



“An extraordinary book! I have been a priest for 50 years and I don’t know a book that has revitalized the faith of more people... or brought more people back to the Church than *Rediscover Catholicism*.”

—FATHER RON RIEDER

Pastor, Saints Peter and Paul Church Huntington, Indiana

Rediscover Catholicism

A SPIRITUAL GUIDE TO LIVING
WITH PASSION & PURPOSE

Study Guide

Matthew Kelly

New York Times bestselling author
of *The Rhythm of Life*

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Introduction

Books change our lives. The reason is because what we read today walks and talks with us tomorrow, so in many ways we become what we read. We hope this book will change your life and the lives of the people you are gathering to discuss it with.

Millions of people have read *Rediscover Catholicism* and we constantly receive letters and e-mails about the ways it has touched people and drawn them closer to God and his Church. At DynamicCatholic.com we believe that if Catholicism is to thrive in these modern times, then we as Catholics need to become continuous learners.

Spiritual reading has been a crucial part of the Catholic experience for centuries, but with the growing demands and distractions of modern life people are reading less and less. Less than 1% of Catholics in the United States read a Catholic book last year. This is tragic, because so many people have so many questions about Catholicism at this time, and unless we are feeding our minds with great Catholic thought we will not be able to share our faith in a way that is articulate, bold, and inspiring.

One of our goals at DynamicCatholic.com is to encourage Catholics to start reading great Catholic books. Our strategy is very simple. Encourage every Catholic in America to read two great Catholic books each year. We believe this would be a game changer for the Catholic Church in America.

We hope you enjoy *Rediscover Catholicism* and pray this study guide is a useful resource as you explore what God is saying to you at this point in your spiritual journey.

May God bless you with a prayerful spirit and a peaceful heart.

The Dynamic Catholic Team

Study Guide Purpose and Format

The purpose of this study guide is to help readers delve further into the book by exploring personal reaction and application. It can also be used by small faith groups and book clubs.

The study guide comprises eight sessions.

For Small Group Study, these sessions could take place once a week or once a month, at the discretion of the group.

Each session follows the same format:

Opening Prayer: Provided on Page 5 of this guide

Reflection/Discussion Questions

Closing Prayer: Provided on Page 5 of this guide.

If doing this in a group setting, meet for fixed length of time, e.g. sixty to ninety minutes. And have the participants complete the reading assignment before attending each session.

You may adapt this guide to fit your personal or group sessions as needed.

Any Questions or comments related to this study, please contact Deacon Michael at gospamir@comcast.net or 347-7350

Reading Schedule

Session One

Prologue

Pages 5 - 8

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Pages 13 - 17

Session Two

PART ONE: WE BECOME WHAT WE CELEBRATE

Pages 19 - 56

Session Three

PART TWO: THE AUTHENTIC LIFE

Pages 58 - 132

Session Four

PART THREE: THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY Pillar 1 and 2

Pages 134 - 192

Session Five

THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY Pillar3 - The Mass

Pages 193 - 216

Session Six

THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY Pillars 4 and 5

Pages 217 - 252

Session Six

THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY Pillars 6 and 7

Pages 253 -272

Session Eight

PART FOUR: NOW IS OUR TIME

Pages 274 - 311

Suggested Opening and Closing Session Prayers

Opening Prayer

Loving Father,
Open our hearts and minds
and allow us to see the beauty of our faith.
Show us what is possible and fill us with the grace, strength,
and wisdom to live all the good things we explore here together.
Send your Spirit upon us so that we can discover your dream
for us to become the-best-version-of-ourselves,
and have the courage to defend and celebrate this true self
in every moment of our days.
We ask you to bless in a special way the hungry, the lonely,
the sick, and the discouraged.
Remind us of our duty toward them
and inspire us to be filled with a profound gratitude.
We ask all this through your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Closing Prayer: The Dynamic Catholic Prayer

Loving Father,
I invite you into my life today
and make myself available to you.
Help me to become the-best-version-of-myself
by seeking your will and becoming a living example
of your love in the world.
Open my heart to the areas of my life that need to change
in order for me to carry out the mission
and experience the joy you have imagined for my life.
Inspire me to live the Catholic faith in ways that are dynamic and engaging.
Show me how to best get involved in the life of my parish.
Make our community hungry for best practices
and continuous learning.
Give me courage when I am afraid,
hope when I am discouraged, and clarity in times of decision.
Teach me to enjoy uncertainty and lead your Church
to become all you imagined it would be for the people of our times.
Amen.

