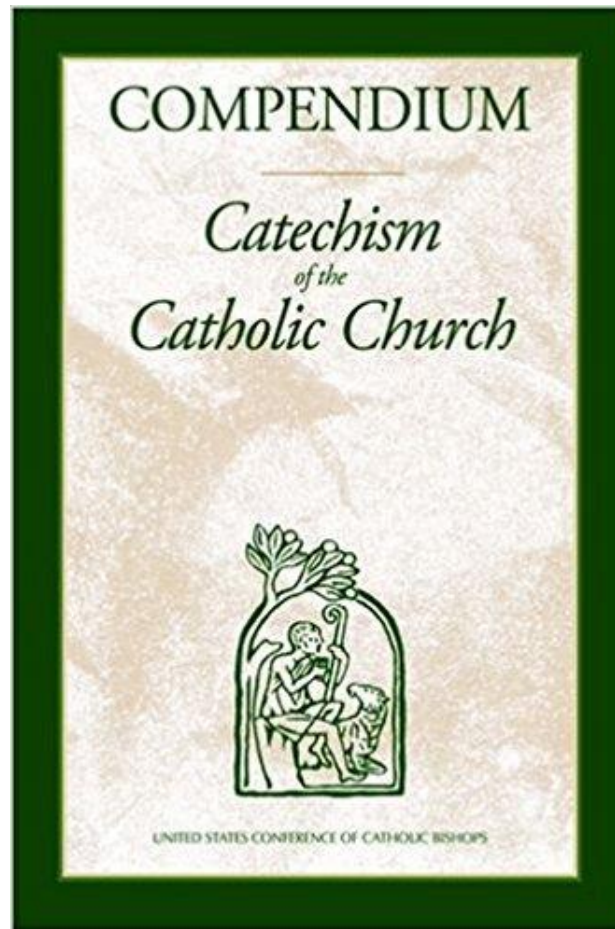


Man's Capacity for God



Paragraphs 1-5

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the
Father before all ages.

...

Through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the
Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,

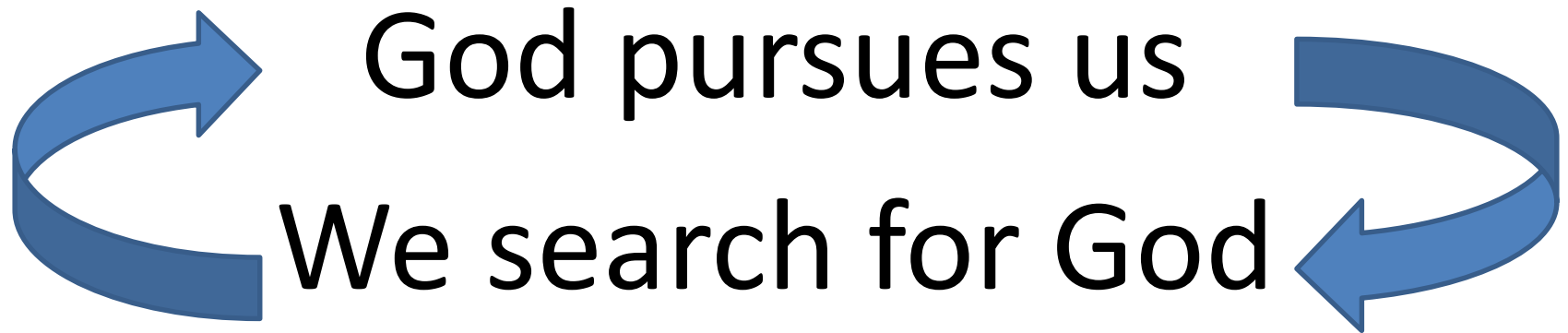
...

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the
Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

...

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 27

The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and *God never ceases to draw man to himself*. Only in God will he find the *truth and happiness he never stops searching for...*



Compendium: Catechism of the Catholic Church – paragraph 2

God himself, in creating man in his own image, has written upon his heart the desire to see him. Even if this desire is often ignored, God never ceases to draw man to himself because only in God will he find and live the fullness of truth and happiness for which he never stops searching. By nature and by vocation, therefore, man is a religious being, capable of entering into communion with God. This intimate and vital bond with God confers on man his fundamental dignity.

Man's Desire For God

King David wrote in Psalm 42:2-3

As the deer longs for streams of water, *so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God,* the living God. When can I enter and see the face of God?

