

Volunteer Formation Series SAINT ANTHONY



JUNE 1 | GOD THE FATHER & GOD THE SON How do we know God?

- Faith, Reason, & Revelation
 - Reason = rationality based on facts
 - Faith = beliefs inspired by revelation
 - Revelation = removing the veil from our eyes to expose a truth that we have not yet seen
- By the use of our natural reason, we can come to know that God exists through the existence of His creation [CCC 36]
 - Without this capacity, man would not be able to welcome God's revelation.
 - Wisdom 13:1-9 | The Craftsman
 - Foolish by nature were all who were in ignorance of God, and who from the good things seen did not succeed in knowing the one who is, and from studying the works did not discern the artisan; Instead either fire, or wind, or the swift air, or the circuit of the stars, or the mighty water, or the luminaries of heaven, the governors of the world, they considered gods. Now if out of joy in their beauty they thought them gods, let them know how far more excellent is the Lord than these; for the original source of beauty **fashioned them.** Or if they were struck by their might and energy let them realize from these things how much more powerful is the one who made them. For from the greatness and the beauty of created things their original author, by analogy, is seen. But yet, for these the blame is less; For they have gone astray perhaps, though they seek God and wish to find him. For they search busily among his works, but are distracted by what they see, because the things seen are fair. But again, not even these are pardonable. For they so far succeeded in knowledge that they could speculate about the world, how did they not more quickly find its Lord?
 - The beauty of the ordered world points back t
 - Something of the creator is left in the creation
- There are certain "proofs" for God's existence within natu [CCC 31-34]
 - Aguinas 5 Proofs:
 - Motion
 - Efficient Cause
 - **Necessary Being**
 - Gradation of Goodness
 - Intelligent Design
- But to be able to enter into real "intimacy" with Him (personal relationship and deeper knowledge of Him unavailable to reason) God chose to directly reveal Himself [CCC 35 & 50]
- So God is first known as Creator and sustainer through the natural world, but He begins to directly reveal Himsel

 in the Old Testament through Covenants and Prophets as Father [CCC 54-64] Exodus 3:13-15 (YHWH) - the proper personal name of the God of Israel Moses said to God, "If I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what do I tell them?" God replied to Moses: I am who I am. Then he added: This is what you will tell the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you. God spoke further to Moses: This is what you will say to the Israelites: The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever; this is my title for all generations. 	NOTES
Who is God the Father? Who is he not?	
• Before we make our own this first exclamation of the Lord's	
Prayer, we must humbly cleanse our hearts of certain false	
images drawn "from this world." Humility makes us recog-	
nize that "no one knows the Son except the Father, and no	
one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom	
the Son chooses to reveal him," that is, "to little children."	
The purification of our hearts has to do with paternal or	
maternal images, stemming from our personal and cultural	
history, and influencing our relationship with God. God	
our Father transcends the categories of the created world. To impose our own ideas in this area "upon him" would	
be to fabricate idols to adore or pull down. To pray to the	
Father is to enter into his mystery as he is and as the Son	
has revealed him to us. The expression God the Father	
had never been revealed to anyone. When Moses him-	
self asked God who he was, he heard another name. The	
Father's name has been revealed to us in the Son, for the	
name "Son" implies the new name "Father." [CCC 2779]	
• The Father is beyond our understanding, and yet is also a	
father to us as intimately as a biological father is meant to	
 So how are we meant to know him if we can't dream up 	
• So how are we meant to know him if we can't dream up something understandable in our heads? The Father is	
made known to us through Jesus Christ	
 Jesus is the Word of God - the fullness of the Father's 	
communication to humanity	
• Hebrews 1:1-2	
• In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ances-	
tors through the prophets; in these last days, he spoke to us through a son, whom he made heir of all things and through whom he created	
the universe.	
with with consensation of the consensation of	
Who is Jesus? Who is he not? (John 1 [Incarnation of God the	
Father's communication], Transfiguration, Revelation)	
• God the Son, Triptic	
• Colossians 1:12-20	
• He is the image of the invisible God , the firstborn of all creation. For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible	

and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or **NOTES** powers; all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he himself might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile all things for him, making peace by the blood of his cross [through him], whether those on earth or those in heaven. Basic Christology Jesus Christ is the one mediator between God and man by fully uniting humanity and divinity within His one Person Why we say: "true God and true man" Christology (understanding Who Christ is) is the most drastic example of the necessary connection between doctrine and prayer. • If He is God, we must worship Him; if He isn't we must not. • Even the understanding of salvation as being "transformed into Christ" The earliest Christian theology was an attempt to clarify our understanding of Christ • Because the earliest heresies were Christological in nature either denying He actually pre-existed as God (i.e. Arianism) or denied He took on real human flesh (i.e. Gnosticism) The earliest Church Councils clarified a few essential points on this teaching • CCC 250 Particularly, the Council of Nicea (Nicean Creed) clarified three main points: 1.) only-begotten Son of God born of the Father before all ages John 1:18 2.) begotten, not made (not a creature because He is not created) 3.) consubstantial with the Father By teaching that Christ is true God and true man, the Church affirms that He both: 1.) eternally pre-existed His coming to earth 2.) actually took on a human nature (body and soul) as well as all the conditions of humanity (besides sin) while remaining God. • Definition of the Incarnation **Challenge:** In personal prayer, take some time with God the Father and with God the Son. In the liturgy, listen for the prayers which we make through the Son to the Father.

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