



Ascension—June 1, 2025

Little Neon Sparks That Light Up the Sea

Dear Thomas,

For some reason I always think of tropical fish whenever I hear the word “spark” because they seem like **little sparks of colored light** swimming happily through the illuminated waters of fish tanks.



According to the Book of Genesis, God created the birds and the fishes on the **fifth day of Creation**, and I imagine He may have left the tiniest fish, the tropical ones, to the end of that day.

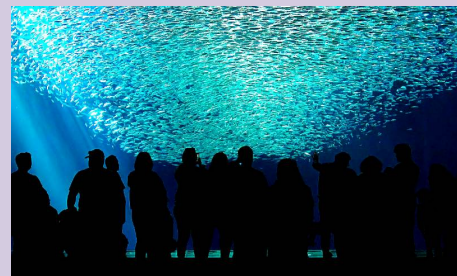
Perhaps they were even an afterthought, as if God had all kinds of leftover colors and trinkets after working on the animals and wondered what to do with them all.

Stepping back and seeing the world as a whole, He decided that it still needed a little more *flair*, especially in the water department (too much blue). So He used all the flecks and hues and knickknacks and residuals **to decorate the littlest fish in the sea**. And *voilà*, we got tropical fish!

Those fish are **tiny artistic masterpieces** and, if I may say, *sacred windows* into His divine creativity.

Sparks and Flashes

I looked it up and found that the Bible contains nine instances of the word “spark” or “sparks”. My favorite one is this: “*Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.*” (Job 5:7, KJV) That **applies to men**, not fish, but it’s pretty insightful if you ask me. But, back to our topic.



To add to their mystique, if the light is just right, tropical fish also “flash” (49 occurrences of *that* word in the Bible) when they change direction. A whole wall of flashing fish creates an especially brilliant effect when they are swimming in schools.

A World Within a World

I remember being mesmerized by those sparks and flashes when I was a kid gazing into my grandfather's fish tank. It was just a small ten gallon tank, but it seemed like a vast ocean to me. He had a **wonderful variety of fish** and lit up his tank with a special fluorescent lamp to make some of the fish put on an even more brilliant show.

He also introduced me and my siblings to the little catfish-like fellow who ate the algae off the inside of the glass, **the Kissing Gouramis (kids just love those!)**, and the more flamboyant types like the tiny neons and the Siamese fighting fish. I'll feature those and more below.



Even as a child, I came to realize that a fish tank is a little world all its own and **not entirely different** from the air-breathing world that we live in:

- The occupants are large and small, thin and fat, fast and slow, colorful and bland;
- They generally **congregate in compatible groups**;
- Some are bullies while others run and hide at the slightest sign of danger;
- Many others **work to maintain the ecosystem**; and
- Still others have only one purpose: to swim around and *just be beautiful* all day.

The fish world is quite an amazing bit of divine artistry when you think about it. One can get **lost for hours admiring tropical fish in a tank**, not to mention the invertebrates that live with them (snails, starfish, and an occasional octopus), as well as the decorative landscaping which attempts to mimic their natural habitat. I don't know if the fish are fooled by it, but humans are, and that's usually the point.

Divine Arts and Crafts

Most tropical fish come from the great coral reefs of the world, and we're lucky to have one massive system of them right off our shores **in the wonderful Caribbean reefs**. They may have an even greater abundance of tropical fish than the Great Barrier Reef off the east coast of Australia.

However, the thousands of Pacific islands, particularly Indonesia, are really the undisputed **epicenter of the tropical fish world**, as you can see from this map.



But the great thing about tropical fish is *their tremendous pizzazz and diversity*. Depending upon their species, they live in either fresh water or salt water, and I'm told that the salt water fish are generally the most colorful. It is estimated that there are **over 35,000 species of tropical fish!** But let's take a moment to view some of that divine artistry in pictures:

