

# Luke

## IGNATIUS CATHOLIC STUDY BIBLE QUESTIONS

### Welcome

“You are approaching the ‘word of God’. But for thousands of years, . . . the Word of God has been approaching you.”

The following guide is provided to enhance your reading of the Gospel according to Saint Luke using the *Ignatius Catholic Study Bible*. If you are new to this resource or to reading the Bible, we recommend you read the general Introduction before you begin. It explains what it means that Scripture is the Word of God as well as how we understand and interpret it as Catholics. It also introduces the special features of the Study Bible and tells how they can enrich your reading and study. Additionally, the *Introduction to the Gospels* will provide valuable context for your reading.

A simple rhythm of prayer followed by reading and reflection is offered below to guide you through the book one chapter at a time. Questions draw attention to key footnotes and word studies to lead you into a deeper understanding of what you read and then prompt you to consider how to apply what you have learned. For a deeper dive, take advantage of additional features as you go: not just the other footnotes but also cross-references to Scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* that are provided above the footnotes as well as any maps, charts, or essays that are not touched on in the questions.

Don’t miss these helpful icons as you read! They highlight footnotes that pertain to the Church’s criteria for interpreting Scripture (see CCC 112–14):



### Be attentive to the content and unity of Scripture

Notes marked with a Bible icon connect Old Testament passages and New Testament mysteries, fostering appreciation for God’s unified plan.



### Read Scripture in light of the Church’s living tradition

This icon marks notes drawn from the Holy Spirit’s guidance of Church teaching and the spiritual senses of scripture. Here you’ll find official teaching as well as interpretations from Fathers, Doctors, and saints of the Church.



### Be attentive to the “analogy of faith”

Explore notes marked with an icon of keys to learn how the mysteries of faith, revealed in Scripture and defined by the Church, clarify and connect with one another in a unified, coherent way.

May God bless you as you read his word!

of God,\* did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,<sup>7</sup>but emptied himself,<sup>†</sup> taking the form of a servant,<sup>‡</sup> being born in the likeness of men.<sup>§</sup>And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.<sup>¶</sup>Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name,<sup>||</sup>that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,<sup>|||</sup>and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**Shinin**  
12 Therefore, obeyed, so now much more in salvation with f work in you, bo pleasure.  
14 Do all thi tioning,<sup>15</sup>that y children of God crooked and per

2:9–11: Rom 10:9; 14:9; Eph 1:20–21. 2:13: 1 Cor 15:10. 2

**2:7 emptied himself:** The Greek verb *kenōō* means “empty out” or “render void”. The idea is, not that Christ divested himself of divinity when he united himself with humanity, but that he restricted his rightful exercise of certain divine abilities during his earthly life and accepted certain limitations of the human condition. In effect, the Son of God made himself poor in order to make us rich with his grace (2 Cor 8:9) (CCC 472). • Christ emptied himself by compressing the glory of his Godhead within our smallness. What he always was remained perfect and incomprehensible, but what he assumed was in proportion to the measure of our nature (St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Apollinarius*).

**2:8 death on a cross:** The ultimate indignity. Death by crucifixion was the most awful and degrading form of criminal execution in the ancient world. The Romans reserved it for slaves and insurrectionists. See note on Mk 15:24.

**2:9 exalted him:** By raising him from the dead, enthroning him in heaven, and clothing his humanity with divine glory. A similar destiny awaits all who humble themselves as Jesus did (3:21; Lk 14:11).

**2:10 every knee should bow:** An allusion to the divine oath in Is 45:23. • Yahweh swore that all peoples, to the very end of the earth, would acknowledge his Lordship and bow before him in homage. Paul moves Christ into the center of this prophecy as the divine Lord destined to be revered by all. **heaven . . . earth . . . under the earth:** The three principal realms in the world view of ancient Israel (Ex 20:4). Homage will come from all creatures great and small—the angels and saints above, the family of man and beasts spread over the earth, and the dead and the demons of the underworld.

**2:11 confess:** I.e., acknowledge. Included in this open dec

serious that we pur sense of awe at ser the prospect of sinn Encouragement con readers that God’s g desire (intention) at 21; CCC 308) (CC “work”, he address and trembling”, he good deeds were th not boast of your g within you (St. Augu **2:15 pervers** • Deuterono poetic lawsuit that and ingratitude du

*A Thing to Harpagmos (G in the Greek O Occurrences of “robbery”. Its considerable d the leading vi (1) Some, like “something sel*

## Prepare

Read the Introduction to Luke, paying particular attention to the *Structure* and *Themes* of this Gospel. What one thing stands out to you, that you would like to remember?

