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THE JOURNEY BEGINS!

Stephen Valgos

Leader Guide

An Introduction to Jesus the Christ according
to Matthew and John, Third Edition Revised

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*An Introduction to Jesus the Christ
According to Matthew and John*

Third Edition Revised

LEADER GUIDE

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This book is dedicated to my wonderful wife, Jill, who so patiently waited for me to finally come to bed as I labored late into the night time and time again. And to my sons, Mark and Luke, that they may one day search the Scriptures for themselves and experience the excitement and joy of encountering God in its pages.

I want to offer my sincere appreciation to my beloved students at St. Stanislaus Parish School (Modesto, California), classes of 2003 and 2004, for your love, patience, enthusiasm, energy, and willingness

to celebrate and share with me the joy of studying the Sacred Scriptures as this work was created. May God bless you and make his presence known to you through them always.

I want to thank my student aides, Anthony Palermo and Kristin Garke, for their help in editing and formatting earlier editions of this work. Finally, my thanks to the Central Catholic High School English Department teaching staff for their willingness to edit this work in addition to the piles of student essays through which they courageously waded each quarter.

All scripture is inspired by God
and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love
and speaks with them; and the force and power in the word of God is so great
that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons,
the food of the soul, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life.

Dei Verbum 21

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Dear Teacher or Leader,

Thank you for considering this tool for educating our Catholic youth in the joy of finding God in the Sacred Word. As I began teaching middle school religion in August 2002, I was pleased to see that my students were required to purchase a Bible, but I was frustrated by not finding a worksheet for them to use alongside their reading of the Bible as a primary source. Their religion text referenced the Scriptures, some studies focused on particular people or events, but no workbook that I found provided students and teachers with a tool that would walk them from the beginning of the Scriptures to the end over three school years, a 120-week time frame. With that goal in mind, I began my work.

This student workbook and leader guide provide a chapter-by-chapter investigation of the life of Jesus according to Matthew and John. My goal is to help students understand the story of salvation in a thorough, comprehensive, meaningful way.

I intend that this work be used as a critical supplement to the regular religious instruction in the classroom. Biblical literacy is paramount in the Church today. Especially since the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, reading the Sacred Word has been encouraged universally. I needed my students to read it and reflect on it at home so that we could discuss it in class. This Bible study program invites them to do exactly that.

Students read the Scriptures, find the answers to the questions, write down the chapter and verse where they found each answer, reflect on a particular short answer question, write down their favorite verse, and come to class ready to share. The questions, as you can see, are to ensure that students are doing the prescribed reading. The classroom teacher has total control over the discussion of the Scriptures themselves. He or she is able to explain in greater depth and apply what is said to students' lives, to what is going on in the classroom or in the contemporary world. The emphasis on particular verses or values is up to the teacher.

Although I initially intended the study to be a supplement to the religious curriculum, I understand that some teachers are using *The Journey Begins!* as a lens through which to teach the religion standards for their particular grade level. Fantastic! Teachers will no doubt find a number of ways to use this study not only to enhance their students' understanding and love for the Scriptures but also to increase their level of participation and engagement at Mass. My students come into class excited to have heard a previously reviewed Scripture passage proclaimed during the Liturgy of the Word that Sunday.

The end of each lesson has an opportunity for critical reflection on a verse or point made by someone in the text. Students are invited to share their personal experiences, reflections, difficulties, or understanding of the particular lesson reviewed. I understand that students enjoy this component most. In some cases they illustrate their point, sometimes they are asked to write prayers, and still other times they thank their teacher or their parent or parents. Many of my high school students tell me they still have their Bible study worksheets from more than five years ago. The story of salvation is exciting and fun, and God uses the Sacred Scriptures to speak to his children. I invite you to give them the opportunity to hear his voice by using this program.

I used the *New American Bible* Revised Edition (NABRE) to create the work. Consequently, students will have an easier time finding the answers by using the NAB, but it is not necessarily required. Schools within the Diocese of Stockton in California typically ask students to purchase the NAB *Catholic Youth Bible*, from St. Mary's Press. Additionally, students can always go to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Web site (<http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/>) and access the NAB online if they need to do so.