Colorful Wonders



Yellow Tang



Cherry Barb



Damselfish

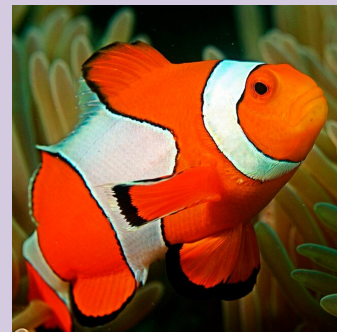
Star Performers



Mandarin Fish

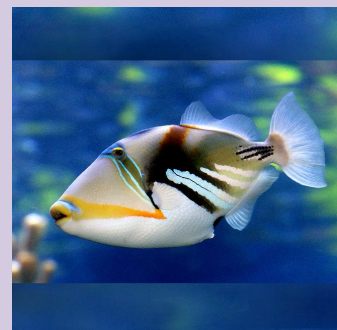
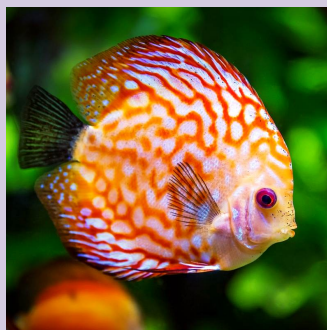


Blushing Angel Fish

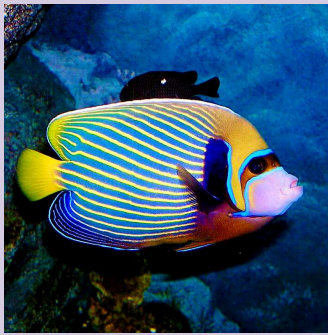


Clownfish (Nemo!)

Personality Plus



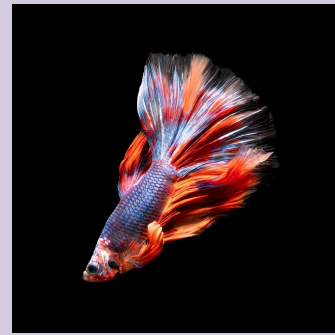
Harlequin Tuskfish



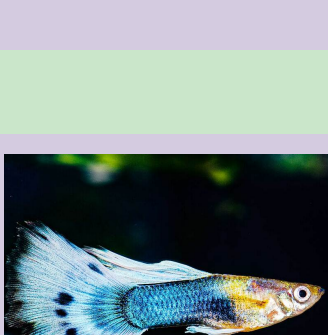
Discus



Picasso Fish



Emperor Angelfish



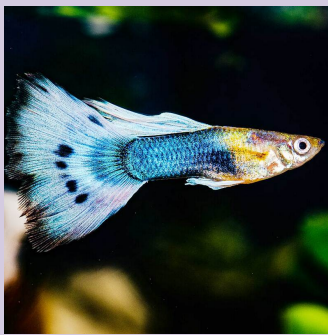
Copperband
Butterflyfish



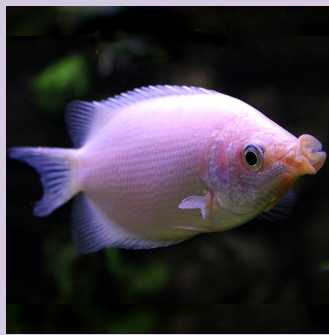
Siamese Fighting Fish



Cuteness Galore



Guppy



Kissing Gourami



Blue Tang (Dory!)

Quaint Oddities



Lionfish



Purple Firefish



Unicorn Fish

An Analogy for a Mystery

One of the ongoing lessons of Sacred Windows is that the world itself is an icon of God's life. The Fathers of the Church often said that **God revealed Himself in the two books of Scripture and Nature**. The natural world doesn't witness to Him as explicitly or as fully as Scripture does, but it's only supposed to point us to the other world and whet our appetites for the true beauty that is to come.

In that way fish, too, could **have some deeper meaning**, so let me end with a kind of fishy analogy for explaining God and the world. I realize the imagery is not very sophisticated, but it works for just about everyone who isn't blindly opposed to it.

I once got into a discussion with a guy who claimed he didn't believe in God. He had all

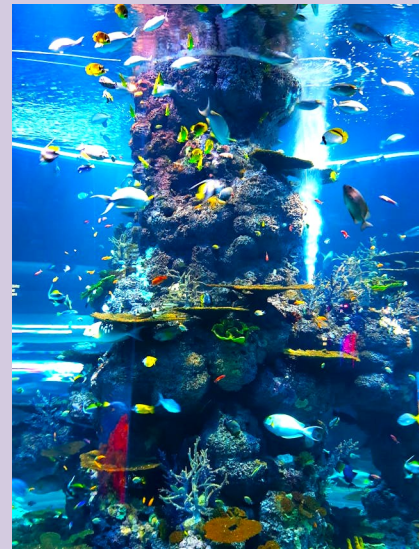
the standard arguments about why a supposedly good God would let the innocent suffer and how a good God could create such an evil world, etc., etc. Those challenges all have their answers, even if atheists are not satisfied by them.



