

The Catholic revival of creation science

Creation, Evolution, and Catholicism: A discussion for those who believe

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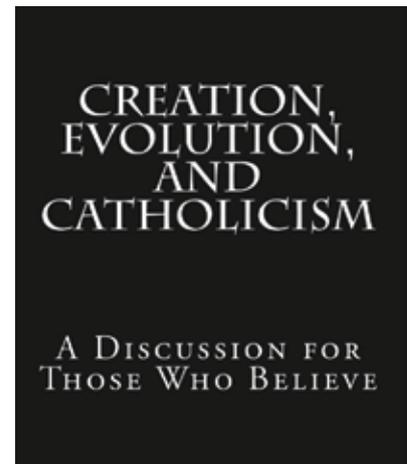
Compromise on Genesis 1–11 has become increasingly rampant, not only in the Protestant churches, especially the mainline denominations; it also has greatly influenced the Catholic Church. Unlike those in evangelical churches, Catholics' returning to the biblical and traditional beliefs in Genesis 1–11 has been slow. Nevertheless, it has begun with the founding of several organizations that offer seminars and talks and several books, of which the one under review is the latest.

Years ago, Thomas McFadden became aware of skepticism among Catholic teens while teaching courses in Catholic Christian Doctrine (CCD). These courses take place normally about one hour a week and are designed for Catholics who attend government schools. He discovered while teaching that the students' unbelief in the supernatural biblical doctrines was often a direct result of their acceptance of evolution. His suspicions were supported by a study done by the Pew Research Center which documented why Catholics have been leaving the church and Christianity in droves, and why those that still practise their faith do so timidly. The main reason Catholics gave for leaving the church was that 'science' disproves the Bible. McFadden also learned that the

majority of American Catholics accept evolution from molecules to man as factual. The Catholic theologians taught in seminaries that the Bible and 'science' can be reconciled by theistic evolution. The students realized that both the Genesis account and evolution couldn't both be right at the same time, so they rejected the compromise and later left the Catholic Church. The average age the children were lost was 13 years; often their unbelief was not necessarily a conscious decision.

Catholic Church leaders clueless

Most distressing to the author is that most of the leaders in the Catholic Church, from the last few popes down, have been theistic evolutionists and unaware of the main reason why so many young people have left the Catholic Church. As a result, McFadden is working to wake up the Catholic Church and make them aware of the abundant scientific evidence supporting creation and the Flood. For that purpose, he started a creationist organization, Institute for Science and Catholicism, and wrote this book. McFadden is not the only Catholic who sees the problem clearly. Other Catholic creation science organizations are the Kolbe Center for the Study of Creation, and, in Europe, the Daylight Origins Society. As an engineer, McFadden has educated himself on the creation/evolution issue through the help of various creation science organizations, especially *Creation Ministries International*. He has discovered that there is a plethora of scientific evidence supporting biblical creation. He has also learned that evolutionary origins stories are clearly based on the worldview of naturalism or atheism, the advocates of which have dominated science and



the culture. *Creation, Evolution and Catholicism* is written for non-scientist Catholics, namely parents, priests, and mature students.

The influence of Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.

About two thirds of McFadden's book is devoted to explaining how evolution came to be accepted by the Catholic Church. He mentions the pivotal influence of the Jesuit priest and paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., who was involved in the Peking Man discoveries and the Piltdown Man fraud. De Chardin also wrote several amazingly popular books, including *The Phenomenon of Man* and *The Divine Milieu*. These books are creatively written in high philosophic language, trying to reconcile evolution to a very loose interpretation of Scripture. In apparent recognition that evolution devalues both God and man, de Chardin attempts to refute that with man-exalting language that is not only confusing but fallacious. The book's appeal is to the pride within all people. In once trying to read these books myself, I certainly agree with McFadden that these two books are theological fiction, vague, and very difficult to understand. Although the Catholic Church tried to ban de Chardin's books, they became even more popular and apparently are still popular among Catholics.