Read the Outline of Luke to get an overview of the book. What are its major divisions?

## Pray

Use the following questions to guide your reading of Luke, going at a pace that is comfortable to you. Before you begin each new section, pray simply for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit:

*Come, Holy Spirit, open my heart to hear and receive these words as what they truly are, the Word of God. Enlighten my understanding and give me grace to put what I read into practice in my life. Amen.*

## Read and Reflect

Read and reflect on Luke as follows:

- Pray before you read
- Read a section of biblical text by itself
- Read the text again, referring to the notes that accompany the text
- For deeper understanding and to aid in applying what you read, answer the questions that follow. The references at the top of each numbered question correspond to particular notes.

At the end of each chapter, review what you have written and linger where you feel drawn, asking the Lord to speak to your heart and into your life. What do you hear? Respond in prayer and ask his help to live what you hear in your attitudes and actions this week.

# STUDY QUESTIONS

## Chapter 1

### *For understanding*

1. **1:15.** What is the Old Testament significance of Gabriel's prophecy that John the Baptist would "drink no wine nor strong drink"? Who are some other figures who had the same commitment as John?
2. **1:28.** What considerations help us understand the meaning of the title "full of grace" that Gabriel gives to Mary? Why is the Greek more revealing than the traditional rendering that St. Jerome gives? Why is a translation like "highly favored one" inadequate?
3. **1:35.** Why is the angel's use of the term "overshadow" significant? What Old Testament passage uses the term? In that passage, what was overshadowed?
4. **Topical Essay: Mary, Ark of the Covenant.** How does Luke draw upon traditions from Second Samuel and the Books of Chronicles to portray Mary as the Ark of the Covenant?

### *For application*

1. **1:4.** How fully informed are you about your Catholic faith? What are you doing right now to learn it more fully?
2. **1:18, 34.** Compare these two passages. How are they different? How do the ways their questions are worded reveal that Zechariah doubts and Mary believes? If Gabriel had appeared to you, how would you have asked the question?
3. **1:25.** How would a Jewish woman's hopes for the coming of the Messiah influence her desire to bear children? How is Elizabeth's attitude toward her barrenness also a feature of a woman's psychology? How should a Christian regard pregnancy?
4. **Topical Essay: Mary, Ark of the Covenant.** In what respects is it appropriate to compare Mary to the Ark of the Covenant? Do you know of any other New Testament passages where she is compared to the Ark? Why is that comparison important to modern Christians?

## Chapter 2

### *For understanding*

1. **Topical Essay: The Census of Quirinius.** How does a closer look into the facts of the infancy narrative in Luke support both Luke's reliability as a historian and that of the early Church as a channel of historical traditions?
2. **2:7.** What was the legal meaning of the term "first-born" in ancient society? What does the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (see 499–507) say about Jesus' birth to the Virgin Mary?
3. **2:14.** What does the word "peace" in the angels' hymn mean?
4. **2:29–32.** How does Simeon's *Nunc Dimittis* evoke Isaian prophecies? Which ones?

### *For application*

1. **2:14.** How does the "peace among men with whom he is pleased" apply to you? Do you enjoy that peace? If so, how can you grow in it? If not, how can you enter it?
2. **2:19.** Why would Mary ponder the events surrounding Jesus' birth and revelation in her heart? What might these events have meant for her? How have you pondered God's action in your life, and what has it revealed to you?
3. **2:34–35.** While it may be easy to see how Jesus might be "set for the...rise of many", how might he be destined for their fall? In what ways has Jesus and his message been a stumbling block for you? How have you surmounted the problems?
4. **2:49.** Why do you think Jesus (who had been missing for three days) was surprised that his parents were looking for him? Where did he expect they should have looked? How have you looked for Jesus in the wrong places?

## Chapter 3

### *For understanding*

1. **3:4–6.** What is the significance of Luke's quoting the opening chapter of Isaiah's central section (chaps. 40–55)?

2. **3:21–22.** Which two Old Testament oracles resonate in the background of Luke’s account of Jesus’ Baptism by John?
3. **3:23–38.** Why does Matthew trace Jesus’ ancestry forward from Abraham, while Luke traces it back from Jesus to Adam? How can we explain the fact that the generations from David to Jesus in both Gospels are significantly different?
4. **3:23.** Why does Luke note Jesus’ age at the start of his public ministry? What is the connection with King David?

