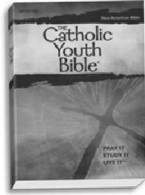


## The Gospels

- The Gospels are the heart of the Scriptures.
- The four Gospels are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
- The Gospels bring the Good News of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.
- They also herald that Jesus came to fulfill the promises God made to our ancestors, and to overcome the slavery of sin and death.



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## Characteristics of the Gospels

- The Gospels are the main source of information about the life and teachings of Jesus (see CCC, 125).
- The Gospels are God's Revelation.
- When we encounter Jesus in the Gospels, we encounter God's most definitive and perfect Revelation.
- Each Gospel presents a unique perspective on Jesus.



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## The Synoptic Gospels

- Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called **synoptic Gospels**.
- **Synoptic** comes from a Greek word meaning "seeing the whole together."
- These Gospels are similar in style and share much of the same content.
- Many scholars believe that both Luke and Matthew used Mark as a source when writing their Gospels.
- Some scholars also propose that Luke and Matthew may have used a second source known as the **Quelle**, or the Q Source.



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## The Gospel of Mark

Who was Mark?

- Gentile Christian who may have been a disciple of Peter

Approximate Date of Authorship:

- AD 65–70

Intended Audience:

- Non-Jewish Christians

Issues Addressed:

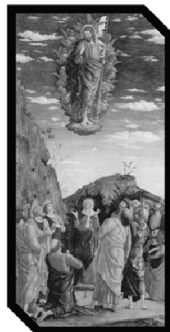
- Members of the community being persecuted (even to death) for their beliefs



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## Mark's Image of Jesus

- Mark includes an aura of secrecy in this Gospel known as the **messianic secret**.
- Those who should recognize Jesus as the Messiah fail to do so.
- Mark emphasizes the humanity of Jesus.
- Central to Mark's Christology is the image of Jesus as the Suffering Servant.
- True discipleship must imitate Jesus in both his ministry and his suffering.



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## The Gospel of Matthew

Who was Matthew?

- Jewish Christian well versed in the Hebrew Scriptures

Approximate Date of Authorship:

- AD 85

Intended Audience:

- Mixed community of Jewish Christians and Gentiles

Issues Addressed:

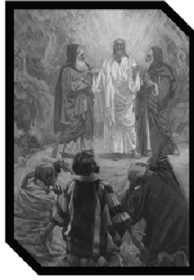
- A possible rejection and even some persecution of Jewish Christians for their belief in Jesus



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## Matthew's Image of Jesus

- Matthew wanted his Jewish Christian readers to know that believing in Jesus was a continuation of their tradition.
- Matthew highlights Jesus as the fulfillment of many Old Testament hopes and prophecies.
- He validates the community's link to the covenant promises of the past, while justifying their new devotion to Christ and his mission.
- Jesus is presented with clear ties to Jewish ancestry. The genealogy at the beginning of the Gospel is one example.



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## The Gospel of Luke

Who was Luke?

- Gentile convert to Christianity, and the author who wrote not only the Gospel of Luke but also the Acts of the Apostles

Approximate Date of Authorship:

- AD 80–90

Intended Audience:

- The audience of both the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles is identified as Theophilus, meaning "lover of God."



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## Luke's Image of Jesus

- Luke paints a picture of Jesus as the compassionate Savior who welcomes all.
- Much of Jesus' ministry and preaching is directed toward the plight of the *anawim*.
- Luke emphasizes the presence of women in the ministry of Jesus.
- The final groups given special attention in the Gospel of Luke are those who are sick and sinners.



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## The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John is not one of the synoptic Gospels.

Who wrote it:

- Many people credit this Gospel to a man named John, "the [disciple] whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23), but the actual author is unknown.
- Many believe the author was a member of a Christian community founded by the Beloved Disciple.
- Its tradition and teachings represent the whole Johannine community rather than just one individual.



Approximate Date of Authorship:

- AD 90–100

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## Characteristics of John's Gospel

Twofold purpose:

- To evangelize both Gentiles and Jews
- To strengthen the faith of the local community as well as Christians everywhere

Two books in one Gospel:

- In the first half of the Gospel, Jesus teaches mainly through signs that reveal his identity.
  - These signs are found in John 1:19–12:50 and are known as the Book of Signs.
- The second half of the Gospel focuses on the Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension—the events that glorify Jesus.
  - This is known as the Book of Glory and is found in John 13:1–20:31.



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## John's Image of Jesus

- The synoptic Gospels emphasize the humanity of Jesus.
- The Gospel of John emphasizes the divinity of Jesus.
- John uses *high Christology*—a term used to describe how John proclaims from the very beginning that Jesus is God, the Eternal Word of the Father.



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