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## LOOKING AHEAD

In this chapter the Holy Spirit invites you to ►

**EXPLORE** the amazing story of Saint Luke.

**DISCOVER** the purpose of the Gospel writings.

**DECIDE** how you will be a modern-day evangelist.

CHAPTER

2

# Proclaim Boldly

- Who is someone you know who has had a significant impact on your life?

Everyone knows people who have had a significant impact on their lives. Sometimes one or more of these people influence us to the point that we decide to make changes in our lives. When someone is truly significant to us, we naturally tend to share news or views about that person with others.

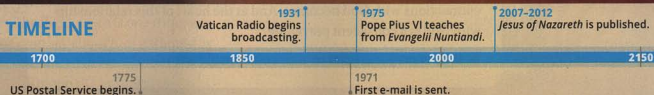
The writers of the Gospels share with us the significance of the Risen Jesus for their lives and the lives of all people.

*[M]ake known with boldness the mystery of the gospel.*

EPHESIANS 6:19

- Why do you think the Gospel is to be proclaimed with boldness?

## TIMELINE





# The Educated EVANGELIST

**J**ust as you have your own personal style of writing, each of the four evangelists proclaimed the Good News about Jesus Christ in their own unique ways.

Luke tells the amazing story of Jesus with careful attention to history so we can fall in love with who God is:

*I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus.*

LUKE 1:3

In addition to his Gospel account, Luke also tells us the story of the early Church in the book, Acts of the Apostles. These two works are often read like a two-volume work. In this way, we can read from Luke's perspective on how the Holy Spirit has been at work in the world. We read how the Holy Spirit enliven the Apostles to go out and boldly proclaim the Gospel.

Luke's unique writing style helps us with our own perspectives. The more we see God working in our own lives, the deeper our connections with God becomes. And at the heart of this relationship with God is a consistent prayer life.

► Why is prayer crucial to your relationship with God?



Luke gives us a clear portrait of Jesus as a person of prayer. For example during his baptism, Jesus was praying and the heavens opened (see Luke 3:21). After healing a leper, Jesus retreated to pray (see Luke 5:16). Prior to choosing the Twelve Apostles, Jesus went to a mountain to pray (see Luke 6:12). And Luke is the only gospel where it is clear that Jesus is praying to the Father (see Luke 23:34, 46).

## The Beloved Physician

Much of what we know about Luke comes indirectly from his Gospel writing and from Saint Paul. In the Letter to the Colossians, Paul described Luke as “the beloved physician” (see Colossians 4:14). And in two other letters, Paul referred to Luke as a co-worker during his missionary journeys (see 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 1:24). These verses serve as our basis for the Church’s tradition that acknowledges Luke as a doctor and a friend of Paul.

Some scholars think that the style and detailed way in which Luke wrote is consistent with a person who would be highly educated, like a doctor. For example, Luke provides us a vivid description of Jesus' agony just before he is arrested (read Luke 22:39-46).

► What detail in Luke 22:39-46 seems to give evidence of Luke being a doctor?

Whoever Luke was and wherever he lived, there is one thing we can say about him without any doubt. He realized that God works through the events of our lives.

Luke devoted his life to following Jesus and was a person of prayer.

Luke provides us with detailed lives. Luke devoted his life to following Jesus and was a person of prayer.

Luke provides us with detailed direction on how we too can become followers of Jesus. He encourages us to fall in love with Jesus by inviting us to become a member of the Church and to rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us in our faith journeys.

Disciple  
**POWER**

## PRAYERFULNESS

The person of prayer recognizes that God works through the people and events of our lives. Developing a prayerful spirit involves being open to God when we pray so that we might better discern where God is leading us and choose God's will over our own.



# FAITH JOURNAL



In what ways has the Holy Spirit helped you to see Jesus active in your life?

[illegible]

### ► FAITH FOCUS

Why were the accounts of the Gospel written?

### ► FAITH VOCABULARY

disciples  
evangelists

## The Gospels

The word *gospel* means “good news.” The “good news” of the entire New Testament is that Jesus, the Son of God, suffered death and was raised from the dead to save us from sin and death. Jesus, Lord and Messiah, is the Savior of the world.

The first four books of the New Testament are called the Gospels. The Gospel transformed the lives of the first **disciples** of Jesus. They wanted the lives of all people to be transformed as their lives were transformed by faith in Jesus Christ.

## The Evangelists

The writers of the four Gospels are called **evangelists**, a name that means “sharers of the Good News.” Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the evangelists wrote down the Good News of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, for future generations. The four evangelists are:

1. Saint Matthew the Apostle
2. Saint Mark
3. Saint Luke
4. Saint John the Apostle

# The Heart of Scripture

Each evangelist wrote his account for a particular community of believers. While all of the Gospels are based on eyewitness testimonies, the evangelists wrote down these accounts well after the Resurrection of Jesus. In light of this amazing truth, the whole Paschal Mystery became apparent and compelled the evangelists to write down the story of Jesus for other generations.

