

Why We Pray: Man's Desire, God's Initiative

- Why this course?
  - importance of prayer viz. *raison d'être* of Church
    - i.e. the *Great Commission*
  - most not satisfied with their prayer
    - feel not doing it right or as they ought
  - want to confirm the first [imp of prayer]
  - and mitigate the second [not doing it right]
- Structure of Course / Sessions
  - Schedule of sessions follows particular pedagogy / flow
    - 1/ Why we pray                      Sept
    - 2/ To Whom do we pray          Oct
    - 3/ How do we pray                Nov
    - No session in                        Dec
    - 4/ Who prays with us            Jan
    - 5/ Who joins us in prayer      Feb
    - No session in                        Mar
    - 6/ Traditions of Prayer         Apr
    - 7/ Prayer changes us            May
  - Each session will have 'homework' to do
    - Each session begins with review of homework / sharing at table

PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS / FRAMEWORK

- Prayer not the goal of Christian life (!)
  - Union with God is (Eph 1:10)
- Prayer = privileged place of expressing & deepening union
- However → must have some unique exclusive time for prayer
  - Else nothing is prayer

## CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

### How we are who we are

- "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 27
- "This search for God demands of every man effort of intellect, a sound will, an 'upright heart', as well as the witness of others who teach him to seek God." -CCC 30
- "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 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 35

### God's self-revelation; follow salvation history from Genesis to Jesus

- "Through an utterly free decision, God has revealed Himself and given Himself to man. ... God has fully revealed this plan by sending us His beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit." -CCC 50
- "God, Who 'dwells in unapproachable light,' wants to communicate His own divine life to the men He freely created, in order to adopt them as His sons in His only-begotten Son. 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." -CCC 52
- Prayer → relational
  - Thus intensely personal and communitarian
    - That is, familial and familiar

## HOMEWORK

How do I pray?