Our heart is restless until it rests in you.

St Augustine, *The Confessions*

397-400 A.D.

◇We long for “something more” ◇We feel “spiritual”

◇What is my purpose? ◇What happens when I die? ◇What will make me happy?

CCC 28

In many ways, throughout history down to the present day, men have given expression to their quest for God in their religious beliefs and behavior: in their prayers, sacrifices, rituals, meditations, and so forth.

Nothing has changed! Isn't that why we are all here tonight?

So How Do We Find God?

through **Creation**

through **The Human Person /
Reason**

through Revelation

Paths to Come to God - *Creation*

- CCC 46
When he listens to the message of creation and to the voice of conscience, man can arrive at certainty about the existence of God, the cause and the end of everything.
- Psalm 19:2
The heavens declare the glory of God; the firmament proclaims the works of his hands.
- Beauty of nature
Canticle of the Sun, St. Francis of Assisi 1278
Sermon 241, St. Augustine
- Complexity/Order/Purposefulness of nature, not random
Fibonacci Sequence

Do you have an example from your life?

Paths to Come to God – *Through the Human Person / Reason*

- CCC 47
The Church teaches that the one true God, our Creator and Lord, can be known with certainty from his works, *by the natural light of human reason*.
- We can believe in God using our mind; Logic, Observation, Science
- Romans 12:2
Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of our mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.
- *Summa Theologiae*, St. Thomas Aquinas
5 demonstrations for God's existence
- Conscience
- Reason is limited because we are limited

Paths to Come to God - *Revelation*

- No amount of unaided thinking or observation could lead to comprehension of God
CCC 52
...By revealing himself God wishes to make them capable of responding to him, and of knowing him, and of loving him far beyond their own natural capacity.
- God has revealed himself by great deeds, as narrated for us in Scripture
 - In Exodus 3:6 & 3:14, God tells Moses who he is
 - Jesus Christ is the fullness (final/total) of God's revelation to us
Hebrews 1:1-2 In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he spoke to us through a son...
- God revealed himself to form a relationship with us, a covenant
- **All that is required for salvation has already been revealed**
CCC 66
Even if Revelation is already complete, it has not been made completely explicit; it remains for Christian faith gradually to grasp its full significance over the course of the centuries.

Paths to Come to God - *Revelation*

Public Revelation vs. Private Revelation

Public

God's covenant revealed for all of God's people

No new public revelation until Jesus returns

Private

To individuals

Messages given by Mary at Lourdes & Fatima

Inspire us to a more profound commitment to God

DO NOT add anything to or contradict public revelations up to/through Jesus Christ

God's Revelation calls for a response of faith and conversion from us

- Sharing the Gospel, praying, voting..

How are you responding in your daily life?

Revelation is transmitted to us through Apostolic Tradition and Scripture

2 Thessalonians 2:15

So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter.

1 Corinthians 11:23

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you...

- When Jesus left the Earth after the Resurrection, he did not leave a Bible in the hands of his Apostles, instead he gave them the mandate to go out and teach all nations as He had commanded (Mt 28:20)
- Sacred Tradition came before the New Testament was codified

Tradition, with a capital 'T'

- Sacred Tradition
- Handed down from Jesus through the Apostles
- Doesn't change

tradition, with a small 't'

- Customs
- Not part of Divine Revelation
- Help us to worship and focus on God
- May change
- Not required

Spend time reading Sacred Scripture!

So Why Have So Many **NOT** Found God?

- Presence of Suffering and Pain
- Rebellion
- No one has shared the good news
- Ignorance of religion or indifferent
- Scandalous behavior of some believers
- Sin and resistance to following God's ways
- Too busy

What Kept You From God
in the Past?

*How Did God
Draw You Back?*

Resources

- Wisdom 13:1-9
- CCC 27-43, 46-48
 - The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* originated with a recommendation made at the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops in 1985
 - In 1986 Pope John Paul II appointed a Commission of Cardinals and Bishops to develop a compendium of Catholic doctrine
 - In 1992 Pope John Paul II officially approved the definitive version of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
 - Important functions:
 - It conveys the ***essential and fundamental content of Catholic faith and morals in a complete and summary way***
 - It is intended to be a ***teaching resource/tool***
 - ***Reference text***
 - Abbreviated CCC
- Saints Elizabeth Ann Seton, Francis of Assisi, Augustine, & Thomas Aquinas