I would not get too wrapped up in having the right answers. Remember that the goal is to get our students to read the Bible so that a meaningful, informed discussion can take place in the classroom. I make the worksheet due on the Wednesday of each week. We dedicate that class period to our Bible study. As we review the correct answers and discuss them, I invite students to grade their own workbooks, correct missed questions, and fill in incomplete questions with the correct answer. I make a point not to nitpick the correct answers. If the students make a genuine attempt, that's good enough for me. I want them to read it so we can discuss it. The worksheet is only a means to accomplish that end. I have to remind myself of that fact often.

I always allow the prompting of the Holy Spirit to guide the class and the discussion. If we are unable to complete the grading because of an important and meaningful discussion, then so be it. The students enjoy the discussion greatly (and learn the most that way too).

At the end of the class period I have the students open their workbooks to the correct page and have them stack them and pass them to the front. I grade with a check for fully complete work, a plus for almost complete, and a minus for halfway complete (or less) so that my whole day is not consumed with correcting. Remember that this is a fun supplement and an opportunity to break open God's Word. Don't kill yourself. Come prepared, and your students will love the discussion.

Thank you for using this work in your schools and classrooms. I hope you find this tool as helpful and exciting as I have. Please don't hesitate to e-mail with questions concerning the program or ideas for its use. I use teacher comments to enhance the quality of the program by taking cues from those who use it in the field. You can e-mail me at stephen@catholicevangelist.com or write to me care of Saint Mary's Press, Christian Brothers Publications, 702 Terrace Heights, Winona, MN 55987-1320.

God bless,
Stephen Valgos

Reflect Before Reading the Gospels

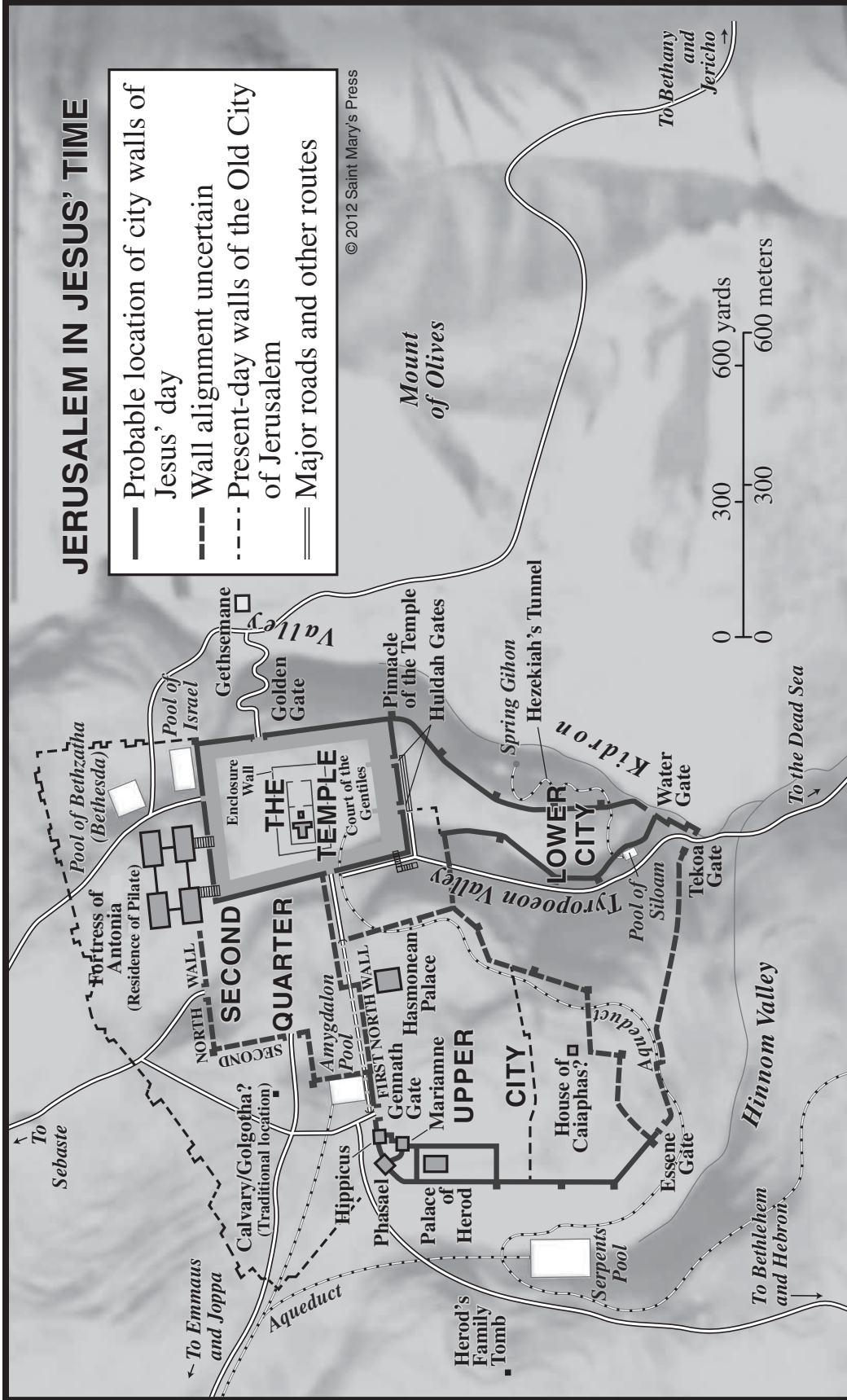
In the space provided, write what you know about the Gospels: their main characters, events, or central story. Why do you think Christians concern themselves with reading the Gospels at all? What do you hope to learn by reading the Gospels according to Matthew and John? How do you think these two Gospels differ in their teaching about Jesus' life, teachings, and ministry? How might what you read change your life?



