

Unit 5 Reading Guide Answer Key

God Revealed through Jesus and the Church

Chapter 15: The Gospels

Article 65: Sharing the Story

1. Reflecting on the events they had experienced, and guided by the Holy Spirit, the human authors of the Bible wrote about the truth revealed to them about how God was acting in their history.
2. The life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ are the climax of the whole Bible.
3. The word *gospel* is translated from a Greek word meaning “good news.”
4. The Gospels, then, proclaim the “good news” that Jesus is God’s fullest revelation to humanity.
5. Scholars have identified three stages in this process of forming the Gospels: (1) the life and teachings of Jesus, (2) oral tradition, and (3) the written Gospels.

Article 66: The Synoptic Gospels: Similar but Different

1. Each of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—emphasizes certain aspects of Jesus’ life and teachings that their communities needed to hear.
2. The Gospels offer accounts of Jesus’ life, but they are not exactly biographies.
3. It is fair to say that the Gospel authors were more concerned about the meaning of certain events in Jesus’ life than in perfectly describing his life’s every detail.
4. All this leads biblical scholars to describe the Gospels as a unique literary form. Think of them as religious or theological biographies that are based on the words and deeds of Jesus Christ.
5. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the four Gospel writers, or Evangelists, focus on the themes and aspects of Jesus’ life and teaching that are most meaningful to their respective Christian communities.
6. Because three of the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—are similar in their style and content, they are called synoptic Gospels. *Synoptic* comes from a Greek word meaning “seeing together”.
7. Many scholars believe that Mark was the first Gospel written and that Matthew and Luke use Mark as a source for their Gospels. Matthew and Luke also seem to have some common passages that are not in Mark. Scholars theorize that these came from another common source they call Quelle, or the Q source.



Article 67: Major Events in the Synoptic Gospels

1. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke include infancy narratives, accounts of Jesus' birth and childhood. These Gospels use the events surrounding Jesus' birth to express important truths about who he is. (Extra note: The synoptic Gospel that does not include accounts of Jesus' birth and infancy is the Gospel of Mark.)
2. Because Matthew's audience is Jewish, he begins his Gospel with Jesus' genealogy, emphasizing his Jewish ancestry. Jesus' coming into the world is the climax of Israel's history.
3. The author of Luke, on the other hand, is writing to a mostly Gentile audience in Greece. This community probably includes men and women from a wide variety of backgrounds and ethnicities, both rich and poor. Luke focuses attention on oppressed and marginalized people to emphasize Christ's compassion and justice.
4. Matthew and Luke include some of Jesus' most profound and significant teachings, in particular the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes describe the actions and attitudes by which one can discover genuine happiness.
5. At the very center of our faith are the Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ, which is called the Paschal Mystery. The Passion of Christ refers to the suffering Jesus endured in the final days of his life. The people behind this are the chief priests and elders, and the Sanhedrin, the ruling council of Jewish leaders, back them up. They turn Jesus over to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, to be executed.
6. Christ's Resurrection is the cornerstone of our faith. In his First Letter to the Corinthians, Saint Paul writes, "If Christ has not been raised, then empty [too] is our preaching; empty, too, your faith" (15:14).
7. Jesus Christ's Resurrection appearances end with his Ascension. Though we cannot see his physical presence in human form, Jesus is still present in the Eucharist and he is present in his people, the Church.

Article 68: Jesus: Storyteller and Miracle Worker

1. Parables are short stories that use everyday images to communicate religious messages.
2. The Kingdom of God (or sometimes "Kingdom of Heaven") is the goal of God's plan of salvation, when God rules over the hearts of people and a new social order, based on unconditional love, is established.
3. To really understand Jesus' parables, it is helpful to know that they often end with an unexpected twist meant to surprise Christ's original audience.
4. Jesus used not only words to teach about the Kingdom of God but also actions to show that he was already making the Kingdom present—very powerful actions called miracles. Miracles are signs or wonders that can only be attributed to divine power.
5. Jesus' miracles can be categorized into four types: healings, exorcisms, control over nature, and restoration of life.