► What differences are there between the four accounts of the Gospel?

## The Synoptic Gospels

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are the most similar. For the most part, they follow the same sequence of events. For this reason, these three accounts are described as the Synoptic Gospels. The word *synoptic* is based on a Greek word that literally means, “seeing with the same eye.” John, on the other hand, writes his Gospel in a different manner. John’s Gospel is so distinct from the other three that his is sometimes referred to as the Fourth Gospel.

## Invite to Believe

The four Gospels are the center and heart of all Sacred Scripture. The Church places the four Gospels at the beginning of the New Testament. They have that place of importance because of the significance of Jesus, not because they were the first books of the New Testament to be written.

Jesus Christ is the center and heart of God’s plan of creation and salvation. He is the fullness of Divine Revelation. The Old Testament is a preparation of humankind for Jesus Christ.

The New Testament revolves around the person of Jesus Christ and his saving mission for the world. Each of the evangelists writes to invite people to have faith in Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God. They invite the world to believe and hope in Jesus as the most significant person in their lives.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Christian tradition has assigned a symbol for each of the evangelists based upon apocalyptic literature in the Bible. These symbols are based on the four living creatures who surround the throne of God as recorded in the Book of Ezekiel and the Book of Revelation. Matthew is depicted as an angel or man, Mark as a lion, Luke as an ox, and John as an eagle.



*The Blessing Christ*  
by Fernando Gallego  
(1440 -1507)

## Faith CONNECTION

Describe how the Gospel has helped you come to know Jesus more.



## The Gospel Message

The very first words offered by each of the four evangelists give us a clue as to the author's unique perspective on Jesus Christ. For example, Matthew's Gospel opens:

*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. . . . Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Messiah.*

MATTHEW 1:1, 16

Ancient of Days from the frontispiece for William Blake's (1757-1827) book *Europe: A Prophecy*, published in 1794.



Matthew spends sixteen verses giving us a genealogy, or family tree, of Jesus. Jesus is the kingly Messiah, announced and promised to the Jewish people. In Jesus the Old Covenant is fulfilled.

The opening of John's Gospel echoes the first verse of the story of Creation in the Book of Genesis. John begins:

*In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.*

*He was in the beginning with God.*

*All things came to be through him,  
and without him nothing came to be.*

*What came to be through him was life,  
and this life was the light of the human race;  
the light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness has not overcome it.*

JOHN 1:1-5

Detail of the Jesse Tree stained glass in the Royal Door Chartres Cathedral Eure-et-Loir (28) France



## FOLLOW JESUS

Jesus, the eternal Son of God, gives us life. Without him, we would not exist. The work of Jesus as recorded in John's Gospel makes this point clear. John tells us:

*Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of [his] disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may [come to] believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.*

JOHN 20:30-31

- In what ways does Matthew's portrait of Jesus compare to or differ from John's portrait?

### One Faith, One Lord

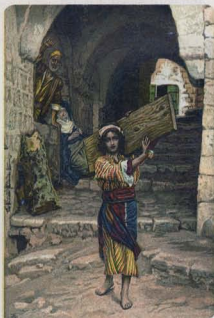
As we read and compare the four Gospel accounts, we can see that they use similar kinds of literary building blocks to share the Good News of God revealed in Jesus. These similarities include:

- General narrative: writings that report "he went here" or "he did this"
- Passion narrative: sections detailing the suffering Death of Jesus
- Resurrection narrative: accounts of the appearances of the Risen Lord to the followers of Jesus
- Short sayings: insightful remarks by Jesus
- Preaching: extended sermons of Jesus
- Questions: Jesus gives his listeners the chance to discover truth themselves
- Parables: stories told by Jesus
- Miracles: miraculous healings by Jesus

Even though each evangelist's account of Jesus is somewhat different in perspective, all four evangelists pass on the faith of the Apostles through the Catholic Church. They do this in similar but different ways. They all present the truth of Jesus Christ so that faith in Jesus Christ and new life in Jesus Christ might blossom and take root in all people.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Gospels profess the faith of the Church in Jesus by the names and titles they used to address him. Among these titles are Christ, Lord, Messiah, Savior, Son of David, and Son of God. Together they profess that Jesus, the Savior of the world, is true God and true man. He is the Second Divine Person of the Holy Trinity who became fully human in all things except sin while keeping his divinity.



*The Youth of Jesus* by James Tissot, illustration for *The Life of Christ*, c. 1894

## Faith CONNECTION

Which of the four Gospel accounts appeals most to you? Share your reasons with a classmate.



## Catholics BELIEVE

The parable of the Good Samaritan is actually a story within a story. The parable follows a brief conversation between Jesus and the lawyer during which the lawyer recites what Christians and Jews understand to be the Great Commandment: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27).

