

Leader's Guide for
THE VISION OF THE GOSPELS
The Gospel of Matthew

Leader: Jesus, send us your Holy Spirit that we may speak from the depths of our hearts. Open our minds to ideas new and old, that we may grow closer to you. Amen.

- What is your favorite story in Matthew?
- How would you describe the “new law” of Christianity?
- Why are the Beatitudes so central to Christian life? Does Himes’s description of them as “an experiment in living” make sense to you? What would be another way of interpreting them?
- Do you know anyone who has “experimented” with living the Beatitudes? What are they like? Have you ever done this experiment?
- Matthew is clear about the Jewish roots of Christianity. Are these roots important to you?
- Matthew demands that the Church be an “inclusive community.” Why is it difficult for the Church to be inclusive? How could your own Church be more inclusive?
- What do you think about the Last Judgment story? Did you gain any new insights into this from this video?

Closing Prayer: Read Matthew 28:16-20 aloud. Allow a few minutes of silent reflection. Then read it again.

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For use with: *The Vision of the Gospels: The Gospel of Matthew* on VHS (V5010) and DVD (D5010)

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800-488-0488
www.AmericanCatholic.org

Leader's Guide for
THE VISION OF THE GOSPELS
The Gospel of Mark

Leader: Jesus, thank you for the luxury of this time together. We are aware of the many needs around us, and we are also aware of the need to reflect on your word. Help us to focus and appreciate the wisdom which comes from each person here. Amen.

- Why does Michael Himes say this is the best Gospel for “middle age”? If you are “middle age,” does that seem true in your life?
- “Immediately” is a key word in Mark’s Gospel. Have you ever felt that you needed to make a decision for or against God in your life “right away”?
- John the Baptist is a key figure in this Gospel. What is your opinion about him? Is he someone you reflect upon in prayer? Imagine a scene in which the Baptist is introduced to your friends, or your business acquaintances. What happens at such a meeting?
- Fighting evil is a key dimension of this Gospel. Have you ever felt you were in a battle against evil?
- The Transfiguration is in the middle of this Gospel. Have you ever had a “mountain” experience of God? What happened when you came down from the mountain?
- The centurion recognizes Jesus as the Son of God as he hangs on the cross. When have you recognized Jesus as the Son of God?

Closing Prayer: Read Mark 1:1-8 aloud. Allow a few minutes for silent reflection. Then read the passage again.

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Leader's Guide for
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The Gospel of Luke

Leader: Jesus, you are the lord of our lives. Open our hearts now to listen to your wisdom as it comes through the members of this community. Help us to listen with compassion. Help us to speak with confidence in you. Amen.

- Which Beatitudes mean more to you—those of Luke or those of Matthew?
- “Outcasts” are important in Luke’s Gospel. Who are the outcasts in your community?
- In Luke, women are the first to proclaim the Good News. Does that surprise you?
- What is your favorite story in the Gospel of Luke?
- It is when Jesus encounters the grieving widow of Nain that Luke calls Jesus “Lord” for the first time. Was there an event in your life when you truly recognized Jesus as “Lord” for the first time?
- Luke is the Gospel of “strong compassion.” In your life, who has provided “strong compassion”? Who needs strong compassion from you?
- If we took Luke’s call to help the poor seriously, what would that mean politically and socially?
- Finally, Luke is characterized by joy. Name a time when Christianity has been a source of joy in your life.

Closing Prayer: Read Luke 7:11-17 aloud. Allow a few minutes of silent reflection. Then read the passage again.

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Leader's Guide for
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The Gospel of John

Leader: Jesus, you offer us nothing less than eternal life. Help us to keep that perspective as we listen to one another, as we search for the truth. Jesus, you are the way and the truth and the life. We praise you and thank you. Amen.

- How do you feel about the “cosmic vision” of John ? Does eternity comfort or scare you?
- Miracles are only important because they are signs of God’s love. What signs of God’s love are in your life?
- Why does Jesus express more disapproval of Peter than he does of Judas?
- How does Jesus respond to death in the Lazarus story? What is your response to death?
- What do you think of Gerard Manley Hopkins’s definition of the “paraclete”? Have you ever experienced God “urging you on”?
- Jesus calls us to serve as he serves! What are you called to do in life which parallels the “washing of the feet”?
- Have you ever turned away from God’s love?
- How does John’s Gospel differ from the Synoptic Gospels? Which Gospel do you prefer? How can you hold the Synoptic Gospels and John together?

Closing Prayer: Read John 20: 30-31 aloud. Allow a few minutes for silent reflection. Then read the passage again.

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