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# THE HUMAN LONGING FOR GOD

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*“As the deer longs for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God.” (Psalm 42:2, NABRE)*

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## **The Human Longing for God**

The desire for God is a natural part of being human. We are created by God and for God, and only in Him will we find the ultimate truth, happiness, and love that we constantly search for. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 27) says: *“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.”*

Your faith journey, especially now as part of RCIA, is a journey toward God through Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Together, we seek truth, love, and happiness in the context of the Christian community.

## **Man's Search for God**

Throughout history, people have expressed their search for God in many ways: through prayer, sacrifices, rituals, and meditation. Though these expressions can sometimes be unclear or imperfect, they are so common that we can call humanity inherently religious. We are all searching for something beyond ourselves because our minds are made for truth, and our hearts are made for love.

Our journey is toward the Father through the Son, guided by the Holy Spirit. St. Augustine put it beautifully when he said, *“You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.”*

## **The Human Longing for God**

In **Acts 17:26-28**, St. Paul reminds us that God created all nations and peoples so that they might seek Him, even if they do so imperfectly: *“In Him we live and move and have our being... for we too are His offspring.”* This search for God is driven by a deep spiritual hunger that only He can satisfy.

We all desire happiness, love, peace, and fulfillment. These longings are ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who reveals God the Father to us and sends the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts. Although we can experience a taste of divine happiness and peace on earth, its fullness will only be realized in heaven.

## **How God Draws Us to Himself**

God constantly shows us His desire for our happiness in three main ways:

1. **Creation** – God created the world good and made it a place where we can live and flourish. Through nature, we can see signs of His love and care for us.
2. **Providence** – God continues to guide and provide for us in every aspect of our lives. We encounter God not only in beautiful experiences of creation, like a sunset or the majesty of the mountains, but also in the needs and hopes of those around us.
3. **Salvation** – The ultimate sign of God’s desire for our happiness is the saving work of His Son, Jesus Christ. In **John 3:16**, we hear: *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life.”*

## **Seeking Happiness in God**

Many people try to find happiness in things like wealth, power, or pleasure. However, Jesus reminds us to “*seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness*” (**Matthew 6:33**). God promises to provide for all our needs if we put Him first, allowing us to live in peace and happiness, no matter what our circumstances.

### **How God Plants the Desire for Himself in Our Hearts**

God places certain desires in our hearts to draw us closer to Him:

- **Love of truth** – We have a deep hunger for truth, even when we struggle to fully understand it.
- **Attraction to goodness** – Our longing for moral goodness leads us to seek God, the source of all goodness.
- **Appreciation of beauty** – We are drawn to the beauty of creation and the beauty of God’s love.
- **Human affection** – In loving others, we experience a glimpse of God’s love for us. When we show kindness, we are showing love to Christ Himself (**Matthew 25:40**).
- **Desire for a relationship with Jesus** – Our desire for a personal relationship with Jesus brings us closer to God, as Jesus said, “*If you know me, then you will also know my Father*” (**John 14:7**).

### **God's Gift of Grace**

God calls us to a life of grace, which transforms us into His adopted children and makes us sharers in His divine nature. Through grace, God prepares and invites us to respond freely to His love. We cannot achieve this on our own; we need God’s grace, which is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

**1 Corinthians 2:9** tells us: “*What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart – what God has prepared for those who love Him.*”

God loves each one of us personally. He calls us by name and sees us as precious in His eyes (**Isaiah 43:1, 4**). We are loved and accepted by God, who desires to transform us into His beloved children through the grace of Jesus Christ.

### **Jesus as Our Savior and Friend**

God’s greatest proof of His love is sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to live among us, share our human experiences, and ultimately die for our sins. **John 15:13** tells us: “*No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.*”

Jesus is fully human and fully divine, and by following His example, we can live in a way that is pleasing to God. Jesus is “*the way, and the truth, and the life*” (**John 14:6**), and He invites us to follow Him by keeping His commandments and loving one another as He loves us.