

For the Journey

April 9/26 - Rev. Dave Crawford



The photos and videos coming back from Artemis 2 are simply magnificent. The clarity is beyond what we've ever seen from any space voyage. Even the photo above doesn't do justice to the image quality of what can be witnessed online. I urge you to open up your best computer and just gaze in awe at the humbling splendour of what's there to behold. I would even offer a friendly challenge - after viewing the images and clips see if you're not moved to prayer.

From the earliest centuries following the life of Christ theologians have offered, pondered, and debated the concept or doctrine of “creation ex nihilo” (Latin for “creation out of nothing”). In the 3rd century Tertullian argued decisively in favour of the idea, countering Gnostic assertions that indefinable, chaotic matter existed prior to creation and was brought together, organized, by God. Christians held, and generally still hold, the belief that before creation nothing, as far as we can imagine “nothing”, existed. The theory fits well with modern scientific suggestions of a “Big Bang” start to the universe. However, recent academics/astronomers/scientists (recent meaning the past 50 or so years) have argued for the “ex nihilo” proposition, but without the need of a divine creator. In other words, the universe created itself. There’s an interesting video online of Carl Sagan in the 1980s offering a much more refined, although unconvincing (IMHO), explanation of this scientific position.

Whatever your personal position is, informed by your beliefs or by science, or by both, it is surely not only awe-inspiring to consider the order, beauty and expansiveness of our solar system, galaxy and universe. It is absolutely humbling, and maybe even centring, in the same way resting at the top of a mountain trail is centring, or reclining on a quiet tropical beach is centring, or parking your vehicle just outside of town, west of town, watching the sun set, is centring. With so many unpredictable variables in life today, and so many of us living month to month, week to week, revising our budgets downward in order to make ends meet; with so many global problems coming at us digitally moment by moment, I think we need centring, grounding, peace of mind and spirit. God, the same God who launched the universe and gave us the Christ, is the centring we need, the grounding for which we yearn.

Creatio ex nihilo. Creation out of nothing. In God’s eternal, unfathomable wisdom our ever-expanding universe was made. Out of God’s eternal, unshakeable love Jesus the Son and Saviour was sent. Artemis 2 is giving us incredible imagery. May it lead us back to God in praise and gratitude and wonder.

“Now to the One who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we can ask or imagine, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” - Ephesians 3:20-21.