Session One

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Reading: Prologue pages 5-8 and Introduction pages 13-17

Opening Prayer:

Videos: Prologue: Imagine (7:38 min) This and Where to From Here (10:18 min) on our Parish Website under [Rediscover Catholicism](#).

Reflection/Discussion:

1. How did the story about the epidemic and the little boy change the way you think about Mass? What else did the story challenge you to reflect upon?
2. What are your thoughts that God has an incredible dream for us to become the best version of ourselves – to become all that we were created to be?
3. The Catholic Church feeds, houses, clothes, visits prisons, takes care of the sick, and educates more people than any other institution. Do you think that we have forgotten our Story?
4. Spirituality affects the way we live, love and work. It gives us courage, kindness, generosity, and thoughtfulness. It also affects the way we interact with and intrigue people. Do you think that we (Catholics) are no longer considered a Spiritual People?
5. Is Catholicism still relevant? Do you feel empowered when you have the answers to questions people ask about Catholicism? What could you do on a regular basis to increase your knowledge about the Catholic faith so that you will have more and more answers to share with others?
6. It seems the first Christians lived differently, loved differently, and worked differently, and in the process captured the imagination of the people of their time. How can you live, love, and work so as to intrigue the people in your own place and time?
7. In what ways is God calling you to a bigger future at this time in your life?

Closing Prayer:

Next Session Preparation:

- The reading assignment for our next session is Part One (Chapters One through Five pages 19 - 56).

Session Two

WE BECOME WHAT WE CELEBRATE

Reading: Part One, Chapters One through Five

Opening Prayer:

Reflection/Discussion:

1. When you consider where we are today as a society, do you think the world needs Christianity more or less than it did a hundred years ago? What are the signs that support your view?
2. How are you influenced by the philosophies of individualism, hedonism, and minimalism? Give examples.
3. In Chapter Three the author quotes, "The desire for God is written on the human heart . . ." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*). In what ways do you yearn for God?
4. How would you describe your relationship with Jesus? Is he friend, mentor, coach, savior, spiritual director, role model, distant God, or historical figure? Where do you see opportunities for this relationship to grow?
5. How does embracing Catholicism as a way of life make you a-better-version-of-yourself?
6. In Chapter Five the author discusses the identity crisis that we are struggling with as a Church. If your life were put under a microscope, would there be sufficient evidence to convince a jury of your peers that you were truly Catholic? What would that evidence be?

Closing Prayer:

Next Session Preparation:

- The reading assignment for our next session is Part Two (Chapters Six through Eleven, pages 58 - 132).

Session Three

THE AUTHENTIC LIFE

Reading: Part Two, Chapters Six through Eleven

Opening Prayer:

Reflection/Discussion:

1. When you are behaving in ways that are inauthentic, are you conscious of it at the time, or do you become aware of it only later? How do you feel different when you act authentically versus when you do not?
2. Is holiness possible for you? Why or why not?
3. Now that you are reading *Rediscover Catholicism*, do you find yourself thinking about the-best-version-of-yourself in the moments of the day?
4. In Chapter Eight the author offers short biographies of Francis of Assisi, Mother Teresa, John Vianney, Thomas More, and John Paul II.
 - a) Which biography inspired you the most?
 - b) Which person did you know the least about before?
 - c) How did the stories encourage, challenge, or inspire you to live differently?
5. If you had to give yourself a score between one and ten (ten being total commitment), how would you rate your commitment to doing the will of God in your life?
6. In what way did you rediscover Catholicism by reading Part Two of the book?