Article 69: From a Beloved Friend: The Gospel of John

1. The use of poetic language in the Gospel of John is one of the things that sets it apart from the synoptic Gospels. It contains no parables and far fewer miracles than the synoptic Gospels. Jesus also talks a lot more, giving lengthy speeches at various times. John's Gospel also highlights the Beloved Disciple.
2. Instead of an account of Jesus' birth or early ministry, it [the Gospel of John] begins with a poetic prologue. Where else in the Bible have you heard the phrase "In the beginning"? This tells us that the beginning of the Gospel of John is also about creation—with a little bit of a twist.
3. First, the "Word" is a title for Jesus who was with God, who "was God" (John 1:1) from the beginning of time. Second, it is through the Word, the Son of God, that creation comes into existence.
4. In a few short verses, the prologue establishes that Jesus Christ is the Divine, Eternal Son of God; that he participated in the work of creation; and that he has taken on our human nature to lead the human race to salvation.
5. John's Gospel provides a more mystical and divine portrayal of Jesus than any of the synoptic Gospels. The author makes it clear that knowing Jesus Christ is knowing God.
6. The Gospel itself is divided into two parts. The first part, called "The Book of Signs," contains seven miracles, which John calls "signs," that point to Jesus' divine nature. The second main section of John's Gospel is called the Book of Glory.
7. Next, Jesus gives his disciples a new commandment, love one another. Here, Christ is describing the defining characteristic of a Christian community.

Article 70: Jesus: God in the Flesh

1. Jesus Christ has "been there" and is our ultimate guide in life.
2. The Gospels help us understand that Jesus is God's Word Made Flesh, and through him, God is most fully revealed to us. Saint Paul says that Jesus Christ "is the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15).
3. Another way to state this is that Jesus Christ is one Divine Person with two natures—a human nature and a divine nature.
4. This mystery—Jesus Christ, the Divine Son of God, becoming man—is called the Incarnation.
5. Incarnation comes from a Latin word meaning "to become flesh," referring to the mystery of Jesus Christ, the Divine Son of God, becoming man.
6. Because Jesus Christ is true God and true man, he is the fullness of Divine Revelation.

Chapter 16: The Acts of the Apostles and the Letters

Article 71: Acts of the Apostles: Passing the Baton

1. Before his Ascension into Heaven, Jesus passed his saving mission to the Apostles.
2. When you read the first line of the Acts of the Apostles, do you notice to whom the book is written? If you go back and read the first verse of the Gospel of Luke, you will see that it is addressed to the same person: Theophilus. This is because the Acts of the Apostles is part two of Luke's account.



3. After the Apostles choose a successor for Judas, they observe the Feast of Pentecost. The new Pentecost in Acts tells how Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to guide the Church.
4. "The Way" is one of the earliest names for the Christian community.
5. The troubles inside the community are caused primarily by quarrels between groups of Christians. The biggest disagreement is over what to do with Gentile believers. Specifically, do the Gentile believers need to follow Jewish Laws to be Christians, especially the laws on food and circumcision? Ultimately the Council of Jerusalem, the Church's first Ecumenical Council, resolves this question.
6. On his way to arrest some Jewish Christians in Damascus, Saul has an incredible vision of Christ saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" (Acts 9:4). This vision completely changes Saul's life—he quickly converts and is baptized a Christian.
7. Most of the second half of the Book of Acts covers the travels of Saint Paul and his companions in the lands around the Mediterranean Sea. In three separate journeys, Paul focuses his missionary work on spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.

Article 72: Paul's Letters: Time Machine and Guidebook

1. To help them [the early Christian communities], Saint Paul writes many letters, or epistles, to these communities and their leaders, offering advice, criticism, and encouragement.
2. Paul is sometimes called the Apostle to the Gentiles, and it would be difficult to find someone better for this task. He was born in Tarsus (located in modern-day Turkey), which makes him a Roman citizen—a status that affords him important privileges. He is also a well-educated Jew who is fluent in Hebrew and Greek. Prior to his conversion, Paul had studied with a respected rabbi and had become a zealous Pharisee.
3. There are thirteen Pauline letters in the New Testament, written by Saint Paul or by disciples who wrote in his name.
4. Nine of the letters are addressed to entire communities. The other four are letters to individuals. Three of these are called Pastoral Letters (First and Second Timothy and Titus) and are addressed to leaders, or pastors, of a community.

