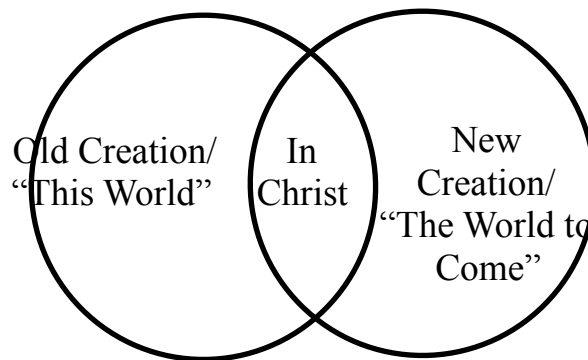


This World is Passing Away (3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B)

1 Corinthians 7:29-31—This World is Passing Away

²⁹ I mean, brethren, the appointed time has grown very short; from now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, ³⁰ and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, ³¹ and *those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the form of this world is passing away.* (1 Cor 7:29-31)

1. Paul’s theology of the “this world” and the “world to come” (1 Cor 7:31):



2. Detachment from “the world” (Greek *ho kosmos*) (1 Cor 6:29-31)

- a. Husbands from “wives”
- b. Mourners from the dead
- c. Rejoicers from “rejoicing”
- d. Consumers from “goods”

The Living Tradition

Thomas Aquinas: To sum it up universally, “they that use this world,” i.e., worldly things... “Let them be as if they used it not,” that is, let them not *cling to worldly things with excessive delight*. “Having food and clothing, with these let us be content” (1 Tim 6:7). (Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* no. 382).

Ignatius of Loyola: Man is created to praise, to reverence and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul. The other things on the face of the earth are created for man to help him in attaining to the end for which he was created. Hence, man is to make use of them in as far as they help him in the attainment of his end, and he must rid himself of them in as far as they prove a hindrance to him. *Therefore, we must make ourselves indifferent to all created things*, as far as we are allowed free choice and are not under

any prohibition. *Consequently, as far as we are concerned, we should not prefer health to sickness, riches to poverty, honor to dishonor, a long life to a short life...* Our one desire and choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which we are created. (Ignatius, *Spiritual Exercises* no. 23, trans. Louis J. Puhl, S.J.)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B)

1. How does Paul's Jewish concept of "two worlds" inform his understanding of the Christian detachment from the good things of this world? What are the implications of the reality that Christians live 'in-between' worlds?

For Further Reading

1. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians* (trans. F. R. Larcher, O.P.; eds. J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón; Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012).
2. Gerald Bray, ed. *1-2 Corinthians* (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament VI; Downers Grove, IL.: IVP, 1999).
3. George T. Montague, SM, *First Corinthians* (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010).