*For application*

1. **3:7–8.** John calls his audience a brood of vipers because they put on a show of repentance without actually repenting inwardly. How hard is it for you to examine your conscience before going to confession? How do you excuse your behavior or dodge the need to repent?
2. **3:16.** In terms of your personal experience, what does it mean for you to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire? How has that Spirit and that fire touched your life?
3. **3:18.** In the preceding verses, how has John “exhorted” the crowds? What is this good news? If it is so good, why threaten people with the prospect of hellfire and damnation?

## Chapter 4

*For understanding*

1. **4:1–13.** How does Luke’s version of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness plot the course of Jesus’ ministry?
2. **4:18–19.** When Jesus quotes Is 61:1–2, how does his audience understand the meaning of the passage? What did Isaiah mean by referring to the jubilee year? What does Jesus mean by it?
3. **4:25–30.** When Jesus invokes the missions of Elijah and Elisha to explain his own ministry, how does he apply them to his own work?
4. **4:43.** How is the kingdom of Christ associated with the kingdom of David? How does Vatican II’s *Lumen Gentium* describe this kingdom as it exists now?

*For application*

1. **4:1–2.** Why do you think the Holy Spirit would expose Jesus to temptation by leading him into the desert? Why do you think he allows you to experience temptation? In what areas are you most vulnerable to it?
2. **4:12.** Jesus here quotes Deut 6:16. What does it mean to “tempt the Lord your God”? How is that different from “taking a step out in faith”? What is your own experience in this regard?
3. **4:22–24.** Jesus’ neighbors reject him because he grew up among them. How have you fared with evangelizing your relatives (or being evangelized by them)? How do you deal with the reactions?
4. **4:39.** What does Simon’s mother-in-law do when Jesus heals her? How has Jesus’ grace in your life influenced your social behavior?

## Chapter 5

*For understanding*

1. **5:12.** At how many levels was leprosy a damaging disease to those who had it?
2. **5:13.** What was the expected outcome for a Jew who touched a leprous outcast? How does Jesus reverse that outcome?
3. **5:21.** What is Jesus challenging when he forgives the sins of the paralyzed man? At what does this action hint?
4. **5:32.** When Jesus says that he did not come to call the righteous, what does he suggest his mission is?

*For application*

1. **5:8–10.** When Peter reacts in astonishment to the great catch of fish, he asks Jesus to depart from him, “for I am a sinful man”. In reply, Jesus tells him not to be afraid. How often do feelings of unworthiness make you feel afraid to approach God? What do you do with that fear?
2. **5:12–13.** What kind of person is the “leper” in your environment? How have you avoided contact? How would Jesus touch this person? How does he want you to do so?
3. **5:18–24.** Why does Jesus respond to the paralyzed man by first forgiving his sins? How has the connection between sin and paralysis shown itself in your life? How has God’s forgiveness allowed you to move?

4. **5:28–32.** What kinds of people in a parish might have others thinking of them as “sinners”? Would you avoid them or welcome them since we are all sinners? How does Jesus’ comment to his critics apply in your own parish situation?

## Chapter 6

### *For understanding*

1. **6:1.** What was the biblical rule regarding work on the Sabbath? How did the Pharisees of NT times reinforce those rules? How does Jesus’ attitudes toward the Sabbath contrast with theirs?
2. **6:3 and 6:4.** What was the “bread of the Presence”? Why was an exception made for David and his men to eat it?
3. **6:20.** In Luke, what does the word “poor” denote? According to St. Ambrose, how does the Lucan version of the Beatitudes reflect the four cardinal virtues?
4. **6:36.** How does Jesus’ emphasis on imitating God’s mercy reformulate the command in Lev 19:2 to imitate Yahweh’s holiness? What is the difference?

### *For application*

1. **6:12.** What need do you think the incarnate Son of God would have for prayer, especially for extended periods of it? What might his prayer have been like?
2. **6:27–31.** How do these verses indicate you should love your enemies? What has love of enemies demanded of you personally? How successful have you been at taking these verses seriously?
3. **6:37–38.** If the principle in verses 37–38 holds true, what happens to you if you fail to forgive those who offend you? Under what conditions, then, will you yourself be forgiven?
4. **6:45.** Apply this verse to your habits of speech. How do you speak when you become irritated or impatient? How do you speak of others (especially family members) who do not behave as you would wish? What do your speech habits say about “the abundance” of your heart?