JERUSALEM IN JESUS' TIME

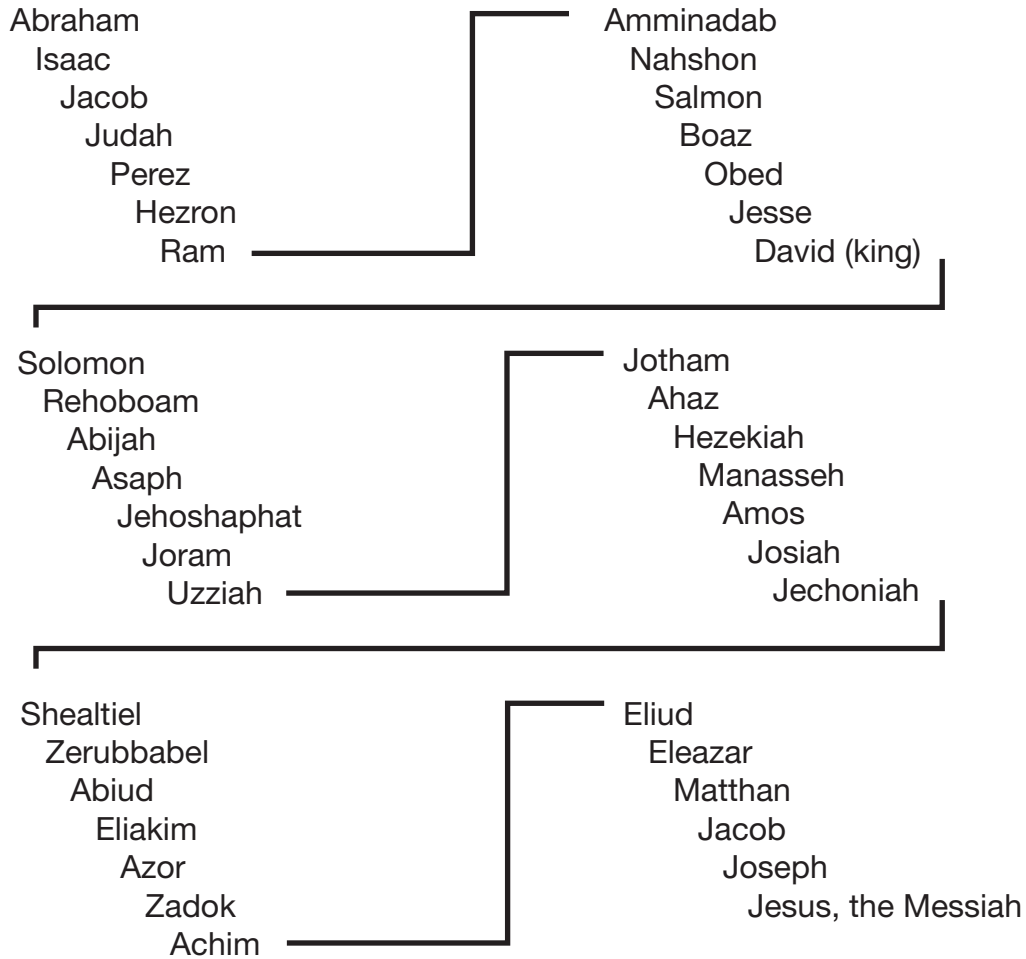
- Probable location of city walls of Jesus' day
- - - Wall alignment uncertain
- · · Present-day walls of the Old City of Jerusalem
- == Major roads and other routes

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Matthew Chapter 1: Genealogy of Jesus

Matthew, writing to a largely Jewish-Christian community, emphasizes Jesus' connection to the Father of the Hebrew people, Abraham, and to the great king of Israel, David.



