

The Father, first person of the Trinity

Let's begin by talking about the Name of God:

God revealed Himself to Moses on Mount Horeb in the theophany of the Burning Bush (Ex. 3:1-22). (A revelation or visible appearance of God) Moses asked what he should tell the captive Israelites when they ask him the name of the God who had appeared to Him. The name God revealed to Moses was the Hebrew equivalent of "I AM THAT I AM" — meaning something similar to "The One Who exists by His own power." In Hebrew this Name is spelled "YHVH", the Hebrew letters (yod, heh, vav, heh) and was considered too sacred to pronounce. This four-letter word is also known as the Tetragrammaton (meaning "four letters"). The Catholic church officially no longer uses the word Yahweh, the personal name of God. I think it is with good reason. First, out of respect for God we should not use his personal name, second, the word we use is a transliteration and not entirely accurate. Traditionally, out of respect, you would not call your own father by his first name, I think we should do at least that much out of respect for God.

I know that language changes over time but Hebrew is an ancient language. I've always wondered what it would sound like when Moses told the Israelites the name of God. So let's listen to that language that Christ spoke when he taught in the temple, and learn to speak a couple of words in Hebrew.

http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Names_of_G-d/YHVH/yhvh.html

Adonai

The LORD

Hashem

The Name

Ehyeh ahser Ehyeh

I Am That I Am

Adonai Elohim

The LORD God

Adonai Ro'i

The LORD my Shepherd

From the Torah

God simply answered Moses

first wave file

Let's talk about what His name is not, i.e. Jehovah. The Masorites, Jewish biblical scholars of the 8th to 10th century, replaced the vowel signs that had appeared beneath the consonants of YHVH with the vowel signs of Adonai to avoid pronouncing the name of God. During a German translation of the Bible in about the 12th century, the vowel points of Adonai were slid

up into position between the letters of The Name, the Y was pronounced as J and the mistranslation "Jehovah" was created.

(ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA) States: "the pronunciation "Jehovah" is an error resulting among Christians from combining the consonants YHWH with the vowels of ADHONAY."

Who is God?

One way to state that is: "God is the only being in existence, for whom the reason for his existence does not depend on anyone else." All other beings look for the reason for their existence outside themselves. God alone is perfect in that sense, He doesn't need a cause of his being.

Another way to say that is: God is the only self-existent being, he is the uncaused first cause of everything.

I like this definition because it avoids the trap of trying to re-define God in our image.

9 qualities of God

In the CCC article 222

1) God is unique:

Is 45:18 For thus says the LORD, The creator of the heavens, who is God, The designer and maker of the earth who established it, Not as an empty waste did he create it, but designing it to be lived in: I am the LORD, and ***there is no other.***

2) God is infinite and omnipotent:

God is everywhere, unlimited, and all powerful. God can do everything.

PS 135:5-6 For I know that the LORD is great, that our Lord is greater than all gods.

Whatever the LORD desires he does in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all the depths.

3) God is eternal:

God is the only self-existent being, he is the uncaused first cause of everything.

Is 40:28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD *is God from of old*, creator of the ends of the earth.

4) God is beyond measurement, He is not limited to space:

1 Kgs 8:27 "Is God indeed to dwell on earth? If the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain you, how much less this house which I have built!

5) God contains all things:

Wis-8:1 Indeed, wisdom spans the world from end to end mightily and governs all things well.

6) *God is immutable, He does not change...ever:*

Ps 102:26:28

Of old you laid the earth's foundations; the heavens are the work of your hands. They perish, but you remain; they all wear out like a garment; Like clothing you change them and they are changed, but you are the same, your years have no end.

7) *God is utterly simple, pure spirit:*

The opposite of simple is complex, which implies divisible into parts. In God there are no divisions, no parts, he is one in three. God is not material, he is supernatural, so you can't really create an image of God.

Ex 20:4 You shall not make for yourself an idol or a likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters beneath the earth;

8) *God is personal:*

God is the source of all life, knows all things, loves and cares beyond any sense of limit. This saving God manifested personal love through the compassionate acts in the history of the Israelites, and most supremely through sending The Son, Jesus Christ to all people.

Jer 31:3 With age-old love I have loved you; so I have kept my mercy toward you

9) *God is supremely holy:*

Holiness is a quality of being, God expresses it through his unlimited goodness and love.

Sir-43:28 Let us praise him the more, since we cannot fathom him, for greater is he than all his works;

God the Father

So why do we call this self-existent being, the uncaused first cause of everything "The Father?"

We understand that God is beyond having gender, however we are limited in our ability to explain the supernatural through language. We draw parallels, make analogies and similes, but we can only go so far before we run up against a wall....The supernatural is not natural... but we are. God in His great wisdom has chosen to communicate with us, through the words of the Bible, using concepts that we can understand, and which are a part of our ordinary lives.

The common way that Christians address the Almighty as Father comes from Christ himself. In fact, Jesus often used a more intimate word, Abba or "Daddy."

Fatherhood and Headship

To expand on fatherhood a little, in the Greek language, Father literally means nourisher, protector or upholder. Holy Scripture presents the concept of fatherhood in several ways: (1) headship-generating and establishing a household; (2) feeding - nourishing or protecting his offspring; (3) maintenance - upholding that which he established.