## Chapter 7

### *For understanding*

1. **7:12.** What are the prospects for the widow of Nain now that her only son has died? What mystical significance does St. Ambrose give the identity of the widow?
2. **7:16.** How does the raising of the widow’s son parallel the mighty works of the prophets Elijah and Elisha?
3. **7:24.** On what two levels is Jesus using the image of the reed shaken by the wind (when talking about John the Baptist)?
4. **7:28.** Why did Jesus consider John the Baptist the greatest of “those born of women”? Look up CCC 719; how does the *Catechism* expand upon this understanding?

### *For application*

1. **7:6–7.** Which words from this passage are used in the liturgy? How does the Church apply the centurion’s words? The centurion asked that his servant be physically healed. What kind of healing do we ask of Jesus in the sacred liturgy?
2. **7:6–9.** What is there about the centurion’s description of his authority that amazes Jesus so much? How much does your faith resemble the centurion’s confidence in Jesus’ authority?
3. **7:35.** What (or who) are the children of wisdom?
4. **7:47.** What difference has God’s forgiveness of your sins made to your love of him? How have you responded to forgiveness?

## Chapter 8

### *For understanding*

1. **8:10.** What does Jesus’ allusion to Is 6:9–10 indicate about his own ministry with reference to Isaiah’s?
2. **8:16–18.** How does the parable of the lamp explain Jesus’ teaching style? How does Augustine understand the parable in moral terms?

3. **8:30.** What is the significance of the name Legion for the demons that possess the Gerasene demoniac?
4. **8:40–56.** What three details link together the healing of the woman with the flow of blood and the raising of the synagogue ruler's daughter?

*For application*

1. **8:8b.** How hard is it for you to hear the Lord speaking to you? How do you listen? What would it take for you to acquire the “ears to hear”?
2. **8:18.** What does it mean to “take heed how you hear”? What does Jesus warn will happen through a consistent failure—or perhaps refusal—to hear properly?
3. **8:21.** What does Jesus suggest is the proper way to hear? What part of the Word of God do you have the most resistance to hearing and then acting upon?
4. **8:22.** In the context of the foregoing passages, why is it significant that the winds and the sea hear Jesus' command and obey him?

## Chapter 9

*For understanding*

1. **9:27.** When Jesus promises that his kingdom will arrive in the lifetime of his contemporaries, to what is he pointing?
2. **9:28–36.** What three levels of significance does the Transfiguration of Jesus have in Luke?
3. **9:31. Word Study: Departure.** How does Luke blend the various shades of meanings of the word *exodus* (departure) in his account of the Transfiguration?
4. **9:35.** What are the Old Testament echoes in this passage? Why is the Father's injunction, “Listen to him”, significant for those who heard it?

*For application*

1. **9:3–4.** Why do you think Jesus tells his disciples to travel without spare clothing or necessities and to stay where they are first received? When you travel, what arrangements do you typically make? How would you contrast your travel patterns with those Jesus asks his disciples to follow?
2. **9:23.** Why would Jesus have told his followers to “deny” themselves, and what do you think they understood him to mean? What would the expression “taking up one's cross” have meant? How often did Jesus say that this should be done? What do these expressions mean to you?
3. **9:49–56.** John's zeal occasionally earned him a response from Jesus that he did not expect. How has Jesus corrected your own zeal for him? Why does he do that?
4. **9:57–62.** Why does Jesus seem to take such a “hard line” toward those who profess an interest in following him? To what extent is being a follower of Jesus more important to you than personal security or family obligations?

## Chapter 10

*For understanding*

1. **10:1.** How does Jesus' appointment of 70 disciples to go on missionary journeys parallel other aspects of Jewish and Old Testament life?
2. **10:7.** Why should Catholics support ministers of the gospel? What does the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* say on this point? (See CCC nos. 2043 and 2122.)
3. **10:30–37.** On a theological level, how does the parable of the Good Samaritan illustrate that holiness as defined by the Old Covenant is surpassed by the New? What Old Testament story parallels the events in this parable?
4. **10:42.** What does Jesus mean when he tells Martha that “one thing is needful”?

*For application*

1. **10:2.** In the contemporary Church, what evidence do you see that the “harvest is plentiful”? What evidence do you see that the laborers are few? Where do you see yourself in this picture?
2. **10:17–20.** How do you rejoice when your evangelistic efforts succeed? How should you rejoice?

