

I come in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“In the beginning!” Have you ever wondered what “In the beginning” looked like? Today we have ‘something’, but what did ‘nothing’ look like? Things that make me go “HMMM”

Scientists estimate that “In the beginning” took place about 13.8 billion years ago - almost 14 billion years. I wasn’t born yet. If you would like to take a tour of our universe, you might want to block off enough time. Estimated length of the trip, traveling at the speed of light, figure about 93 billion years. This doesn’t include hotel stays, lunch stops or bathroom breaks.

These numbers are hard to comprehend. 14 billion years, that’s 14 and 9-zeros. Just for fun, and it’s what I do, I calculated how long it would take to count from 1 to 14 billion, again no lunch stops or bathroom breaks. The answer is 444 years.

And now in the news, NASA and ESA (European Space Agency) launched the James Webb Telescope yesterday. This new space telescope is the next generation of the “Hubble.” Equipped with the latest technology, it is predicted to be able to capture light transmitted from its source 13.8 billion years ago. In other words, it will look back in time to see the light from the beginning of creation. The first lights of creation have been traveling through space for billions of years, and are nearing our doorstep.

It sort of sends chills down my spine, to think that our generation may get a peek at the first lights of creation. Personally, it fills me with wonder and awe. Hold this thought.

In our Gospel today, John begins his Gospel with the words, “In the beginning.” His Gospel begins by referring back in time to Genesis, and explains that God and ‘the Word’ existed before and outside of time and space. If you’d like to impress others at a dinner party, you can explain that the Greek translation of ‘the Word’ is the masculine noun “Logos,” which came out of the Jewish Tradition. “The Word/Logos” was used to identify the divine, rather than using the name of God (YHWH). AND, through an utterance of the Word, creation was launched into existence.

Fr. Francis Moloney explains, “the Word preexisted creation with God; creation was through the Word; Jesus Christ is the incarnation of God, the Word become flesh; he shares in the divinity of God, yet he has taken on the human condition totally; Jesus is the unique, once and for all revelation of God in the human story.” Jesus Christ was a gift to humanity, one who did not come to replace the Mosaic Law, but rather to perfect it, and give us divine truth and eternal light. It is through the gift of Jesus, a perfect reflection of the divine, that we can see the eternal light of God.

Recalling that Logos is a masculine name for the divine, it was common for Hellenized Jews to also use a feminine gender word for the divine: Sophia.

Sophia is not an additional entity, but rather a complementary term for Logos.

Wisdom literature describes Sophia as, “the breath of the power of God, a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty, **a reflection of eternal light**, a spotless mirror of the working of God and an image of God’s goodness” (Wis. 7:25–27). Just as Logos is the source of Divine Truth and eternal light, Sophia is the source of Divine Wisdom and a reflection of eternal light.

God’s gift to us – Christ - as Logos and Sophia became human and lived **among** us. He is the source of Divine Truth, Wisdom, and eternal light. And the Holy Spirit, God’s gift to us, **lives within us**, and is **our** source of Divine Truth, Wisdom and eternal light. By freely accepting these gifts, we can come to know God, and be children of God.

Let’s return to the wonder and awe of creation. When God ‘uttered the Word’, Logos/Sophia launched creation into existence, but not as a single event but rather a continuously unfolding presence of God from the past, into the present, and beyond through Divine Truth, Wisdom, and eternal light. What has come into being in Divine Truth, Wisdom, and light **was life, and the life was the light of all people**. “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”

Regardless of the darkness in which we live, it has no resistance to God's eternal light!

Yet, as we look at the vast expanse of creation, we wonder if our little blue planet even matters to God. It is indistinguishable. We wouldn't even show up on a AAA map of the universe.

Yet, a spark of eternal light penetrated the void of darkness and initiated the creation of our world. You'd have to ask, "**Was it by chance that earth was formed, placed** within the 93 billion light year expanse of the universe? Was it by chance that our planet orbits the sun at just the right distance away, rotates at just the right speed, travels at just the right pace, with just the right combination of elements, and sustains life? I say "no." It was not by chance, but rather by Divine Truth, Wisdom, and eternal light – on purpose, by design.

And we know God loves every minute, insignificant part of our indistinguishable speck of a planet. How do we know? Divine Truth and Wisdom, and eternal light, became flesh, dwelled with us, on purpose, no accident, to embrace, heal, love, and forgive us – each one of us. Right here, on earth.

This all means that God created you with the divine eternal light of Logos and Sophia (Truth and Wisdom) within you, on purpose, by design, no accident, in love. Sometimes I feel so small, so insignificant. Do you ever feel this way? I have come to realize that God's incomprehensible creation would not be complete

without you. God's 93 billion lightyear plan would not be fulfilled if you weren't here. There'd be a piece missing in the puzzle.

And Sophia, Logos, and the eternal light within you, penetrates the darkness for all time and through space. Because God chose you to carry the eternal light, creation will be forever changed.

For the first time in history, we may get a glimpse **of the first lights of creation**. At the same time, let's not forget how a star, a light from the heavens, revealed the first lights of a **new** creation, the light of the world, Jesus Christ.

Imagine that we may be able to witness God's action in the world from the past, witness it now, and know that our eternal light will travel through space and time until creation is complete. If that is not awe-inspiring, I don't know what is.

May you feel the warmth of God's Truth, Wisdom, and eternal light deep in your heart. May you look upon the earth and stars with amazement, wonder, and awe. May you know that **you have been chosen** to participate in God's plan for all that was, is now, and will ever be! And be assured that God loves you more than all of the stars in the universe, more than all of the stars that the James Webb telescope will reveal to us, because you bear His eternal light within you! So live in the light! Radiate the light! Bask in the light! And reflect the eternal light of Christ! Merry Christmas. Amen.