

DYNAMIC CATHOLIC AMBASSADORS SHARE
THEIR **HOPES** AND **DREAMS** FOR THE FUTURE

why I
LOVE
being
CATHOLIC

FOREWORD BY
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 **Dynamic Catholic**

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TO THE LEADER

Hey there!

First and foremost, we want to thank you for taking the initiative to not only read *Why I Love Being Catholic* but also go through the book in a group setting.

Here at Dynamic Catholic, we are quite proud of this book. Not because of anything we did (you know by now we had very little to do with the content) but because of ordinary people who were willing to share answers to these important questions and to do so in such a simple, beautiful, inspiring way.

These people are the reason Dynamic Catholic exists. You are the reason why we do what we do. Our mission is to help ordinary people living their ordinary lives become extraordinary saints, one Holy Moment at a time.

And you, leading this group, that's a Holy Moment.

Know that we are praying for you and your endeavor.

To help you throughout this five-week journey, here are some tips and best practices for leading a group study.

This study guide consists of five sessions. There's even a session dedicated entirely to the foreword to drive home the point Matthew Kelly makes about "ordinary heroes." *Note: You can read the foreword together in person, rather than in advance of your first meeting.*

Sessions two through five each tackle one section of the book—chapter two is divided into two sections since it is significantly longer than chapters one and three. Ideally, people would read these sections *before* attending the corresponding meeting. It's important for you as the leader to mention at the end of each meeting the pages you will be discussing next time so participants will come prepared.

BEST PRACTICES

Keep your meeting time and place consistent. Once a week, at a time convenient for all participants, in a location that has accessible parking is great. If you're meeting at someone's house, let people know beforehand where they can park (e.g. in the driveway, at the curb, down the street).

Get to know each other. Even if you have already been meeting for some time, it can be beneficial to begin your time together as a group with a fun, lighthearted question. Here are some fun suggestions:

- Which fictional character would you want to be your best friend?
- What is your dream vacation?
- If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life what would it be?
- What is one of your favorite, funniest, or most awkward childhood memories?

Starting sessions this way helps individuals get to know each other a little and feel more comfortable together.

Allow room for silence. It's okay if there are moments of quiet in the group. It may feel uncomfortable or awkward, but people need time to process or to summon the courage to speak up.

Pray. Start every session with the opening prayer (found at the beginning of each section), and close each session with the closing prayer (found at the end of each session). You can also give people the opportunity to offer personal prayer intentions.

We are very grateful for you and your decision to meet people where they are and lead them to where God is calling them to be. The Catholic Church needs people like you doing things like this.

Be Bold. Be Catholic.

God Bless,

The Dynamic Catholic Team

SESSION ONE: ORDINARY HEROES

“Great holiness consists in carrying out the little duties of each moment.”

— St. Josemaria Escriva

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for this life.

Thank you for our friends and families, our work, our homes,
and the Church.

Help us to encourage each other and to nurture this community.

Grant us the grace to create Holy Moments every day, even
when we're tired and overwhelmed and just don't feel like it.

Help us become the-best-version-of-ourselves and embrace
the joy you made us for.

And help us understand and love our faith more
and more every day.

We ask this all in your name.

Amen.

Read

Foreword, pages vii-ix.

Take turns reading this section out loud, one paragraph per person.

Introduction

In this brief section, Matthew discusses his inspiration for this book: you. This is important to consider as you read the foreword.

How can *you* make a difference? Here? Today? How can you make a difference in your corner of the world, in your parish, in your home? You can be a difference-maker. As far as Matthew is concerned, you already are.

Discussion

1. What are some words that come to mind when you think about the word *hero*? Discuss these initial thoughts with your group. Do they differ from Matthew's description of his heroes? How are they similar?
2. Who are your heroes? Who is someone you look up to now or admired when you were younger? This could be anyone: your parish priest, a teacher, coach, someone who has accomplished something you also want to accomplish, or even a fictional character. Share your hero with the group. Include *why* you look up to them, and how they have influenced your life.
3. Now consider the word *saint*? What and who come to mind? How is this different from your associations of a hero? How are they similar? Do the people you consider heroes have anything in common with the saints?
4. How do you or would you like to bring light into your corner of the world? How does being Catholic play a role in this light and how you bring it to others?

For Next Time

Read chapter one. What stands out to you? Highlight or make note of the responses that most resonate with you.

Closing Prayer

Holy Spirit, come and enkindle in us the fire of your love.

Lord Jesus, thank you for our heroes, thank you for the saints.

Please fill us with your love so we may be a light to others.

Please help us be your ordinary heroes.

Amen.

SESSION TWO: A REASONABLE FAITH

“I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.”

— C. S. Lewis

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for this life.

Thank you for our friends and families, our work, our homes, and the Church.

Help us to encourage each other and to nurture this community.

Grant us the grace to create Holy Moments every day, even when we're tired and overwhelmed and just don't feel like it.

Help us become the-best-version-of-ourselves and embrace the joy you made us for.

And help us understand and love our faith more and more every day.

We ask this all in your name.

Amen.

Introduction

Our faith is not one that we have to accept blindly, no questions asked. In fact, we *should* ask questions, we *should* seek understanding. We *should* have reasons for our faith. Reasons we are Catholic, reasons we love Catholicism.