Closing Prayer:

Next Session Preparation:

- The reading assignment for our next session is Part Three, Chapters Twelve and Thirteen, pages 134 - 192
- The next four sessions will cover the Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality. In addition to reading these chapters, you may wish to visit our Website: and view the videos of Matthew Kelly speaking about each of the pillars. Go to [Rediscover Catholicism](#).

Session Four

THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY

Pillars 1 Confession and 2: Daily Prayer

Reading: Part Three, Chapters 12 and 13, pages 137 - 192

VIDEO: Confession (12:45 min) and Daily Prayer (5:07 min)

OPENING PRAYER

Reflection/Discussion:

Confession:

1. What are your thoughts on the following statements:
 - I can confess my sins directly to God and there is no need to go to a Priest.
 - Every single day we do things that stop us from becoming the best version of ourselves.
 - Confession provides an outlet for us to be healed, become whole, and be renewed in our spiritual life.
 - Confession enables us to see two visions of ourselves. A vision of the person we are right now and the vision of the person you are capable of becoming.
2. What did you think about the analogy of washing a car and going to Confession?
3. Can we lose our sensitivity to sin over time? What if you were only allowed to wash your car on the way home from Confession?
4. What insight from the video made you rethink your attitude toward confession?
5. Do you have any questions or concerns about going to Confession?

Daily Prayer:

What we think – we become. Our actions in life are determined by our last most dominate thought.

1. How do you imagine your life would improve if you were more consistent in your approach to daily prayer?
2. What do you feel are the benefits when praying in the Church or in Adoration?
3. In your Prayer do you ask: God, what do You think that I should do?

Closing Prayer:

Next Session Preparation:

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Three, Chapter Fourteen - The Mass, pages 193 - 216.
- If you liked the idea of keeping a Mass Journal you can request a free one at DynamicCatholic.com

Session Five
The Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality
Pillar 3 The Mass

OPENING PRAYER

VIDEO: The Mass (14:07 min)

Reflection/Discussion:

1. What was one thing Matthew Kelly said in the video that inspired you to engage more deeply in the Mass?
2. How did the story about the epidemic and the little boy change the way you think about Mass? What else did the story challenge you to reflect upon?
3. What did you think of the Mass journal idea and the question "God show me one way in this Mass I can become a better version of myself this week? Do you think you will make this a part of your spirituality?"
4. Have you ever had an experience of marvel, wonder or mystery at Mass?
5. In the book section "A Quick Journey through the Mass", pgs 209-216, the author gives some practical ideas to engage in each part of the Mass. Have you tried any of his suggestions? Did it help you engage more deeply in the Mass? Which of these suggestions might be the biggest help for you?
6. What do you think of Matthew Kelly's statement, "Our lives change when our habits change".

CLOSING PRAYER

Next Session Preparation:

- Continue to utilize the Prayer Tracking Card, and start your Mass Journal.
- Rediscover Catholicism, read Pillar 4: Scripture/Bible pgs 217-234 and Pillar 5: Fasting, pgs 235-252.

Session Six

The Seven Pillars Of Catholic Spirituality Pillar 4 The Bible and Pillar 5 Fasting

OPENING PRAYER

VIDEO: The Bible (9:58 min) and Fasting (6:00 min) Spiritual Reading (1:00 min)

Reflection/Discussion:

Scripture/Bible:

1. What is your favorite story from the Bible? Why?
2. What did you learn about the Bible that you did not know before?
3. Why should we come to know the Gospels intimately? In what way can we do this? What will you begin doing?

