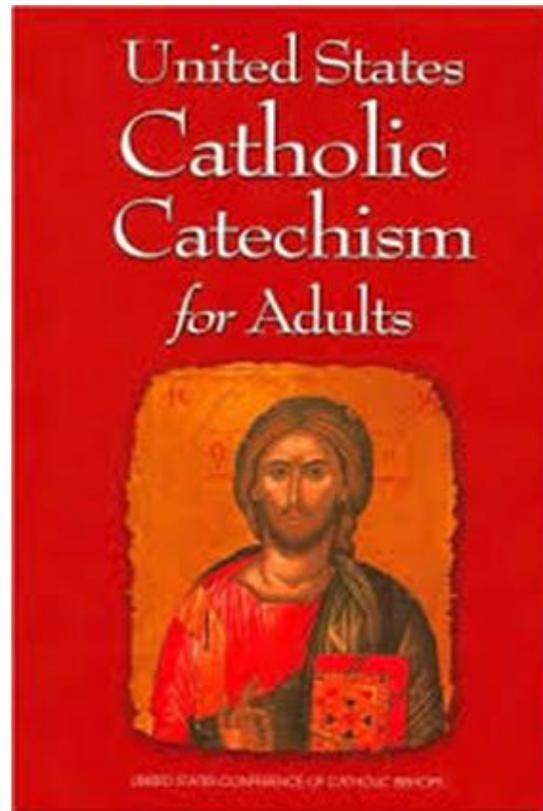


# Chapter 1

## My Soul Longs For You, O God

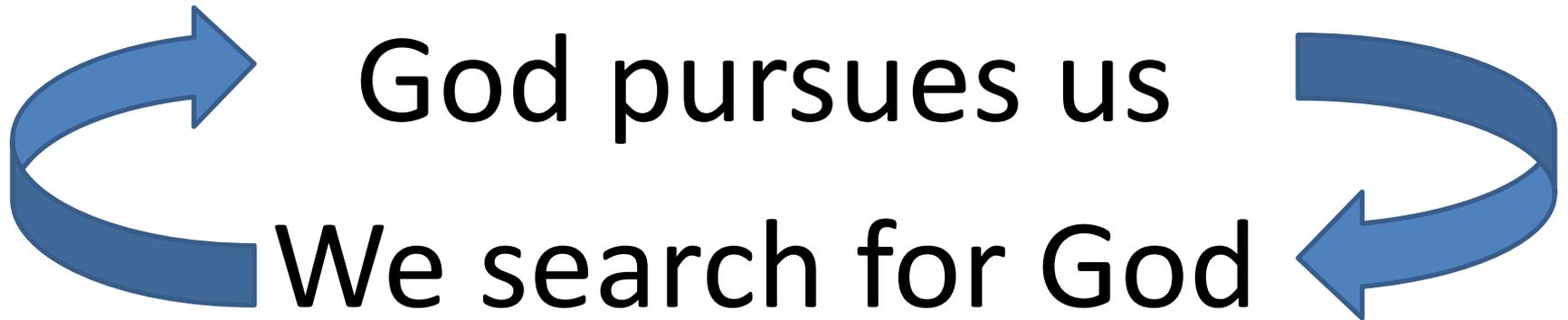


# Chapter 2

## God Comes To Meet Us

Romans 1:19-20

For what can be known about God is evident to them, because *God made it evident to them*. Ever since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what he has made.



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...*

CCC 1718

The Beatitudes respond to the natural desire for happiness. This desire is of divine origin: *God has placed it in the human heart in order to draw man to the One who alone can fulfill it...*

## **THE BEATITUDES**

Matthew 5:3-10

from the Sermon on the Mount

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

# 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*

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?**

◇We long for "something more"

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

◇We feel "spiritual"

# So How Do We Find God?

through **Creation**

through **The Human Person /  
Reason**

*through Revelation*

# Paths to Come to God - *Creation*

- 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
- Complexity/Order/Purposefulness of nature, not random  
Fibonacci Sequence
- 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.

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

- Moral Goodness, Conscience
- Experiences
- We can believe in God using our mind; Logic, Observation, Science
- 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*.
- Reason is limited because we are limited

# Paths to Come to God - *Revelation*

- The self disclosure of the living God, showing himself by both great deeds, as narrated for us in Scripture and by the words that illumine the meaning of these deeds.
  - 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
    - 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... Hebrews 1:1-2
- Enables us to learn about God's inner life and his loving plan to save us.
- The bridge between God and man
- No amount of unaided thinking or observation could lead to comprehension
  - 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.
- Revelation calls for a response of faith and conversion
- 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 public revelations up to/through Jesus Christ
- **All that is required for salvation has already been revealed**

# *Revelation* is transmitted to us through Apostolic Tradition and Scripture

"So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter." 2 Thessalonians 2:15

- 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 (Council of Nicea 325 AD)
- Sacred Tradition could be defined as the living interpretation of Sacred Scripture

"For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you...." 1 Corinthians 11:23

## 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

# 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

- Bible verses and Catechism references throughout presentation
- Wisdom 13:1-9
- CCC 27-43, 46-48
- United States Catholic Catechism for Adults
  - <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/us-catholic-catechism-for-adults/>
  - Chapters 1 & 2
  - p. 17 Doctrinal Statements, bullets 2-7 “Revelation Time Line”
- Association for Catechumenal Ministry (ACM)
  - Does God Exist?
  - Made in His Image
  - The Covenants of God with Us
- Saints Elizabeth Ann Seton, Francis of Assisi & Augustine

## Slide 2 Catechism of the Catholic Church

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 for local Catechisms*** (like our red book)

Abbreviated CCC

## The Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (The Birth of Mary)

Celebrates the birth of Mary to Saints Joachim and Ann.

It is recounted by the Protevangelium of James, an apocryphal writing from the end of the 2nd century. Our tradition is based on this account.

The name *Protevangelium* "implies that most of the events recorded in this 'initial gospel' (prequel) of James occur prior to those recorded in the gospels of the New Testament."

### Apocryphal Writings

Writings by [early Christians](#) that give accounts of [Jesus](#) and his teachings, the nature of [God](#), or the teachings of his [apostles](#) and of their lives. The word "[apocrypha](#)" means "things put away" or "things hidden" and comes from the Greek through the Latin. The general term is usually ***applied to the books that were considered by the church as useful, but not divinely inspired.***

### Interesting Fact

In the case of all the Saints, the Church commemorates their birthday on the day of their *return* to the Lord. In the cases of St. John the Baptist and the Blessed Virgin, the Church also celebrates the day of their *earthly* birth.