

# Adult Catechism @ Year 1 Prayer DESIRE for GOD

## Immaculate Conception

Catechism Paragraphs 26-49; 2558-2567

Aquinas College Online Catechist Formation Program Part 1 22:51 <https://vimeo.com/24391377>  
VIDEO links Part 2 17:09 <https://vimeo.com/24393807>

*Any Seeds Planted? Any Memories Provoked? Any Questions Raised? Any Actions Prompted?*

27 The desire for God is written in the human heart, because the human is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw the human to Godself. *Human dignity rests above all on the fact that we are called to communion with God.* Gaudium et spes

28 Forms of religious expression (prayers, sacrifices, rituals, meditations, etc. ) despite the ambiguities they often bring with them, are so universal that one may well call the human a religious being. See Acts 17:26-28 \_\_\_\_\_

30 *...for you have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.* St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 1:1 \_\_\_\_\_

34 The world, and the human, attest that they contain within themselves neither their first principle nor their final end, but rather that they participate in **Being Itself**, which alone is without origin or end. Thus in different ways, the human can come to know that there exists a reality which is the first cause and final end of all things, a reality *that everyone calls 'God.'* St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologia* \_\_\_\_\_

35 Human faculties make the human capable of coming to a knowledge of the existence of a **personal** God. But for the human to be able to enter into real **intimacy** with God, God willed both to reveal Godself to humanity and to give the grace of being able to welcome this revelation in faith. \_\_\_\_\_

41 All creatures bear a certain resemblance to God, most especially human beings, created in the image and likeness of God. \_\_\_\_\_

42 God transcends all creatures. We must therefore continually purify our language of everything in it that is limited, image-bound or imperfect, if we are not to confuse our image of God – *the inexpressible, the incomprehensible, the invisible, the ungraspable* – with our human representations. *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, Anaphora  
Our human words always fall short of the mystery of God. \_\_\_\_\_

43 *Between Creator and creature no similitude can be expressed without implying an even greater dissimilitude.* 4<sup>th</sup> Lateran Council, DS 806  
*Concerning God, we cannot grasp what God is, but only what God is not, and how other beings stand in relation to God.* St. Thomas Aquinas \_\_\_\_\_

2558 **"Great is the mystery of the faith!"**

The Church professes this mystery in the Apostles' Creed and celebrates it in the sacramental liturgy, that the life of the faithful may be conformed to Christ in the Holy Spirit to the glory of God the Father. This mystery, then, requires that the faithful believe in it, that they celebrate it, and that they live from it in a **vital and personal relationship with the living and true God**. This relationship is prayer.

*For me, prayer is a surge of the heart;  
it is a simple look turned toward heaven,  
it is a cry of recognition and of love,  
embracing both trial and joy.* St. Therese of Lisieux \_\_\_\_\_

2559 *Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God  
or the requesting of good things from God.* St. John Damascene

But when we pray, do we speak from the height of our pride and will,  
or *out of the depths* of a humble and contrite heart? Psalm 130

One who humbles the self will be exalted; humility is the foundation of prayer.

Only when we humbly acknowledge that *we do not know how to pray as we ought* Romans 8  
are we ready to receive freely the gift of prayer.

*A human is a beggar before God.* St. Augustine \_\_\_\_\_

2560 *If you knew the gift of God!* Jesus to the Woman at the Well, Jn 4:10

The wonder of prayer is revealed beside the well where we come seeking water:  
there, Christ comes to meet every human being.

It is he who first seeks us and asks us for a drink.

Jesus thirsts; his asking arises from the depths of God's desire for us.

Whether we realize it or not, prayer is the encounter of God's thirst with ours.

God thirsts that we may thirst for God. Cf. St. Augustine \_\_\_\_\_

2561 *You would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.* Jesus at the Well, Jn 4:10

Paradoxically our prayer of petition is a response to the plea of the living God:

***They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters,***

***and hewn out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water!*** Jeremiah 2:13

Prayer is the response of faith to the free promise of salvation

and also a response of love to the thirst of the only Son of God. \_\_\_\_\_

2562 Where does prayer come from?

Whether prayer is expressed in words or gestures, it is the whole human who prays.

But in naming the source of prayer, Scripture speaks sometimes of the soul or the spirit,  
but most often of **the heart** (more than a thousand times).

According to Scripture, it is **the heart** that prays.

If our **heart** is far from God, the words of prayer are in vain. \_\_\_\_\_

2563 **The heart** is the dwelling-place where I am, where I live;

according to the Semitic or Biblical expression, **the heart** is the place "*to which I withdraw*." \_\_\_\_\_

**The heart** is our hidden center, beyond the grasp of our reason and of others;  
only the Spirit of God can fathom **the human heart** and know it fully.

**The heart** is the place of decision, deeper than our psychic drives.

It is **the place of truth**, where we choose life or death.

It is **the place of encounter**, because as image of God we live in relation:

it is **the place of covenant**. \_\_\_\_\_

2564 Christian prayer is a covenant relationship between God and the human in Christ.

It is the action of God and of man, springing forth from both the Holy Spirit and ourselves,

wholly directed to the Father, in union with the human will of the Son of God made human. \_\_\_\_\_

2565 In the New Covenant, prayer is the **living relationship** of the children of God

**with** their Father who is good beyond measure,

**with** his Son Jesus Christ

and **with** the Holy Spirit.

The grace of the Kingdom is

*the union of the entire holy and royal Trinity...with the whole human spirit.* St. Gregory of Nazianzus

Thus, the life of prayer is

the habit of being in the presence of the thrice-holy God and **in communion** with God.

This **communion** of life is always possible

because, through Baptism, we have already been united with Christ.

Prayer is Christian

insofar as it is **communion** with Christ and extends throughout the Church, which is his Body.

Its dimensions are those of Christ's love. \_\_\_\_\_

2566 Every human is in search of God.

In the act of creation, God calls every being from nothingness into existence.

*Crowned with glory and honor*, a human is, after the angels,

capable of acknowledging *how majestic is the name of the Lord in all the earth.* Psalm 8

Even after losing through our sin our **likeness** to God, a human remains an **image** of his or her Creator,  
and retains the desire for the one who calls us into existence.

All religions bear witness to the essential human search for God. \_\_\_\_\_

2567 God calls us first.

A human may forget his or her Creator or hide far from God's face;

I may run after idols or accuse the deity of having abandoned me;

yet the living and true God tirelessly calls each person to that mysterious encounter known as prayer.

In prayer, the faithful God's initiative of love always comes first;

our own first step is always a response.

As God gradually reveals God's own self and reveals the human to himself or herself,

prayer appears as a reciprocal call, **a covenant drama**.

Through words and actions, this drama engages **the heart**.

It unfolds throughout the whole history of salvation. \_\_\_\_\_