Fasting:

1. What do you think of the following statements:
 - In order to love, in order to put another before ourselves, we need self-possession.
 - The Church says, "You cannot be happy without discipline," (pg 242)?
2. Did you fast since the previous session? What was that experience like?
3. What would be the hardest thing for you to fast from for one day each week? Would you consider giving up that one thing for one day each week?
4. Jesus reveals fasting as a spiritual exercise; one of its primary purposes is to help us become aware of God's presence in our lives and world around us, (pg 247.) As a family of faith how can we grow in this area of our spiritual life?

Closing Prayer:

Next Session Preparation:

- Next session focuses on the Spiritual practices of Fasting, and praying the Rosary. Practice fasting from something, and pray a Rosary.
- Guide to praying the Rosary:
 1. <http://www.kofc.org/un/en/resources/cis/devotionals/4772.pdf>
 2. <http://www.how-to-pray-the-rosary-everyday.com/rosary-guide.html>
- Rediscover Catholicism, read Pillar 6: Spiritual Reading pgs 253-258, and Pillar 7: The Rosary, pgs 259-272.

Session Seven

The Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality Pillar 6 Spiritual Reading, Pillar 7 The Rosary & Ending

OPENING PRAYER

VIDEO: Spiritual Reading (1:20 min) and The Rosary and Ending (6:01 min)

Reflection/Discussion:

Spiritual Reading:

1. What is the last really good Catholic book you read? If you read a great Catholic book for fifteen minutes every day for the rest of your life, how would your life and spirituality improve?
2. Books change our lives. Think about this quote from the book (pg. 253)...“Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body and prayer is to the soul.” What do you think the author means?
3. Are there other forms of Adult Faith Formation that you do participate in or in which you would like to participate?

The Rosary:

1. What impact did the Mother Teresa story on the Rosary, (pgs 259-261) have on you?
2. When was the last time you prayed the rosary? Are there any problems making this part of your spiritual routine? Do you have any questions about how to pray the Rosary?
3. What was your opinion on the Twenty Lessons outlined on pgs 265-268.

Ending:

1. What is one thing you learned about the pillars of Catholic spirituality that you did not know before?
2. Which of these 7 pillars would you say modern Catholics are most passionate about? Least passionate about? (Passionate means: with feeling, having energy toward, are drawn to - therefore actively engaged in, or desire to participate in!).
3. A Tree with strong roots can weather any storm. Do you believe the 7 Pillars will help you to develop stronger roots to weather the next storm in your life?
4. In what ways did you rediscover Catholicism by reading this book and participating in this small study group?

CLOSING PRAYER

Next Session Preparation:

- Rediscover Catholicism, read Chapters Nineteen to Twenty-One pgs 274-311.

Session Eight
NOW IS OUR TIME

Reading: Part Four, Chapters Nineteen through Twenty-one

Opening Prayer:

Reflection/Discussion:

1. Now that you have read *Rediscover Catholicism*, do you feel inspired to get more involved in the Church? How do you feel called to contribute?
2. If the Church's future is going to be bigger than it's past, it seems education and evangelization are the key.
 - a) How can you become better educated about Catholicism?
 - b) What are some simple ways that you can evangelize in your circle of influence?
3. It seems everybody wants the Church to change in some way or another. When you and I change for the better, the Church changes for the better. Are you willing to change?
4. In what areas of your life are you a leader? How did Chapter Twenty challenge your leadership style?
5. Jesus' message over and over in the Gospels was, "Do not be afraid." What are you afraid of? How is that fear stopping you from being all God created you to be (the-best-version-of-yourself)?
6. If our lives genuinely improve only when we grow in virtue, what virtue do you sense God is calling you to grow in at this time in your life?
7. In what ways did you rediscover Catholicism by reading this book?
8. How many people do you know who need to read this book? How are you going to encourage them to read it?

Closing Prayer:

What's Next?

- If you enjoyed *Rediscover Catholicism*, we recommend Matthew Kelly's ***The Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic or Rediscover Jesus***. Both titles are available through the Dynamic Catholic com.
- Thank you for taking part in our study of *Rediscover Catholicism*. We hope that it has ignited your faith in a new way, and that you will share some of what you have learned here with others in your circle of influence.