



LESSON ONE

What Do You Seek?

Opening Prayer

*God, I come before you, searching.
For what, I do not yet know.
Is it truth? Is it belonging? Is it love?
I ask you to be with me as I begin this journey of faith.*

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart!
Try me and know my thoughts” (Psalm 139:23).*

Amen.

Lesson Objectives:

- ❖ Recognize the universal human longing for truth, meaning, and belonging as a sign of God's presence, drawing us toward him.
- ❖ Understand that only God can satisfy the longing of the human heart and fulfill the deepest thirst within us. Make it personal, connecting personal experiences with this search for truth.

BURNING QUESTIONS

- ❖ What is this thirst that nothing in the world can satisfy?
Something has led you here. What has brought you to OCIA?
- ❖ What gives your life meaning and purpose?
Where do you look for meaning? Has it been enough?

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

Feast Day: August 9

October 12, 1891 – August 9, 1942 · Breslau, Germany · Patron of Europe, Converts to Christianity

Raised Jewish, Edith Stein drifted into atheism after her father's death, unable to reconcile others' professed faith with their lives. Her search for truth led her to philosophy and eventually to Christian writings, including the autobiography of St. Teresa of Ávila. In 1922 she was baptized Catholic. She entered the Carmelites, taking the name Teresa Benedicta of the Cross. In 1942 she died at Auschwitz. She was canonized in 1998.



“God is truth. All who seek truth seek God, whether this is clear to them or not.”

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross

We Are All Seekers

The Universal Search

We write poetry, debate philosophy, build altars, climb mountains, and dive to the ocean's floor; not merely to conquer but to understand. We ask: Who made this world? What does it mean? Why am I here? These questions are not signs of weakness. They are divine fingerprints on the human heart.

Jesus' First Question

The first recorded words of Jesus in the Gospel of John are a question: "What do you seek?" (John 1:38). He still asks it of us today, not because he doesn't know, but because he wants us to know. He wants us to name our hungers and desires so he can meet us in them.

"The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God."

Catechism of the Catholic Church 27

Created with a Purpose

Made in God's Image

When God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Genesis 1:26), he made a declaration: you were created with loving intention, with a purpose unique to you. Our longing for more is not a design flaw. It is evidence that we were made for something—and someone—greater than this world alone can provide.

The Restless Heart

St. Augustine knew this from his own life of searching. He pursued pleasure, philosophy, and power before arriving at the truth he had been circling all along. His hard-won words have resonated for sixteen centuries: “You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you.” That restlessness is not a flaw. It is a guide, a holy invitation.

“I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

John 10:10

Come and See

The Invitation of Faith

When those first disciples asked Jesus where he was staying, he didn't explain himself. He simply said: "Come and see" (John 1:39). That is still his invitation. Not "Figure everything out first," just "Come and see." You are not alone on this journey. The Church—the Body of Christ—is here to walk with you toward the encounter your heart was made for.

Why the Catholic Church?

Because the One you are searching for is already searching for you. This is the Church he founded, and he longs to meet you here. Every question is welcome, every doubt can be brought, and the truth, when we find it, will set us free (see John 8:32).

"Come and see."

John 1:39





INVITED

Discussion Questions

- ❖ How is the desire for truth in the human heart a sign that we are created by God?
- ❖ What would happen if there were no objective truth? What if everything were just a matter of opinion?
- ❖ Can you identify obstacles to objective truth in your own life? What about in society?
- ❖ Why do you think it is necessary to know the truth?

Faith and Fun

Which famous twentieth-century author and former atheist once said: “If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world”?

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b. C.S. Lewis

c. J.R.R. Tolkien

d. Thomas Merton

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C.S. Lewis was an English scholar and writer who moved from atheism to Christian faith. His words echo the *Catechism*: “The desire for God is written in the human heart” (CCC 27). Lewis’ insight mirrors St. Augustine’s: our deep, unshakable longing for joy, beauty, and truth is not a flaw—it points to the God who placed the longing within us to draw us back to himself.

Silence

An Ancient Spiritual Discipline

For many of us, silence can feel awkward or uncomfortable. We have countless ways to fill it and avoid being alone with our thoughts. Yet across every spiritual tradition, silence is where the deepest encounters with God occur. It is not emptiness; it is an opening.

Silence in the Catholic Tradition

Catholic liturgy is shaped by silence: before Mass, before the homily, after Communion. The Church invites us to stop filling every moment with noise so that we can hear the voice that is always speaking. As we grow more comfortable with silence, we discover there what we have always longed for.



Living It Out:

Spend five minutes in silence this week. No phone, no music. Just sit and pay attention to the beauty. Ask God to reveal himself in what you see, and give him thanks for it.

Closing Prayer

“You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you.”

St. Augustine, *Confessions*

Announcements / Reminders — add notes here