Roman Catholic Popes throughout the Centuries from Saint Peter to Benedict XVI

Christ gave Peter the keys to the Kingdom as part of instituting the Church on earth. Christ told Peter, “Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:19). In this way Jesus gave Peter, our first Pope, authority as the head and pastor of the Universal Church, and Peter passed on this authority to his successor. For this reason every Pope also carries the title “Successor of Peter.”

1. St. Peter (32-67)
2. St. Linus (67-76)
3. St. Anacletus (Cletus) (76-88)
4. St. Clement I (88-97)
5. St. Evaristus (97-105)
6. St. Alexander I (105-115)
7. St. Sixtus I (115-125)
8. St. Telesphorus (125-136)
9. St. Hyginus (136-140)
10. St. Pius I (140-155)
11. St. Anicetus (155-166)
12. St. Soter (166-175)
13. St. Eleutherius (175-189)
14. St. Victor I (189-199)
15. St. Zephyrinus (199-217)
16. St. Callistus I (217-222)
17. St. Urban I (222-230)
18. St. Pontain (230-235)
19. St. Anterus (235-236)
20. St. Fabian (236-250)
21. St. Cornelius (251-253)
22. St. Lucius I (253-254)
23. St. Stephen I (254-257)
24. St. Sixtus II (257-258)
25. St. Dionysius (260-268)
26. St. Felix I (269-274)
27. St. Eutychian (275-283)
28. St. Caius (283-296)
29. St. Marcellinus (296-304)
30. St. Marcellus I (308-309)
31. St. Eusebius (309 or 310)
32. St. Miltiades (311-314)
33. St. Sylvester I (314-335)
34. St. Marcus (336)
35. St. Julius I (337-352)
36. Liberius (352-366)
37. St. Damasus I (366-383)
38. St. Siricius (384-399)
39. St. Anastasius I (399-401)
40. St. Innocent I (401-417)
41. St. Zosimus (417-418)
42. St. Boniface I (418-422)
43. St. Celestine I (422-432)
44. St. Sixtus III (432-440)
45. St. Leo I (the Great) (440-461)
46. St. Hilarius (461-468)
47. St. Simplicius (468-483)
48. St. Felix III (II) (483-492)
49. St. Gelasius I (492-496)
50. Anastasius II (496-498)
51. St. Symmachus (498-514)
52. St. Hormisdas (514-523)
53. St. John I (523-526)
54. St. Felix IV (III) (526-530)
55. Boniface II (530-532)
56. John II (533-535)
57. St. Agapetus I (535-536)
58. St. Silverius (536-537)
59. Vigilius (537-555)
60. Pelagius I (556-561)
61. John III (561-574)
62. Benedict I (575-579)
63. Pelagius II (579-590)
64. St. Gregory I (the Great) (590-604)
65. Sabinian (604-606)
66. Boniface III (607)
67. St. Boniface IV (608-615)
68. St. Deusdedit (Adeodatus I) (615-618)
69. Boniface V (619-625)
70. Honorius I (625-638)
71. Severinus (640)
72. John IV (640-642)
73. Theodore I (642-649)
74. St. Martin I (649-655)
75. St. Eugene I (655-657)
76. St. Vitalian (657-672)
77. Adeodatus (II) (672-676)
78. Donus (676-678)
79. St. Agatho (678-681)
80. St. Leo II (682-683)
81. St. Benedict II (684-685)
82. John V (685-686)
83. Conon (686-687)
84. St. Sergius I (687-701)
85. John VI (701-705)
86. John VII (705-707)
87. Sisinnius (708)
88. Constantine (708-715)
89. St. Gregory II (715-731)
90. St. Gregory III (731-741)
91. St. Zachary (741-752)
92. Stephen II (752)
93. Stephen III (752-757)
94. St. Paul I (757-767)
95. Stephen IV (767-772)
96. Adrian I (772-795)
97. St. Leo III (795-816)
98. Stephen V (816-817)
99. St. Paschal I (817-824)
100. Eugene II (824-287)
101. Valentine (827)
102. Gregory IV (827-844)
103. Sergius II (844-847)
104. St. Leo IV (847-855)
105. Benedict III (855-858)
106. St. Nicholas I the Great (858-867)
107. Adrian II (867-872)
108. John VIII (872-882)
109. Marinus I (882-884)
110. St. Adrian III (884-885)
111. Stephen VI (885-891)
112. Formosus (891-896)
113. Boniface VI (896)
114. Stephen VII (896-897)
115. Romanus (897)
116. Theodore II (897)
117. John IX (898-900)
118. Benedict IV (900-903)