But then he asked why an almighty God would not just come down and **fix all the problems of the world** and make everyone happy. It's a fair question, but it's just as easy to believe that He actually *is doing that constantly* and humans keep messing it up!

Anyway, I wanted to **put an image on it** for him, so I resorted to my fish tank analogy. It went something like this:

- The Creator of the world is not a part of the world He creates, nor is He subject to time and space. He created those too. He's like the Maker of a huge fish tank, which in our analogy is the whole universe. **The Maker is outside the fish tank** and sees all that goes on within it. He is greater than His creation and all it contains, just as an artist is greater than his art, but He sustains it in being. Every detail.
- The **creatures inside the fish tank (us!)** can't see their Creator, not only because He's pure Spirit but also because of the environment of the tank limits visibility of anything outside it. That, ironically, even makes it possible for atheists (who were *also* created by Him) to deny that He exists.
- Yet, if they just look at what is around them, they will see distinct sparks of the Maker's life spread throughout the entire fish tank. The creatures themselves are **stunning examples of divine engineering**, and if one takes time to scrutinize the incredible designs that occur in Nature, he'll understand that such sophisticated designs need a Designer who conducts His work with both mathematical and artistic precision.
- The fish swim freely in this tank and freely interact with each other, which is one of the things that **makes the fish tank so interesting and beautiful**. The fish are limited in their movements by the glass walls, of course, but that's because they are creatures. Only the Creator has unlimited freedom.
- Resources like food are limited too, so the fish are supposed to be **responsible for one another**. Most of them are. That is why they often gather in schools and help supply the needs of the weaker members so that all can flourish. We call that civilization.



- Certain of the fish in every age decide that they would prefer to be sharks and predators rather than the unique creations their Maker meant them to be. Actual sharks don't have a choice about their shark nature, but beings with free will such as angels and humans do and **can trade their beauty for vulgar existences**.

- They go about destroying civilization rather than contributing to the good of others.
- However, the Creator also gave us laws (natural and human) to control these elements and help to maintain the equilibrium of the tank.
- But if you look only at the damage done by the predators, you will have a deeply skewed view of this world. **You may miss all the beauty** inherent in every other aspect of it.
- It's important not to miss that because one day we'll all be taken out of this fish tank world to experience **the Creator's infinitely more beautiful world** that He has prepared for us from all eternity.
- But we'll also have to answer a few tough questions about whether we left the fish tank in **better or worse condition** for having lived in it for our allotted time.

As I say, it's an analogy that will not convince everyone, but it works for me as a way to **explain a great mystery**. The guy I was speaking to said he'd have to think about it and get back to me. I'm still waiting!

Anyway, it's always a marvel for me that even species as tiny as tropical fish can have a transcendent meaning far beyond their natural work of sparking and flashing. **Such small things should fill us with great joy** whenever we count our blessings and realize what an amazing world we live in.



Features

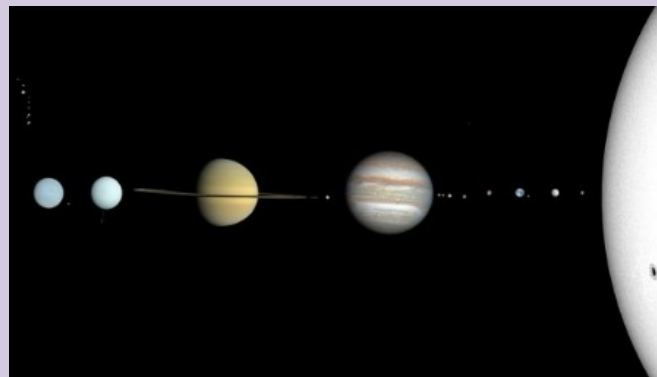
Regular Sacred Windows readers know that I write often about the wonders of the natural world. Here are **a couple of my recent articles** that you may enjoy.

Also, since angels are also part of the natural world (though invisible), you might be interested in reading about them in my book, *Natures of Fire: God's Magnificent Angels*, available through **my author website**. Thanks!

[The Flight and Delight of the Bumblebee](#)



[The Miracle Planet We Live On](#)



[Natures of Fire: God's Magnificent Angels](#)

"Probably the only book on angels you'll ever need!"

~Anthony DeStefano, bestselling author of *A Travel Guide to Heaven*

God bless you and your family!

Peter Darcy

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