Here are some of the reasons listed in chapter one:

- *Catholicism just makes sense!*
- *It grounds my life.*
- *It stands for what is good and what is right.*
- *Being Catholic is away of life that is kind, compassionate, and wholesome.*

- *It gives meaning to everything I do.*
- *I always feel forgiven and loved.*
- *Two words: Holy Eucharist.*
- *I love knowing holiness is possible for me.*
- *I am part of a worldwide family.*

Discussion

1. Why are you Catholic? What brought you to the faith, and who helped you along the way? Share some of your faith journey with the group.
2. What do you love about Catholicism? What are some things you *don't* love about it? What are some things that you struggle with regarding the faith?
3. In chapter one, did any of the reasons why someone loved being Catholic take you by surprise or challenge your way of thinking about the Church? If so, why?
4. What have you found to be a commonly misunderstood teaching or tradition in Catholicism? How do you counter these misconceptions?

For Next Time

Read pages 31-70. Take note of the memory that most inspires you from the first half of the chapter.

Closing Prayer

Jesus, you generously gave us the gift of the Church. Please show me all the goodness that exists within this gift, and the role you want me to play as a faithful Catholic here and now.

Amen.

SESSION THREE: A MEMORABLE FAITH (PART ONE)

*“Life is like a cash register, in that every account, every thought, every deed,
like every sale, is registered and recorded.”*

— Archbishop Fulton Sheen

Opening Prayer

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Thank you for our friends and families, our work, our homes,
and the Church.

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Grant us the grace to create Holy Moments every day, even
when we're tired and overwhelmed and just don't feel like it.

Help us become the-best-version-of-ourselves and embrace
the joy you made us for.

And help us understand and love our faith more
and more every day.

We ask this all in your name.

Amen.

Introduction

Memories are powerful. The experiences we have and hold on to have a lot to teach us. In the beginning of chapter two, we explore some of the beautiful memories individuals have surrounding the Catholic faith.

Discussion

1. Which memory from the first half of chapter two inspired you the most. Why?
2. Read Patrick's favorite memory on page 31. Have you ever strayed from the Church? If so, how did you make your way back?

3. What memories came to mind while reading this section? Are most of your memories associated with Catholicism positive or negative? Share one that sticks out to you the most.
4. Read Nancy's favorite memory on page 41. What was your reaction to her story? When have you been affected by someone else's faith?
5. Read Tim's favorite memory on page 47. Have you ever witnessed someone else's conversion? How did it feel to see someone you know come into the Church?

For Next Time

Read pages 71-123. Remember to take note of the entry that inspired you the most from this section.

Closing Prayer

Holy Spirit, thank you for guiding us in your ways, and for getting us to where we are today. Help us to continue along the path you have chosen for us, and to remember all the times you have been faithful when we are tempted to stray.
Amen.

SESSION FOUR: A MEMORABLE FAITH (PART TWO)

“I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord; I will remember your wonders of old.”

— Psalm 77:11

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for this life.

Thank you for our friends and families, our work, our homes,
and the Church.

Help us to encourage each other and to nurture this community.

Grant us the grace to create Holy Moments every day, even
when we're tired and overwhelmed and just don't feel like it.

Help us become the-best-version-of-ourselves and embrace
the joy you made us for.

And help us understand and love our faith more
and more every day.

We ask this all in your name.

Amen.

Introduction

While there are many beautiful memories related to Catholicism, there are also painful and traumatic ones. As you conclude chapter two, consider praying for those who haven't had experiences in the Church as wonderful as the ones in this book.

Discussion

1. What memory from this section impacted you the most and why?
2. Read Marv's favorite memory on page 73. Who has God placed in your life to lead you closer to him? How have they done so?

3. Read Mary's favorite memory on page 75. Where do you feel particularly close to God? What do you think it is about that specific place that helps you feel that way?
4. Read Erin's favorite memory on page 108. Has tragedy ever played a role in your faith life? If you feel comfortable, share this occasion with the group.

For Next Time

Read chapter three.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we pray in a special way for all those who have been hurt by the Church, by its leaders and members who have fallen short of what was asked of them. We pray for healing, for forgiveness, and for the return of all those who have wandered away. Please show them how your Son is the Good Shepherd.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, who died for the salvation of all mankind.

Amen.

SESSION FIVE: A HOPEFUL FAITH

“People don’t do anything until they’re inspired. But once they’re inspired there’s nothing they cannot do.”

— Matthew Kelly

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for this life.

Thank you for our friends and families, our work, our homes, and the Church.

Help us to encourage each other and to nurture this community.

Grant us the grace to create Holy Moments every day, even when we’re tired and overwhelmed and just don’t feel like it.

Help us become the-best-version-of-ourselves and embrace the joy you made us for.

And help us understand and love our faith more and more every day.

We ask this all in your name.

Amen.

Introduction

Chapter three reminds us of the importance of dreaming, especially when it comes to Catholicism and the future of the Church. When it comes to dreams, we need to have hope that they *will* be realized, and faith or belief in the *beauty* and *importance* of our dreams.

Discussion

1. Just as the Church experiences dark times, we do in our personal lives as well. How do you hold on to hope when you feel hopeless?

2. What is your dream for the Catholic Church? How can you contribute to this dream?
3. What is one way you can share the Catholic faith, and whom do you want to share it with the most?
4. What legacy do you want to leave behind? How do you hope to accomplish this?

Closing Prayer

Dear God,

Please help us all become difference-makers. Help us to be a light to this dark world. Open our eyes to those you want us to serve, and open our hearts to love each other despite differences, difficulties, and disagreements. Please help us to love like you do.

We love you.

Amen.

CONCLUSION

The Church has come a long way and survived many challenges. It also has a long way to go. We can't leave it up to the hierarchy because they can't re-energize the Catholic Church on their own. Each one of us is invited to take part in this incredible mission, starting where we are, with what we have. The Catholic Church needs you.

How are you going to make a difference in your corner of the world?



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