3. **10:21–22.** What has the Father hidden from the “wise and understanding”? What approach to learning the faith is Jesus recommending here?
4. **10:40–42.** What attitude do you think prompts Martha to ask Jesus to correct her sister? Granted that Martha is doing something important, why would Jesus say that Mary had chosen the “good portion”, the better part? When you feel the press of everyday obligations, which of the two women do you tend to imitate? How would Jesus address you?

## Chapter 11

### *For understanding*

1. **11:8.** If God already knows what we need, why is perseverance in prayer called for?
2. **11:20.** What is the “finger of God?” What is the parallel here between Jesus’ activity and the incident in Ex 8:19?
3. **11:34.** What is Jesus’ point in referring to the eye as “the lamp” of the body? What kind of light and darkness is Jesus referring to?
4. **11:44.** How can Jesus compare the strictly religious Pharisees to graves that people walk on unaware?

### *For application*

1. **11:1–4.** How often do you ask Jesus to teach you to pray? What do you learn about prayer from the pattern of the Lord’s prayer?
2. **11:13.** Using the note on this verse as a guide, tell why it is significant that Luke changes the gift sought in prayer from “good things” (cf. Mt 7:11) to the Holy Spirit. If you are in the state of grace, why should you continually pray for the Holy Spirit to be given to you? How would you know when you received what you prayed for?
3. **11:24–26.** What does this passage say to you about the need to be active in your response to God’s grace, rather than passive? If you were to remain passive—that is, to accept God’s gifts without otherwise changing—what might happen?
4. **11:33–36.** In Luke’s version, to what does the “lamp under a bushel” refer? Who sees your light if it is on the lamp stand?

## Chapter 12

### *For understanding*

1. **12:1.** How can hypocrisy be compared with leaven (yeast)? What effect is the leaven of the Pharisees likely to have?
2. **12:7.** In this passage, what does the numbering of hairs on the head have to do with Christian martyrdom?
3. **12:38.** What was the span of time from the second to the third watch? When are the servants supposed to be most vigilant for the Master’s return?
4. **12:49.** What does fire symbolize in this passage?

### *For application*

1. **12:16–21.** What are your long-term goals with respect to the income you have or expect to receive? How rich are you in what matters to God?
2. **12:22–26.** What do you worry about most of the time? What effect has that worry had on the way you pray, or the confidence you have in your own value before God?
3. **12:49–53.** How can Jesus be the cause of division and not of peace? How have you experienced the division he is talking about—and which side of it are you on?
4. **12:54–56.** What are some of the signs of the present time that call for interpretation from Jesus’ point of view? How do you recognize the action of God in the world around you or in your own life?

## Chapter 13

### *For understanding*

1. **13:1–5.** How do the incidents of Pilate’s bloodshed and the collapsing tower at Siloam provide examples of the urgency of repentance?

2. **13:16.** Why does Jesus call the synagogue official who corrected the congregation for seeking healing on the Sabbath a hypocrite? Why is healing on the Sabbath appropriate?
3. **13:24.** What does the image of the narrow door stand for?
4. **13:35.** How does Jesus' lament over Jerusalem recall Jeremiah's prophecies of God's withdrawal from the Temple? What is the connection with Jerusalem's future?

*For application*

1. **13:1–5.** How do you treat newspaper accounts of tragic deaths? How often do they remind you of your own need for repentance? If they have not, how should you take advantage of Jesus' admonition?
2. **13:11–12.** In what ways are you spiritually like the woman in the passage? Is the resemblance a matter of an oppressive spirit or of some kind of spiritual atrophy? How do you think Jesus will heal your infirmity?
3. **13:24.** What kind of strength does it take to enter the narrow gate? How will you get the strength?

## Chapter 14

*For understanding*

1. **14:16.** What does the "great banquet" represent? What significance did such banquets have for those of biblical times, and how does Isaiah describe one?
2. **14:17.** How were invitations to banquets customarily issued? What is an example of this practice from the Old Testament?
3. **14:26.** Why does Jesus require us to "hate" our father and mother and relatives? What does he mean?
4. **14:34.** How can salt become tasteless? What is behind the metaphor for the Christian?

*For application*

1. **14:10.** What kind of risk is connected with taking the lowest place at table? Why would true humility seek the lowest place without thought of being elevated or even noticed? What might be some of the benefits of such humility?
2. **14:12–14.** What are your attitudes toward the guests you invite to your home? How closely do your attitudes resemble what Jesus recommends here? When was the last time you invited people like those Jesus lists?
3. **14:18–20.** What kinds of excuses have you given Jesus for not responding to his invitations? What kind of change are you afraid he wants of you?
4. **14:26–33.** What has your decision to follow Jesus cost you thus far? What do you think it might cost you in the future? What should it cost?

