

USCCA Chapter Notes

USCCA Chapter: 1 – My Soul Longs for You, O God

CCC Paragraph Reference: CCC [#27-43](#) – Man’s Capacity for God

Doctrinal Premise. *What is the underlying truth behind the doctrine of this chapter? Connecting it to Christ, summarize the chapter in 1-2 sentences.*

We are made by God for God. All humans have the desire for God. Only in God do we find our true meaning and purpose.

Three questions adults might have about this topic. *What life-issues do I need to connect with in the people at my session?*

1. What evidence and signs in my life do I have to show that God pursues me?
2. How is my desire for God manifested in my life? What do I do in my life to fulfill this desire for God?
3. How do I recognize this desire for God in people around me, especially when there is so much evil in the world?

Three Points from the Story of Faith/Testimony. *How is the underlying truth taught in this chapter brought to life?*

Person of Faith: [Elizabeth Ann Seton](#)

1. Born Episcopalian, St. Elizabeth Ann’s husband died leaving her with five children. With the witness and support of the Fillichi family of Livorno, Italy, she was received into full communion with the Catholic Church on March 4, 1805.
2. She began to see the needs of people around her, so she founded schools for the poor in Baltimore. She founded a religious order of women to serve orphans in Philadelphia and New York.
3. She is the first native-born North American Saint, canonized in 1975 by Pope Paul VI. Her feast day is January 4.

Essential Points from the Teaching Section. Add in sub-points as needed. *What points need to be made explicit and cannot be left to chance?*

1. Each person is created with a desire for God.
 - a. This desire for God is reflected in the questions people have about their existence and purpose in life, especially questions of longing.
 - b. Because of His love for us, God pursues us first, before we respond to Him.

- c. God created us so that we would find our meaning and purpose in Him.
2. God can be known with certainty from His works in creation and from the spiritual nature of the human person. God has given us signs and evidence of His existence.
 - a. Through creation and the fact that the world exists, we are given evidence of God's existence. Creation demands a Creator!
 - b. Every human person seeks to know the truth and to experience goodness, longing for absolute happiness. These longings are signs of God's presence. Only in God can these desires be fulfilled.
 - c. Through human reason alone we can know God exists.
 - d. We can speak of God, even though our language about Him is imperfect and limited.
 3. Many have not responded to God because of:
 - a. The large amount of suffering and pain in the world. This causes people to rebel against the idea of God.
 - b. Ignorance of God and His plan of salvation. Many have not been told about God, His love and His plan of salvation.
 - c. The scandalous behavior of some believers.
 - d. Not wishing to follow Him.
 - e. Busyness of life.
 4. The evidence for God, while securing our faith in God in reality, does not give us the knowledge we need to have a relationship with God.
 - a. To have a relationship with God, we need His help. We need God to reveal Himself to us. This will lead us to the next session on Divine Revelation.
 - b. People continue to look to fulfill their "spiritual hungers" in life, and the Church offers answers to those who seek.

Scriptural Foundation. List the two to three primary Scripture passages that support the teaching. *How is this teaching rooted in the saving events of Scripture?*

1. Acts 17:26-28.

Acts 17:26-28. ²⁶ He made from one the whole human race to dwell on the entire surface of the earth, and he fixed the ordered seasons and the boundaries of their

regions,²⁷ so that people might seek God, even perhaps grope for him and find him, though indeed he is not far from any one of us.²⁸ For 'In him we live and move and have our being,' as even some of your poets have said, 'For we too are his offspring.'

2. Psalm 19:2.

Psalm 19:2. The heavens declare the glory of God; the sky proclaims its builder's craft.

3. Romans 1:20.

Romans 1:20. 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.

4. Psalm 139:13-16.

Psalm 139:13-16. ¹³ You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I praise you, so wonderfully you made me; wonderful are your works! My very self you knew; ¹⁵ my bones were not hidden from you, When I was being made in secret, fashioned as in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes foresaw my actions; in your book all are written down; my days were shaped, before one came to be.

Summary of the Sidebar material.

1. People are religious by their very nature. They express their belief in God through their religious beliefs and behaviors, including prayers, sacrifices, rituals, meditations and so forth.
2. There are many proofs in the world of God's existence. By 'proofs', we mean that there is evidence in the physical world and in the human person that there is a Creator behind the visible creation. This evidence can be put together to form a convincing argument.
3. We can know God with certainty through His works in creation by the help of human reason.

Relationship to Culture. *What does the USCCA both challenge and affirm in our culture?*

- **Affirmations of US Culture:**

- The US culture has given rise to a generation of seekers. People want to know the purpose for their existences and are willing to find it. Much in our cultures promotes and supports belief in God.
- Many find the move to secularism unfulfilling. Catholicism continues to attract thousands of new members, especially among young people.

- **Challenges to US Culture:**

Many aspects of our culture discourage and corrode faith in God. Secularism, the philosophy that promotes the human being, rather than God, as the center of reality, leads us to a life of materialism and excessive self-love (narcissism).

Additional Questions for Discussion. *Given what the USCCA has in its discussion questions, are there other questions to add to further the discussion?*

1. What signs and evidence do you have in your life of God's existence and His love for you?
2. How would you respond to a person who said the 'evidence' for God, the signs He has left of His existence in creation, really do not point to a Supreme Being?
3. What do you see as obstacles to your own search for God? How can these obstacles be overcome?

Action/Ritual to add with the meditation/prayer. *How can you help the participant respond to Christ's invitation given in this chapter?*

Prayerfully read the meditation and prayer on pages 8 and 9 of the USCCA. As they are read, display an icon of Christ, either physically or on a slide or PowerPoint, as a focal point. When done with the meditation, invite the participants to think of one way that God has given evidence of Himself in their lives. After a few moments of silence, have each person silently thank God for His presences in their lives.