119. Leo V (903)
120. Sergius III (904-911)
121. Anastasius III (911-913)
122. Lando (913-914)
123. John X (914-928)
124. Leo VI (928)
125. Stephen VIII (929-931)
126. John XI (931-935)
127. Leo VII (936-939)
128. Stephen IX (939-942)
129. Marinus II (942-946)
130. Agapetus II (946-955)
131. John XII (955-963)
132. Leo VIII (963-964)
133. Benedict V (964)
134. John XIII (965-972)
135. Benedict VI (973-974)
136. Benedict VII (974-983)
137. John XIV (983-984)
138. John XV (985-996)
139. Gregory V (996-999)
140. Sylvester II (999-1003)
141. John XVII (1003)
142. John XVIII (1003-1009)
143. Sergius IV (1009-1012)
144. Benedict VIII (1012-1024)
145. John XIX (1024-1032)
146. Benedict IX* (1032-1045)
147. Sylvester III (1045)
148. Benedict IX (1045)
149. Gregory VI (1045-1046)
150. Clement II (1046-1047)
151. Benedict IX (1047-1048)
152. Damasus II (1048)
153. St. Leo IX (1049-1054)
154. Victor II (1055-1057)
155. Stephen X (1057-1058)
156. Nicholas II (1058-1061)
157. Alexander II (1061-1073)
158. St. Gregory VII (1073-1085)
159. Blessed Victor III (1086-1087)
160. Blessed Urban II (1088-1099)
161. Paschal II (1099-1118)
162. Gelasius II (1118-1119)
163. Callistus II (1119-1124)
164. Honorius II (1124-1130)
165. Innocent II (1130-1143)
166. Celestine II (1143-1144)
167. Lucius II (1144-1145)
168. Blessed Eugene III (1145-1153)
169. Anastasius IV (1153-1154)
170. Adrian IV (1154-1159)
171. Alexander III (1159-1181)
172. Lucius III (1181-1185)
173. Urban III (1185-1187)
174. Gregory VIII (1187)
175. Clement III (1187-1191)
176. Celestine III (1191-1198)
177. Innocent III (1198-1216)
178. Honorius III (1216-1227)
179. Gregory IX (1227-1241)
180. Celestine IV (1241)
181. Innocent IV (1243-1254)
182. Alexander IV (1254-1261)
183. Urban IV (1261-1264)
184. Clement IV (1265-1268)
185. Blessed Gregory X (1271-1276)
186. Blessed Innocent V (1276)
187. Adrian V (1276)
188. John XXI (1276-1277)
189. Nicholas III (1277-1280)
190. Martin IV (1281-1285)
191. Honorius IV (1285-1287)
192. Nicholas IV (1288-1292)
193. St. Celestine V (1294)
194. Boniface VIII (1294-1303)
195. Blessed Benedict XI (1303-1304)
196. Clement V (1305-1314)
197. John XXII (1316-1334)
198. Benedict XII (1334-1342)
199. Clement VI (1342-1352)
200. Innocent VI (1352-1362)
201. Blessed Urban V (1362-1370)
202. Gregory XI (1370-1378)
203. Urban VI (1378-1389)
204. Boniface IX (1389-1404)
205. Innocent VII (1404-1406)
206. Gregory XII (1406-1415)
207. Martin V (1417-1431)
208. Eugene IV (1431-1447)
209. Nicholas V (1447-1455)
210. Callistus III (1455-1458)
211. Pius II (1458-1464)
212. Paul II (1464-1471)
213. Sixtus IV (1471-1484)
214. Innocent VIII (1484-1492)
215. Alexander VI (1492-1503)
216. Pius III (1503)
217. Julius II (1503-1513)
218. Leo X (1513-1521)
219. Adrian VI (1522-1523)
220. Clement VII (1523-1534)
221. Paul III (1534-1549)
222. Julius III (1550-1555)
223. Marcellus II (1555)
224. Paul IV (1555-1559)
225. Pius IV (1559-1565)
226. St. Pius V (1566-1572)
227. Gregory XIII (1572-1585)
228. Sixtus V (1585-1590)
229. Urban VII (1590)
230. Gregory XIV (1590-1591)
231. Innocent IX (1591)
232. Clement VIII (1592-1605)
233. Leo XI (1605)
234. Paul V (1605-1621)
235. Gregory XV (1621-1623)
236. Urban VIII (1623-1644)
237. Innocent X (1644-1655)
238. Alexander VII (1655-1667)
239. Clement IX (1667-1669)
240. Clement X (1670-1676)
241. Blessed Innocent XI (1676-1689)
242. Alexander VIII (1689-1691)
243. Innocent XII (1691-1700)
244. Clement XI (1700-1721)
245. Innocent XIII (1721-1724)
246. Benedict XIII (1724-1730)
247. Clement XII (1730-1740)
248. Benedict XIV (1740-1758)
249. Clement XIII (1758-1769)
250. Clement XIV (1769-1774)
251. Pius VI (1775-1799)
252. Pius VII (1800-1823)
253. Leo XII (1823-1829)
254. Pius VIII (1829-1830)
255. Gregory XVI (1831-1846)
256. Blessed Pius IX (1846-1878)
257. Leo XIII (1878-1903)
258. St. Pius X (1903-1914)
259. Benedict XV (1914-1922)
260. Pius XI (1922-1939)
261. Pius XII (1939-1958)
262. Blessed John XXIII (1958-1963)
263. Paul VI (1963-1978)
264. John Paul I (1978)
265. Blessed John Paul II (1978-2005)
266. Benedict XVI (2005-Present)