## How Jesus Teaches

The story of the Good Samaritan in Luke's Gospel (10:29-37) gives us examples of a number of the literary building blocks in action. Rather than answering the lawyer's question – "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus allows the man to find the answer himself by telling him a story.

The story Jesus tells is the well-known tale of a traveler who is attacked by robbers and left for dead. The two "respectable" people who pass by – a priest and a Levite – ignore the man and continue on their journey. It is only the Samaritan who takes the time and trouble to help. Jesus concludes the story with a question: "Which one of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?"

Jesus' question forces the lawyer to think hard. Jesus and the lawyer were both Jewish, and many Jews looked down upon their Samaritan neighbors as criminals. The ancestors of the Samaritans were Jews, but they had long ago stopped practicing the Jewish faith.

You can imagine how much the lawyer must have struggled in his heart – how could the Samaritan show more love than the Jewish leaders who should have known better? Yet even though the lawyer cannot bring himself to say the word "Samaritan," he cannot deny the truth – "The one who treated (the injured man) with mercy," he says. The Samaritan is the only person in the story who is really following Jesus' great commandment to "Love your neighbor as yourself."

## Faith CONNECTION

Identify the different kinds of literary building blocks in the story of the Good Samaritan. Cite examples and then explain how they deepen your faith in Jesus Christ.

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# SHARING OUR STORY

**From time to time, all of us engage in the activity of storytelling.** We are not talking about the kind of story that comes totally out of our imaginations. Those stories may be fun to tell, but they do not affect us as powerfully as the accounts of real-life events and experiences.

## FAMILY GATHERINGS

Many families gather at special times of the year, such as Christmas and Thanksgiving. They eat and drink. They relax together. Very frequently in these types of gatherings, family stories are told. Sometimes we tell the same stories over and over again because they strengthen our identity as a family.

Grandma might tell about leaving “the old country” to travel to America—where she met Grandpa and they married. Mom and Dad tell the story of the birth of their first child and the long search for just the right name.

We never get tired of these kinds of stories because they are our stories. Family stories enkindle our hearts and connect us to one another. They make the past present, and they set the course for our future. In short, they boldly proclaim us as family.



# SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

**Have you ever invited a friend over for a family gathering?** How did your friend respond to the family's interaction and sharing of stories? Perhaps during that gathering your friend felt part of the family.

The whole point of becoming familiar with the Gospel is to make them part of who we are. That is why we hear them over and over again during Mass. The Church continues to pass on her faith in Jesus through the sharing of Scripture stories.

Telling others about Jesus does not simply mean reciting the Gospel accounts word for word on a street corner. Rather, it means living the Gospel and giving our hearts to the Gospel so that we and others are transformed. Being devoted to God's Word means living as disciples of Jesus at home, in school, and all aspects of our lives.

- In small groups discuss how you can boldly proclaim the Gospel to the world.
- How can you be messenger of hope and joy through the example of your life?
- Who are some people in your life who need this good news?

## MY FAITH CHOICE

This week I can be a modern-day evangelist. I will: \_\_\_\_\_

**PRAY**

Holy Spirit, enliven in my heart a longing to fall in love with you.  
Help me to boldly proclaim the Good News of Jesus to others.  
Amen.



## Recall

Define each of these faith vocabulary terms:

1. synoptic \_\_\_\_\_
2. evangelist \_\_\_\_\_
3. disciple \_\_\_\_\_

Choose two of the following questions to answer. Write a brief paragraph to answer each of your choices.

4. Describe what it means to say that the four Gospel accounts pass on the faith of the Church in Jesus Christ.

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5. Compare the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth Gospel.

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6. Compare the openings of two of the four accounts of the Gospel with each other.

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## Reflect

Using what you have learned in this chapter, reflect on and describe in your own words the meaning of this statement:

*The need to proclaim Christ boldly and courageously is a continuing priority for the Church.*

POPE BENEDICT XVI

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## Share

With a partner, draw an illustration showing how teens can be the "Gospel in action."

## WITH MY FAMILY

Discuss with your family how your family uses the Gospel to make family decisions?

## To Help You REMEMBER

1. The Gospel is the Good News of Jesus Christ.
2. Each evangelist presents a unique portrait of Jesus.
3. Being a disciple of Jesus means boldly proclaiming the Gospel.



# A Litany of PRAISE

**Leader:** Jesus promised, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

Jesus, you are the Word of God, who became flesh and dwelt among us,

**All:** we praise and honor you.

**Leader:** Jesus, you are true God and true man,

**All:** we praise and honor you.

**Leader:** Jesus, you are the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One of God,

**All:** we praise and honor you.

**Leader:** Jesus, you are the Lamb of God, the Savior of the world,

**All:** we praise and honor you.

**Leader:** Jesus, you are Lord, the only Son of God.

**All:** we praise and honor you.

**Leader:** Lord God, Father of all, send the Holy Spirit to help us honor the name of your only Son both by our words and our deeds.

**All:** Amen.