

## MAN AND WOMAN'S CAPACITY FOR GOD SESSION 3

Image: The Road to Emmaus

Journey of coming to know God

Opening Prayer: St. Hilary, from De Trinitate, Book I

Homework: Read Gen. 1-3

### **WHY GOD CREATED MAN: TO KNOW AND LOVE GOD**

Beginning of the Road to Emmaus:

I- The Road to Emmaus

II- Revelation of Christ at Emmaus (the Eucharist)

III- Return to Jerusalem (to proclaim the Good news)

CCC 1: God created man to share in His blessed life.

CCC 3: The faithful are urged to proclaim the Good News

CCC 4: The purpose for Catechesis is to help men believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

Everything is about and for the purpose of coming to know and love God

CCC 14: God addresses and gives Himself to man. Therefore, by reason alone, we can know and be certain that man has a capacity to know God and receive this Revelation.

God would not present a gift to man knowing that man was unable to receive the gift.

CCC 25: The purpose is to learn how to love and begin the road to perfection

### **MAN AND WOMAN'S CAPACITY FOR GOD: OUR RESPONSE TO OUR CREATOR**

CCC 26: I/We believe

What we believe is our response to God. In other words, the content of our faith is our response to God. One cannot act but according to how one believes.

CCC 27: The desire for God

Man is born having forgotten God completely and does not even possess the ability to see or hear Him. It can recognize that He is present, or the sound of His calling, like one can hear that there is a sound, but cannot make out what that sound is. Or the eyes can see that something is there, but cannot recognize any details. The body has lost all knowledge of Him and on its own, it cannot come to know Him. This is the consequence of Original Sin and the Fall of Man. It is a Fall from His presence. But even in this lowly state, the soul recognizes that something is absent. It knows that it has fallen and senses the absence of the Creator. Even if it does not recognize what is missing, it is filled with yearning and desire for God. This has been repeated in the spiritual life and journey of countless saints and represented in their writings. Such as St. Augustine who is famous for the line "My heart is restless until it rests in you." and the works of St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Jesus. The soul is on a constant search for happiness, and only its Creator can satisfy this longing. As a consequence, we can know that we can know God.

In other words, and in a way that is especially meaningful and necessary in our world today that thrives on relativism and uncertainty, we have a definite capacity to know the Truth of God.

CCC 35: “Man’s faculties make him capable of coming to a knowledge of the existence of a personal God. But for man to be able to enter into a real intimacy with him, God willed both to reveal himself to man and to give him the grace of being able to welcome this revelation in faith.”

CCC 36-37: We can come to know God, but our knowledge of Him is hampered by imperfections in our humanity and conditions in this world that both cloud our ability to sense God and can alter what we perceive of Him. The noise of the world can drown out what we may otherwise hear, and our fundamental separation hinders our ability to sense the spiritual world. Our desires can also distort what we know about God, substituting it with what one wishes God was like.

CCC 38: Therefore, man needs the revelation of God and the Church.

If we were perfectly capable, had a perfect intellect and ability of understanding the world, were free of any desire that influenced our perception of the truth, had perfect memories and flawless reason in analyzing revealed truths, then every person could come to know God perfectly on his or her own. (this is a principle fault of Luther’s Reform movement). But we know that this is not the case and there have been very few who have been able to come to Know God on their own.

CCC 40: Our knowledge is limited and imperfect

This is the reason for and the meaning of *Mystery*, that there are aspects of God’s being and salvation history, which is the work of His attempts to bring man, and in truth, all of creation, back into full and perfect union with Him, which our human capacity cannot fully comprehend or explain in our available language. Although science and theology are complementary in many ways, it is on this point that the two are at odds with one another, as one of the foundational presumptions of modern science is the belief that all things can be known and explained. But when it comes to God, we recognize a difference between the entirety of truth and that which is necessary or helpful for salvation, and our fundamental limitation regarding what can be known. Because God is infinite there are elements and aspects of His being which exceed our ability to comprehend. This in no way limits the significance and meaning of what we do know about Him, nor does a lack of understanding nullify what we know to be true. The fact that we cannot fully understand the nature of the Holy Trinity does not undermine the truth of the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

CCC 41: We come to know God through His creation

This is accomplished primarily in two ways: through *reason* and *revelation*.

*Reason:* Through our observations of creation and natural consequences of what we observe. e.g. We can come to know of God’s existence through reason alone.

*Revelation:* There are aspects of God’s personhood that cannot be attained through observation of creation alone, but His desire to be known, exceeds what He has created.