* Benedict IX appears three times because he was elected Pope three times (twice deposed and restored).

Student Learning Objective:
To appreciate the infancy narrative as a means
by which Matthew roots Jesus within the
Jewish culture and history.

The Gospel According to St. Matthew Chapters 1 and 2

1. To whom, according to Matthew, does Jesus' genealogy lead back?
According to Matthew, Jesus' genealogy leads back to Abraham. (1:1)
(Ask the students to compare Matthew's genealogy with Luke, whose genealogy goes back to Adam, and with John, whose genealogy goes back to God. Matthew is writing to and for a Jewish audience.)
2. Matthew gives three sets of fourteen generations. Who or what is the first and last person or event in each generation?
Abraham to David, David to Babylonian Exile, Exile to the Messiah. (1:17)
(Ask the students to notice that these are the significant periods and figures of Jewish history: Abraham, David, Exile, and awaited Messiah.)
3. Joseph intended to divorce Mary quietly because she was found with child. What does the Law of Moses prescribe for someone in Mary's situation? See Deuteronomy 22:20.
The law required that the woman be stoned to death by the townsmen at the entrance of her father's house because she committed a crime against Israel.
4. If you were Mary, knowing that you would be put to death as a result of your mysterious pregnancy, would you be able to trust in God? If you were Joseph, would you believe the angel? Explain.
Answers may vary.
5. Why does the angel tell Joseph to name the child Jesus?
The angel tells Joseph to name the child Jesus because he would save his people from their sins. (1:21)

6. What, according to the prophet Isaiah, will the child be called? What does it mean?
According to Isaiah, the child will be named Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." (Matthew 1:23)

7. How does King Herod feel when the magi from the east show up in Jerusalem looking for the newborn king of the Jews?
King Herod is greatly troubled when the magi show up asking to see Jesus. (2:3)

8. What do the magi offer to Jesus when they see the child with his mother, Mary?
The magi offer gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the child. (2:11)

9. What does Herod do when he finds out that the magi have deceived him?
Herod becomes furious and orders the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity when he finds out that the magi have deceived him. (2:16)

10. Jesus ends up back in the land of Israel. From what land did the holy family come?
The holy family returned to Israel from Egypt. (2:19)

Reflection Question

Matthew tells us quite a few different names for Jesus. What do you think is Matthew's reason for this? Do the names that Matthew uses for Jesus tell us something about him? Explain. What other names have you heard that describe the Son of God?

My verse to share is _____:_____ because . . .