

EVE

The first woman



GENESIS 2:7, 3:18- 25,



EVE

Meaning of the name Eve -is an English given name for a female, derived from the Latin name Eva, in turn originating with the Hebrew חַוָּה (Chavah/Havah - chavah, to breathe, and chayah, to live, or to give life)

Thomas Aquinas says, “Last in execution, first in intention.” The last thing created by God was Eve. She was in his mind from the beginning of creation, not an afterthought on seeing Adam’s loneliness but the pinnacle of all he had created.

Our feminine experience probably doesn’t feel much like being the cherry on the cake, more like something lost in the mixture.

We know the roots of this are from the broken intimacy with God in the garden. Eve especially gets drawn into dialogue with the serpent, and in her naivety, she starts the path that we all have to struggle along now. Adam stands beside her all this time. He neither protects her nor quietens the snake. He is, at best, passive to what’s happening.

Let’s pay attention to the dialogue here today, who blames whom?

Who had God given the instructions to ?

What can we learn from our first parents?



ENTERING INTO DIALOGUE



3 'Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?"' 2 The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; 3 but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'

It is early days in creation, Already there has been some misinterpretation, a twisting of who God is. Look at what the serpent says to Eve...

'Did God say, "You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?"

Eve replies...., "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die."

We are told that Adam received the instructions about the tree. Who added the instruction about not touching? Where did the message get distorted, do you think?

Have you ever questioned your understanding of Church teachings, of rules and laws?

How important do you think it is to receive information first hand?

What rules/ laws do you not understand, which ones do you struggle with?

Where can you find truthful, solid answers to these?



BUYING INTO THE LIE

4 *'But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'*

The lie. What seed has been sown into the heart of Eve here? Allowing the lie to enter, feeds the temptation, maybe, that God is holding out on her. Which would suggest He isn't to be trusted. If He doesn't wish to give her everything, maybe they aren't as loved as they thought. Maybe there is another agenda? The Lie is also appealing and attractive here, it's like a green light to something Eve would like or finds easier to believe.

What image of God's character do you have?

Where do you think this has come from?

How much of this story resonates with your own deep feelings of God's love for you?

Why do you think God allowed such a serpent and such a tree?

What lies might have been sown into your own heart and taken root? eg worth, gifting, ability, loveliness, conditions of acceptance.

How much room/ time/ conversation do you give to these lies?

Do you suspect there's some truth in them?

How hard is it to be honest with yourself when you fall down?



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

'8 They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him,

'Where are you?' 10 He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.'

The intimacy has been broken. God, as ever, is seeking Adam and Eve, calling to them, but because of their shame they hide themselves away. Eve's shame is in her weakness, that she has brought death to Adam not life, and Adam in his passivity and neglect has brought Eve's death, not life. They have flipped all that they were created for, and shunned the one who has made them. How differently would this have played out if they had run to Him expressing just how sorry they were? Do you think it would have made a difference? Nothing is hidden from God, but we can so easily deceive ourselves.



What is your experience of intimacy with God?

What in your faith life do you maybe hide behind? eg busyness, activity, family other commitments?

What aspects of yourself do you struggle to reveal to God or others?

Do you believe that God loves you enough to forgive you the instant you seek His forgiveness, especially in the sacrament of Confession?

Take it home - Journaling - Examine the male role models in your life, past and present. Is it possible that some of the aspects of these people have formed the image of Gods fatherhood for you - positive and negative? Explore what you think perfect fatherhood would look like...where do you find this in scripture?

THE JESUS CONNECTION

The feeling here in this story is shame, Jesus meets our shame with Mercy not condemnation.

Jesus is called the new Adam, Mary is the new Eve both bringing life rather than death, obedience rather than disobedience.

The tree becomes the cross that saves each of us.

When God tells the serpent “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.” Genesis 3:14 we call this the proto-evangelium, the first Gospel, a telling of the coming of Jesus in the first pages of scripture.



Works of Mercy

Instructi in Ignoranti

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7

Where better to start than with ourselves ! Can you answer your friends questions on the teachings of the church or understand what some of the more difficult bits of scripture are actually telling us? There is always so much more to learn.. This week read into the incarnation and what that means for us as Christians. Google it, ask people, form your own questions and then find the answers

TAKING IT TO PRAYER

These are just some suggestions you may, but please let the Holy Spirit guide you to a more personal response. These are just to get you started.

1. Ask the Lord to reveal the things you may hide behind or avoid facing
2. Pray for Fathers and Mothers, yours and those around you.
3. Pray for the strength to defeat the temptations you face
4. Pray for trust in the Lords goodness
5. Pray for the answers to those questions and teachings you wrestle with

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Written by Xanthe Vanderputt - for Radiant, Sept 2024