

# Rediscover Catholicism<sub>Study</sub>

Guide **Matthew Kelly** A SPIRITUAL  
GUIDE TO LIVING WITH PASSION & PURPOSE *New York*

*Times* bestselling author of *The Rhythm of Life* “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*

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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. Each year we will publish two great Catholic books, one at Easter and the other at Christmas. We call this program the Dynamic Catholic Book Program. The books are made available for just two dollars per copy to dioceses and parishes so that they can be distributed to everyone who attends Christmas or Easter Mass.

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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 DynamicCatholic.com Team 6

## 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. While it has been produced primarily for use in small faith groups and book clubs, it can also be used by individuals for personal reflection.

The study guide comprises six sessions. 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

Discussion Questions

Closing Prayer

Announcements

We recommend that a group meet for sixty to ninety minutes, but that the group agree upon a fixed length of time and adhere to that time.

It is assumed that participants will have completed the reading assignment before attending each session. 7

## Reading Schedule

### **Session One**

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Read pages 13–25

### **Session Two**

PART ONE: WE BECOME WHAT WE CELEBRATE

Read pages 27–66

### **Session Three**

PART TWO: THE AUTHENTIC LIFE

Read pages 67–144

### **Session Four**

PART THREE: THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY

Read pages 145–228

### **Session Five**

PART THREE: THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY (CONTINUED)

Read pages 229–284

### **Session Six**

PART FOUR: NOW IS OUR TIME

Read pages 285–324<sup>8</sup>

## Session One

# WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Reading: Prologue and Introduction

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.

Amen.

Discussion Questions:

1. Describe the moment in your life when you most enjoyed being Catholic.
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. In the Introduction of *Rediscover Catholicism* the author shares many ideas about where we are as a Church and possibilities for the future. Which idea most struck you from that section? Why?
4. This is a very hopeful book, and yet the author is not afraid to confront the very real challenges we face as a Church at this moment in history. As you reflect on the future of Catholicism:
  - a) What are you most concerned about?
  - b) What are you most hopeful about?
5. 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?
6. In what ways is God calling you to a bigger future at this time in your life?
7. What makes you proud to be a Catholic today? <sup>10</sup>

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. <sup>11</sup>

Announcements:

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part One (chapters One through Five).
- Let your family and friends know they can request a free copy of *Rediscover Catholicism* by visiting [DynamicCatholic.com](http://DynamicCatholic.com).
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time). <sup>12</sup>

## Session Two

# WE BECOME WHAT WE CELEBRATE

Reading: Part One, Chapters One through Five

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. Amen.<sup>13</sup>

Discussion Questions:

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?<sup>14</sup>

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. <sup>15</sup>

Announcements:

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Two (chapters Six through Eleven).
- If you are enjoying the book, you may want to request a free copy of Matthew Kelly’s DVD *The Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality* by visiting [DynamicCatholic.com](http://DynamicCatholic.com).
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time). <sup>16</sup>

## Session Three

# THE AUTHENTIC LIFE

Reading: Part Two, Chapters Six through Eleven

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. Amen.<sup>17</sup>

Discussion Questions:

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?<sup>18</sup>

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. <sup>19</sup>

Announcements:

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Three, chapters Twelve through Fourteen.
- The next two sessions will cover the Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality. In addition to reading these chapters, you may wish to visit [DynamicCatholic.com](http://DynamicCatholic.com) and view the short videos of Matthew Kelly speaking about each of the pillars.
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time). <sup>20</sup>

## Session Four

# THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY

Reading: Part Three, Chapters Twelve through Fourteen

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.

Amen.<sup>21</sup>

Discussion Questions:

1. What is one thing you learned about the pillars of Catholic spirituality that you didn't know before?
2. *Confession*: What insight from this chapter made you rethink your attitude toward confession?
3. *Daily Prayer*: How do you imagine your life would improve if you were more consistent in your approach to daily prayer?
4. *The Mass*: What did you think of the Mass journal idea? Do you think you will make this a part of your spirituality?
5. 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?<sup>22</sup>

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. <sup>23</sup>

Announcements:

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Three, chapters Fifteen through Eighteen.
- If you liked the idea of keeping a Mass Journal you can request a free one at [DynamicCatholic.com](http://DynamicCatholic.com)
- Don't forget you can watch five-minute videos of Matthew Kelly speaking about each of the pillars at [DynamicCatholic.com](http://DynamicCatholic.com).
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time). <sup>24</sup>

## Session Five

# THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY (CONTINUED)

Reading: Part Three, Chapters Fifteen through Eighteen

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.

Amen.<sup>25</sup>

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you learn about the seven pillars that you didn't know before?
2. *The Bible*: What is your favorite story from the Bible? Why?
3. *Fasting*: 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. *Spiritual Reading*: 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?
5. *The Rosary*: When was the last time you prayed the rosary? If it is not part of your spiritual routine, why don't you pray it more often? <sup>26</sup>

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. <sup>27</sup>

Announcements:

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Four (chapters Nineteen through Twenty-one).
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time). <sup>28</sup>

## Session Six

# NOW IS OUR TIME

Reading: Part Four, Chapters Nineteen through Twenty-one

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.

Amen.<sup>29</sup>

Discussion Questions:

1. Now that you have read *Rediscover Catholicism* and have participated in this group, 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 its past, it seems education and evangelization are 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 and participating in this small study group?

8. How many people do you know who need to read this book? How are you going to encourage them to read it?<sup>30</sup>

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. <sup>31</sup>

Announcements:

- If you enjoyed *Rediscover Catholicism*, the next title we would recommend for you is *Confessions of a Mega Church Pastor*. It is the story of how and why the pastor of one of America's largest mega-churches became Catholic. To order your copy, visit [DynamicCatholic.com](http://DynamicCatholic.com). After that we recommend Matthew Kelly's *The Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic*. Both titles are available through the Dynamic Catholic Book Program.
- Ninety percent of Catholics have never visited their local Catholic bookstore. We would like to encourage you to visit your Catholic bookstore sometime in the next couple of weeks and explore the incredible Catholic books that are available.
- 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. <sup>32</sup>

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