The first glimpse of the Fatherhood of God is in the Book of Genesis. Chapters 1-3 are about God generating and establishing a household. The plants and other things are created after their own kind (Gn 1:25), but God creates man in His own image (Gn 1:26). God creates mankind in two parts-man and woman. There is a spiritual equality implied in the verse.

Genesis 2:22-23 describes the creation of Eve and the completion of the creation of mankind. In the equality of this creation, there is an order of creation. Mankind sprang from Adam, yet God designed that the rest of the human race should descend from the ordered relation of Adam and Eve. Now Adam is seen as a father because he is the head of a household, and he must nurture all who come from him.

It says in (Rom 5:12)"Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned".

In (1 Cor 15:22) we read "For as in Adam all die".

God the Father is the ultimate principle of life, truth, and love both within the Godhead and within creation. The authority of all fatherhood comes from God the Father (Eph. 3:15). He graciously wills to allow human participation in the communication of natural life, and to associate with human males the authority of His fatherhood. The male human parent is rightly called Father because of his cooperation with the Fatherhood of God in giving life.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

God guides his creation toward its completion or perfection through what we call his Divine Providence. This means that God has absolute sovereignty over all that he has made and guides his creation according to the divine plan of his will. At the same time, both the evidence of the world that we discover by our human endeavors and the testimony of Sacred Scripture show that for the unfolding of his plan, God uses secondary causes, including the laws of physics, chemistry, and biology, as well as the cooperation of our own human intellect and will. The Father of all continues to work with his Son, who is eternal Wisdom, and with the Holy Spirit, who is the inexhaustible source of life, to guide creation and humanity to the fullness of God's truth, goodness, and beauty.

A brief word about Angels

It is a truth of faith that God, the "maker... of all that is seen and unseen," created a realm of spiritual beings who do not share the limitations of a physical body and yet exist as the result of his all-powerful, loving act of creation. We call these spiritual beings angels. "As purely spiritual creatures angels have intelligence and will: they are personal and immortal creatures, surpassing in perfection all visible creatures, as the splendor of their glory bears witness" (CCC, no. 330). Angels glorify God and work for our salvation. The Church celebrates the memory of certain angels (St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael) who were God's messengers.

FROM THE CATECHISM

1. What does faith in God mean?

It means coming to know God's greatness and majesty. It means living in thanksgiving. It means knowing the unity and true dignity of all men. It means making good use of created things. It means trusting in God, even in adversity. (CCC, nos. 222-227)

2. Why does the Creed begin with God?

Our profession of faith begins with God, for God is the First and the Last, the beginning and the end of everything. The [Creed] begins with God the Father, for the Father is the first divine person of the Most Holy Trinity; our Creed begins with the creation of heaven and earth, for creation is the beginning and foundation of all God's works. (CCC, no. 198)

3. What is the importance of God's Revelation about creation?

Creation is the foundation of "all God's saving plans," the "beginning of the history of salvation" that culminates in Christ. Conversely, the mystery of Christ casts conclusive light on the mystery of creation and reveals the end for which "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth": from the beginning, God envisioned the glory of the new creation in Christ. (CCC, no. 280, citing the General Catechetical Directory, no. 51, and Gn 1:1)

IN BRIEF

44 Man is by nature and vocation a religious being. Coming from God, going toward God, man lives a fully human life only if he freely lives by his bond with God.

45 Man is made to live in communion with God in whom he finds happiness: (St. Augustine, Conf. 10, 28, 39: PL 32, 795) "When I am completely united to you, there will be no more sorrow or trials; entirely full of you, my life will be complete".

46 When he listens to the message of creation and to the voice of conscience, man can arrive at certainty about the existence of God, the cause and the end of everything.

47 The Church teaches that the one true God, our Creator and Lord, can be known with certainty from his works, by the natural light of human reason (cf. Vatican Council I, can. 2, § 1: DS 3026).

48 We really can name God, starting from the manifold perfections of his creatures, which are likenesses of the infinitely perfect God, even if our limited language cannot exhaust the mystery.

49 "Without the Creator, the creature vanishes" (GS 36). This is the reason why believers know that the love of Christ urges them to bring the light of the living God to those who do not know him or who reject him.

Patrick of Ireland

"[T]here is no other God, nor has there been heretofore, nor will there be hereafter, except God the Father unbegotten, without beginning, from whom is all beginning, upholding all things, as we say, and his Son Jesus Christ, whom we likewise to confess to have always been with the Father—before the world's beginning. . . . Jesus Christ is the Lord and God in whom we believe . . . and who has poured out on us abundantly the Holy Spirit . . . whom we confess and adore as one God in the Trinity of the sacred Name" (Confession of St. Patrick 4 [A.D. 452]).

Mother Angelica

By His life, death, and resurrection, He merited for me a participation in all of the Father's beautiful attributes. I have been called by the Father to be Holy, given the Way of Holiness by the Son, and given the means to Holiness by the Spirit, that I may reflect every day in some way these Divine Attributes.

Jesus has told us to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect, and that means we must share in His perfection.

We present these things to shepherd you to the author of unmitigated mercy, the flawless advocate of the insignificant, whose death on the cross brings eternal consequence to the word Savior, Jesus The Christ. Amen

End with the Our Father.