Humani Generis taken out of context

Humani Generis, the English title of which is *The Human Race: Some False Opinions Which Threaten to Undermine Catholic Doctrine*, is an encyclical written by Pope Pius XII (1939–1958) in 1950. This encyclical is claimed to have opened up the belief in evolution by Catholics because of a portion of paragraph 36:

“For these reasons the Teaching Authority of the Church does not forbid that, in conformity with the present state of human sciences and sacred theology, research and discussions, on the part of men experienced in both fields, take place with regard to the doctrine of evolution ...” (p. 109).

This statement has been taken out of context by evolutionary advocates and been claimed to be a *carte blanche* for accepting evolution. However, the same paragraph also says the following:

“However, this must be done in such a way that the reasons for both opinions, that is, those favorable and those unfavorable to evolution, be weighed and judged with the necessary seriousness, moderation and measure, and provided that all are prepared to submit to the judgment of the Church ...” (p. 109).

This procedure, of course, was not followed. Evolutionary advocates paid no attention to the fact this encyclical was mainly a warning for uncritically accepting evolutionary philosophy that was infiltrating the Catholic Church. These advocates continued at a feverish pace to undermine the Catholic Church. Through the years, secular humanists have taught students misinformation and biased ‘facts’, including putting out blatant propaganda, such as the completely distorted movie *Inherit the Wind*, which is supposed to be a dramatization of the 1925 Scopes Monkey Trial.

The wise may wonder why advocates of evolution feel the need for

distorting the facts. This movie is just one of many fabrications of the trial. If it is so easy to disprove creation, why do they resort instead to lies and mockery? If the case for evolution is solid, why do they feel the need to use the courts to block the discussing of evidence against evolution?

Catholic compromise runs deep

McFadden gives many examples of Catholic compromise but he points out that both Pope Pius XII, and Leo XIII, (1878–1903) before him, were against the evolutionary hypothesis and believed strongly in the straightforward meaning of Scripture. After Pius XII, the popes rarely mentioned evolution, but a great number of lesser officials promoted it, of whom McFadden gives us typical examples. Pope Benedict XVI, previously known as Cardinal Ratzinger, brought up the subject a few times, but his admonitions were vague enough to be distorted and ignored.

The current Pope, Francis, has been no help. He has come out quite positive toward belief in evolution, which is not surprising because of his Jesuit education: “Pope Francis is also a victim of the scientific method which was part of his evolution-laced Jesuit formation” (p. 126). Of course, it is not the scientific method that is at fault—which can be a great benefit if applied correctly and without scientism—but the worldview of naturalism. Pope Francis also seems to take all the advice of the Pontifical Academy of Science, all the members of which are evolutionists.

Evolution advocates bring up the usual ‘cautions’ to attempt to stop inquiry, such as that the Catholic Church persecuted Galileo, and, therefore, the Church should simply accept what scientists say. Because of this constant refrain, McFadden has an online article on the Galileo affair, showing that evolution advocates have turned the affair on its head.

And there is the usual excuse given by advocates of theistic evolution that returning to belief in the straightforward meaning of Genesis 1–11 will turn away too many people. It is interesting that the author has discovered that the opposite is the case:

“Many people in the church claim that consistent creation teaching ‘turns people away from the Gospel’. However, both logic and many testimonies find exactly the opposite: *capitulation on creation* turns people off the Gospel! Conversely, consistency on creation has helped many to realize the consistency of the Gospel message [emphasis in original]” (p. 148).

A small step in the right direction

McFadden gives us the bad news throughout most of the book. However, he suggests a plan of action for the Catholic Church, emphasized especially in his last chapter. He says that it would be useless to get the hierarchy on board; it has to be a grass roots effort:

“Indoctrination in evolution is a contributing factor to the alienation of Catholic youth that can, and should be, countered at the parish level by the mutual cooperation of parents and clergy to first educate themselves on critical matters which are now ‘below the radar’, so to speak” (p. 159).

Self-education is not that difficult, since there is an overwhelming number of resources available, much of it free online, including the CMI website, that have been developed by Evangelicals, who have led the way.

I highly recommend this book for Catholics. It is also helpful for Protestants to understand how the Catholics are fighting the same battle against the watering down of Scripture. Although there is some mention of uniquely Catholic doctrines, the book is very encouraging and informative.