## Chapter 15

*For understanding*

1. **15:2.** Why did the Pharisees object to Jesus eating with disreputable men? What do the following parables of Jesus indicate about God?
2. **15:3–7.** As the shepherd who goes after the lost sheep, what does Jesus accomplish? What two traditions related to shepherding does Ezekiel bring together?
3. **15:11–32.** How does the parable of the Prodigal Son narrate the exile and eventual homecoming of historical Israel? How do the prophecies of Ezekiel and Jeremiah regarding Ephraim foreshadow the point Jesus is making in the parable?
4. **15:12.** What do the Old Testament passages cited in the note say to illustrate the shamefulness of the younger son's demand for his inheritance and his squandering of it?

*For application*

1. **15:7.** How is the joy in heaven over one repentant sinner sometimes felt even on earth? Why is there more joy over a repentant sinner than over a faithful Christian? When have you experienced or been made aware of such joy?
2. **15:12–13.** In what ways does the younger brother violate the command to honor his father? How serious a violation is it? What temptations have you faced to break the bonds of God's parental care for you? How does your conduct compare with that of the younger son?
3. **15:28–30.** In what ways does the older brother violate the command to honor his father? How serious a violation is it? When have you become angry at God, and what happened as a result?

4. **15:20, 22, 28, 31–32.** What verbs in these verses illustrate the father’s attitude toward both sons? What indication is there that the father regards the behavior of both sons as wrong? What is God’s attitude toward your failures (or those of people you love) when you (or they) repent?

## Chapter 16

### *For understanding*

1. **16:1–8.** What does it mean to say that the parable of the Unrighteous Steward is about “urgency and preparedness”?
2. **16:8.** How did the steward show himself to be shrewd?
3. **16:16.** What does the expression “the law and the prophets” mean? Why does Jesus point specifically to John the Baptist here? What might Jesus mean by saying that people are entering the kingdom of heaven “violently”?
4. **16:22–23.** What is the distinction between “Abraham’s bosom” and Hades in these two verses?

### *For application*

1. **16:8.** Although this verse seems to apply mostly to financial prudence, in what other ways might the “sons of this world” be more prudent than the “sons of light”? Is Jesus here suggesting that the sons of light imitate worldly prudence, or is he suggesting prudence of a different sort?
2. **16:10.** Why is it true that a person who is honest or dishonest in small matters acts the same way in large ones? How has this truth been borne out in your own experience?
3. **16:15.** What might some examples be from your experience of things (acts, attitudes, habits, possessions, etc.) that are estimable in human opinion but abominable in God’s sight? How would you know that God regards them as abominable?
4. **16:31.** How easy is it to explain away a miraculous event? If the miracle is placed in a framework of faith, is it as easy then to explain the miracle away? How well did Jesus’ own Resurrection persuade his contemporaries?

## Chapter 17

### *For understanding*

1. **17:2.** Why does Jesus wish such a severe punishment on those who cause one of the “little ones” to sin?
2. **17:4.** What does Jesus mean by saying that you should forgive your brother if he comes to you seven times for forgiveness? What does the *Catechism* say about this (CCC 2284–87)?
3. **17:18.** What Old Testament incident does the cleansing of the Samaritan leper recall? What does the healing indicate at a deeper level?
4. **Topical Essay: Jesus, the Son of Man.** How might Jesus expect his disciples to unpack from the expression “Son of Man” claims of divine authority? How does Daniel use the expression? What are some instances from the Gospels where Jesus uses the expression in a similar way?

### *For application*

1. **17:3–4.** Why do you think Jesus prefaces a command to rebuke or forgive your brother by telling you to be on your guard? Against what?
2. **17:7–10.** How do you feel when you have done something virtuous? How does this passage say you should behave? What do you think of Jesus’ recommendation about your attitude toward being good?
3. **17:11–18.** From what did the Samaritan leper’s faith save him? For what? What do you think happened to the other nine after they were cleansed and went to show themselves to the priests (as Jesus told them to)? When your prayer is answered, do you act like the one leper who returned to give thanks or the nine who did not?
4. **17:20–24.** What kind of temptations do you face to look someplace other than where you have been taught for the “real” kingdom of God or “real Christianity”? How have you followed Jesus’ admonition not to run off and investigate? (If you did anyway, how did the result validate Jesus’ warning?)

