

FEBRUARY 7, 2017 Tuesday

Reading 1 GN 1:20—2:4A

God said, "Let the water teem with an abundance of living creatures, and on the earth let birds fly beneath the dome of the sky." And so it happened: God created the great sea monsters and all kinds of swimming creatures with which the water teems, and all kinds of winged birds. God saw how good it was, and God blessed them, saying, "Be fertile, multiply, and fill the water of the seas; and let the birds multiply on the earth." Evening came, and morning followed—the fifth day. Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals of all kinds." And so it happened: God made all kinds of wild animals, all kinds of cattle, and all kinds of creeping things of the earth. God saw how good it was. Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground." God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth." God also said: "See, I give you every seed-bearing plant all over the earth and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit on it to be your food; and to all the animals of the land, all the birds of the air, and all the living creatures that crawl on the ground, I give all the green plants for food." And so it happened. God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good. Evening came, and morning followed—the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth and all their array were completed. Since on the seventh day God was finished with the work he had been doing, he rested on the seventh day from all the work he had undertaken. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation. Such is the story of the heavens and the earth at their creation.

Responsorial Psalm PS 8:4-5, 6-7, 8-9

R. (2ab) O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!

When I behold your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars which you set in place—
What is man that you should be mindful of him,
or the son of man that you should care for him?
R. O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!

You have made him little less than the angels,
and crowned him with glory and honor.
You have given him rule over the works of your hands,
putting all things under his feet.
R. O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!

All sheep and oxen,
yes, and the beasts of the field,
The birds of the air, the fishes of the sea,
and whatever swims the paths of the seas.
R. O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!

Alleluia PS 119:36, 29B

R. Alleluia, alleluia.
Incline my heart, O God, to your decrees;
and favor me with your law.
R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel MK 7:1-13

When the Pharisees with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, they observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands. (For the Pharisees and, in fact, all Jews, do not eat without carefully washing their hands, keeping the tradition of the elders. And on coming from the marketplace they do not eat without purifying themselves. And there are many other things that they have traditionally observed, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles and beds.) So the Pharisees and scribes questioned him, "Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?" He responded, "Well did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written: *This*

people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines human precepts. You disregard God's commandment but cling to human tradition." He went on to say, "How well you have set aside the commandment of God in order to uphold your tradition! For Moses said, Honor your father and your mother, and Whoever curses father or mother shall die. Yet you say, 'If someone says to father or mother, "Any support you might have had from me is qorban"'(meaning, dedicated to God), you allow him to do nothing more for his father or mother. You nullify the word of God in favor of your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many such things."

Reflection:

God created human beings in his image and likeness (Gen 1:27). These words stand as the opening statement of the whole Bible that stands as the call of everyman and woman, not only to pay due respect and reverence to all people, but to look at oneself as a part of God himself. Because everybody bears the divine presence we are all obliged to respect ourselves by keeping from all that distorts this image and likeness. In this sense, St. Paul says that we are temple of the Holy Spirit. Laws and traditions are important to guide and save individuals from danger. But if they function as a hindrance to grow in our inner freedom and sense of belonging, we become slaves of certain norms and slowly lose our respect for others. We are capable of updating your personal plans and rules to grow and allow others to grow in the call to be the image and likeness of God.