

7th Grade – Confirmation First Year

Sacrament of Confirmation – The Didache Series

Lesson: Introduction Wrap-up & The Existence of God

September 18, 2022

Topic: Introduction Wrap-up and the Existence of God

We will start with a brief introduction of few topics we did not get to last week: The Fruits and Gifts of the Holy Spirit and the four elements of living as a disciple of Christ. Then we will jump into Chapter 1 which covers some very deep, philosophical material. I fully anticipate we will spend at least this week and next on Chapter 1 because understanding how to explain God's existence is critically foundational to our faith. We will spend some time discussing the ways by which we reason God's existence in more depth than the book contains. The children should not be intimidated by the Tomist language; we will discuss it in very plain terms.

From the Introduction

Very brief review of last week: Confirmation saint, sponsor, grace, receiving the Holy Spirit

The Seven Sacraments (chart on page 5)

Fruits and Gifts of the Holy Spirit

- Gifts of the Holy Spirit – wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord
- Fruits of the Holy Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control
- What is the difference?
These will be discussed in more depth in a later chapter

Four elements of living as a disciple of Christ

- Prayer, holiness, witness, service - describe for yourselves (p7-8)
- Vocations

Chapter 1 – God Reveals Himself to Man

- Law of Non-contradiction: two mutually exclusive propositions cannot be true at the same time
- All religions are not equal paths to God / All religions are not true
- If two religions have contradicting claims, Non-Contradiction says only one can be true, so there are six options:
 - i. None of them are true at all. All are completely false.

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- ii. Some are only partially true, and others are completely false.
 - iii. All are partially true. None are completely false.
 - iv. One is fully true, some others are partially true, some others are totally false.
 - v. One is fully true; the rest are all completely false.
 - vi. One is fully true; the rest are all partially true.
- How do we demonstrate this?

Understanding God's Existence

- God's attributes: eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, omni-present, unchanging
- Faith and reason are complimentary
- Arguments for God's existence: desire, beauty, efficient cause, design

The Design Argument

1. The universe displays intelligibility – (honeybees, finely tuned universe, human body)
2. Intelligible order is either a product of chance or intelligent design
3. Not chance
4. Therefore, intelligent design
5. Intelligent design comes from a mind, a designer
6. The universe is the product of an intelligent designer

Why do we perceive disorder as a problem?

'Chance' is not credible. What is 'Chance' if there is no such thing as order?

The Argument from Efficient Cause

1. There are ordered series of efficient causes (the reason something exists)
 - a. We perceive that there are effects
 - b. Nothing can be the efficient cause of itself
 - c. Therefore, the effects have efficient causes

Ex: Train reaction

2. An ordered series of efficient causes cannot have an infinite regress
 - a. In ordered series of causes, there are first, intermediate, and ultimate causes

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- b. If a cause is removed, so is its effect
 - c. Therefore, if there were no first cause, there would be no intermediate or ultimate causes
 - d. If there were an infinite regress, there would be no first cause
 - e. There are intermediate and ultimate causes
3. Therefore, there is a first cause.

CCC 338. *Nothing exists that does not owe its existence to God the Creator*

The Argument from Desire

1. Every natural, innate desire in us corresponds to some real object that can satisfy that desire the existence of natural desires does, in every discoverable case, mean that the objects desired exist. *
2. But there exists in us a desire which nothing in time, nothing on earth, no creature can satisfy.
3. Therefore, there must exist something more than time, earth, and creatures, which can satisfy this desire.
4. This something is what people call "God" and "life with God forever."