## Chapter 18

### *For understanding*

1. **18:15. Word Study: Infants.** To what question is the noun “infants” tied in this passage? To what answer do the various passages cited in the study lead?

2. **18:16.** What does this passage have to do with the practice of Infant Baptism? What evidence is there that the early Church practiced Infant Baptism?
3. **18:22.** How does Jesus expose the rich official's greatest weakness? What is the lesson for us? How do Joseph of Arimathea and Zacchaeus, who were both rich, contrast with this official?
4. **18:35.** Who was the blind man at Jericho? What irony is attached to his behavior? What moral application did St. Augustine give this passage?

*For application*

1. **18:1–8.** What in the passage suggests that the widow was sure of the justice of her case? How does Jesus apply the moral of the story to his audience? How does the widow's perseverance in pressing her case compare with your own perseverance in prayer?
2. **18:9–14.** Why is it dangerous to compare your practice of your faith with the practice of others? How satisfied (or discontented) are you with your own religious practices? How do you think Jesus looks on that satisfaction (or discontent)?
3. **18:28–30.** What have you given up to follow Jesus? How have you experienced what he offers in exchange?

## Chapter 19

*For understanding*

1. **19:9.** How did Zacchaeus show himself to be a true son of Abraham?
2. **19:11.** On what two counts does Jesus' parable of the ten gold coins correct the disciples' mistaken notion that the kingdom of God will appear immediately when Jesus enters Jerusalem?
3. **19:12–27.** What are the historical, moral, and theological layers of significance in the parable of the Pounds?
4. **19:30.** What is the significance of riding into Jerusalem on a colt that no one has ever ridden? Why the colt of a donkey?

*For application*

1. **19:3–4.** What was Zacchaeus' attitude to his own dignity in his desire to see Jesus? How willing are you to make a fool of yourself so that salvation may come to your house (v. 9)?
2. **19:13–26.** In the parable, what did the king tell his servants to do with the money he gave them? What sorts of gifts has God given you to serve him with? How have you "traded" with these gifts, and how have you fared in their growth or decline?
3. **19:39–40.** When have you seen someone who was enthusiastic for God in public? What was your reaction to that enthusiasm? When have you shown enthusiasm yourself for him in public? How do you think God looks upon those who are unashamed to show their love for him in front of others?
4. **19:41–44.** Why would Jerusalem be to blame for not knowing the time of its visitation? What does "know" mean here? When have you failed to know God's visitation in your life? What have been the consequences?

## Chapter 20

*For understanding*

1. **20:9–16.** How does the parable of the Wicked Tenants recount Israel's Old Testament history? What is its point? Why does Jesus compare Israel with a vineyard?
2. **20:17–18.** What three texts does Jesus combine to employ the image of a stone? What are some New Testament echoes of these texts?
3. **20:27–40.** What is the substance of the Sadducees' dilemma? How does Jesus deal with it? What is the significance of Jesus' reference to the burning bush to prove his point?
4. **20:36.** What does it mean to say that the saints in glory are "equal" to the angels? How do we know that belief in a general resurrection is central to Christian faith?

*For application*

1. **20:1–8.** To the Pharisees, Jesus was an upstart who had no authority to do what he was doing. How do you recognize those in the Church who have genuine authority? How would you know if a charismatic teacher had a genuine charism?

2. **20:9–19.** What authority did the wicked tenants think they had to take over the vineyard? How might you apply this parable—including Jesus’ warning—to the claim of dissident theologians that they have the expertise to redefine Church teaching?
3. **20:36–38.** How does this passage address the grief you might feel at the death of a loved one or an acquaintance? What does it say about the cult of “dead saints”?

## Chapter 21

### *For understanding*

1. **21:5–36.** What catastrophe does Jesus prophesy in the Olivet Discourse that gives us a historical preview of the Last Judgment and the end of the world?
2. **21:15.** In what respect is Jesus telling his disciples to be unlike professional orators when they come into a courtroom? Who will prepare them? Who provided the first example of how this works?
3. **21:22.** What are the “days of vengeance”? What does the citation from Daniel describe? How is the expression used in the Greek Old Testament?
4. **21:24.** From what Old Testament passages does Jesus draw to describe Jerusalem’s demise? Look up the passages cited in the note.

### *For application*

1. **21:2–4.** Whether your gift to God is money, time, or skill, do you give out of what you have left over and available or out of what you have to live on? Either way, how do you feel about the significance of your gift? How do you think God regards it?
2. **21:5–6.** How do you think the Church might function if all the buildings in Rome and the Vatican were destroyed? To what do we look for permanence?
3. **21:12–19.** How would you apply this passage to your present situation with relatives, friends, or neighbors? How is Jesus asking you to prepare for resistance from these people? If you have ever met genuine resistance or persecution, how did you give testimony?
4. **21:34.** How does the present cultural environment encourage your heart to become sleepy? What does it mean in scriptural terms for the “heart” to be weighed down with dissipation? What is Jesus calling on you to do about that?

## Chapter 22

### *For understanding*

1. **22:1.** How were the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover structured?
2. **22:17.** Of the four cups of wine used at the Seder (Passover) meal, to which does the passage most likely refer? Which was probably the eucharistic cup?
3. **22:19.** With what gesture did the early Christians associate the Eucharist? What happens to the Covenant when Jesus consecrates the bread? How does the Church understand Jesus’ command to the Twelve to “do this”?
4. **22:19. Word Study: Remembrance.** How is the term for “remembrance” used in the Greek Old Testament? How is it used in the New Testament? What does this “memorial” do in addition to reminding us of Jesus’ saving death?
5. **22:31–32.** Why does Jesus display a special interest in Peter? How does the *Catechism* apply this passage?

### *For application*

1. **22:7–13.** What is your experience with attending or conducting a Seder (Passover) meal? What did you learn from it about your faith? If you have not attended or conducted one, how might you plan one?
2. **22:21–27.** Why do you suppose that an argument about who was greatest would break out among the Twelve at this particular point? In times of family stress (such as trying to decide how to care for an infirm parent), what kinds of arguments might arise among siblings? How would Jesus stop the argument?
3. **22:42–44.** When you pray in times of trouble, do you pray that God remove the trouble or give you the strength to get through it? How do you think you should pray?
4. **22:61–62.** What was a time when Jesus revealed to you the full impact of one of your own sins? How did the revelation come about? What was your response? Why is it beneficial for Jesus to “look” at you that way?

## Chapter 23

### *For understanding*

1. **23:30.** What was the context of the passage from Hosea to which Jesus alludes? To whom was the passage originally directed? How does Jesus apply it?
2. **23:31.** What or who is the green wood and the dry wood? How did Ezekiel use images of burning wood?
3. **23:34.** How does the Passion of Jesus parallel the movement of Psalm 22? What are some specific parallels?
4. **23:46.** How does Jesus demonstrate that he is in control even on the Cross? How does his cry echo Psalm 31? How does the psalm end?

### *For application*

1. **23:1–5.** How do your political views align with your religious convictions? If they differ, which is likely to win out when you are in the voting booth?
2. **23:23–25.** If you are pursuing a cause you know to be right, how do you respond to the vocal opposition of groups or authorities? How have you handled situations where you had to take a position that was just but unpopular or “against policy”?
3. **23:34.** How do you respond to persons who, with full intention and malice, attempt to cause you serious harm? Why should you forgive as Jesus does?
4. **23:46.** What is there about your life that you commit into the Father’s hands? Why should you not wait until the last moment to commit yourself to him?

## Chapter 24

### *For understanding*

1. **24:1–53.** What are the “many proofs” cited in Acts that Jesus rose from the dead?
2. **24:30.** How does the structure of the Emmaus episode reflect the structure of the eucharistic liturgy?
3. **24:39.** How has the evidence for the truth of the Resurrection mounted up to this point? What type of body does Jesus have, if it is no longer earthly?
4. **24:46.** Which Old Testament passages foretell Jesus’ rejection, Passion, and death? What is the Old Testament background of the Resurrection?

### *For application*

1. **24:25.** What does it mean to be “slow of heart to believe”? How did the disciples show a wish to believe, and how did they signal their unbelief? How does this hesitancy resemble your own when it comes to the preaching you hear?
2. **24:32.** What changed the disciples’ slowness of heart? How has your own heart “burned within you” as you read or heard the Scriptures? What has that “burning” meant to you?
3. **24:38.** What questions do you have about the Christian message? How do they trouble you? Why do you have them? What kind of answer was Jesus expecting from the disciples to his questions?
4. **24:41–43.** If you have doubts about the Christian message, what would it take to convince you? Jesus here gives a practical demonstration of his reality. What kind of demonstration are you looking for? How hard have you looked for it?