Article 73: Letters to Everyone: The Non-Pauline Letters

1. There are eight non-Pauline letters in the New Testament. The first is the Letter to the Hebrews, whose author is unknown and whose title comes from the audience it addresses.
2. The rest of the letters are called Catholic letters. In this context, *Catholic* does not specifically refer to the Catholic Church. The word *catholic* is originally a Greek word meaning "universal." These letters were not written to specific communities or individuals, but rather to the universal Church—all the Christian communities.
3. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews explains how Jesus is the High Priest and the fulfillment of Jewish history.
4. James's letter is a strong admonishment that worship alone is not enough, and that we need to live out our faith by caring for one another.



5. Peter addresses the Christian communities who are suffering from persecution, offering them encouragement to persevere in their faith.
6. John centers his message on the key teaching of Christ: love one another. Jude warns the Church about teachers who are leading the people away from the true faith.

Article 74: The Book of Revelation: A Message of Hope

1. In the late first century, many Church communities were persecuted by the Romans, particularly the seven churches of Asia.
2. John uses a literary style filled with symbols and dramatic imagery, a style Jews and early Christians associated with times of crisis. Its coded language may have also helped avoid putting readers at risk by using imagery that only Christians would understand.
3. The Revelation to John (sometimes called The Book of Revelation) might be one of the most misunderstood books in the Bible. Some people wrongly use it to try to predict the end of the world.
4. The Book of Revelation is an example of apocalyptic literature, a literary form that uses dramatic and symbolic language to offer hope to a people in crisis.
5. In the first century, the Church went through intense periods of persecution. During this period, Roman emperors were believed to be divine, and Christians were sometimes forced to worship them. Refusal to offer incense at a Roman altar could mean death. Many Christians chose to give up their lives rather than deny their faith.
6. The Book of Revelation sends a message that is loud and clear to these persecuted Christians: have courage and keep the faith, even in the face of death.
7. John reminds them that God is with them, even in their darkest and most painful moments.

Article 75: Passing It On

1. The process of passing on the Gospel message is called Sacred Tradition.
2. The responsibility of passing on Sacred Tradition given to the Apostles and their successors is called Apostolic Succession. This is the reason Sacred Tradition is also called the Apostolic Tradition. It refers to the uninterrupted transmittal of apostolic preaching and authority from the Apostles directly to their successors, the bishops.
3. In keeping with the Lord's command, the Gospel is handed on through two means: Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. These two means of transmitting the faith both flow from a single source: the Deposit of Faith.
4. The responsibility of passing on and interpreting the Deposit of Faith belongs to the Magisterium. The Magisterium is the Church's living teaching office, which consists of all bishops, in communion with the Pope.
5. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Magisterium is responsible for teaching and defining dogma, the central teachings of the Church that are considered definitive and authoritative.
6. Acting in harmony with the Magisterium, we all play a part in passing on the Good News of Jesus Christ.



Chapter 17: Scripture in the Life of the Church

Article 76: Sacred Scripture: Food for the Soul

1. As Paul said to Timothy, “All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16–17).
2. Saint Jerome (345–420) wisely taught that “ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ”¹ (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, number 133).
3. Knowing, praying with, and understanding Scripture is a basic necessity for every Christian.

Article 77: The Prayer of the Church: Getting into the Rhythm

1. Before proceeding further, it is important to know that liturgy is the Church’s official, public, communal prayer. The word liturgy comes from the Greek word *leitourgia*, meaning “work of the people.” Liturgy is the work of the whole People of God.
2. The Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office, is the official public, *daily* prayer of the Catholic Church.
3. The Liturgy of the Hours is arranged into four-week cycles that are adjusted for specific feast days and other seasonal celebrations. The daily practice is centered on two primary “hours” each day: morning and evening. Additional prayers bring the total to seven times each day. The prayers for the Liturgy of the Hours are found in a book called the breviary.
4. When we gather to celebrate Mass, we experience the presence of Christ in several ways and every one of those ways is based in Scripture.
5. We experience Christ in the People of God who gather to celebrate the Mass. In fact, we use the term Body of Christ to refer to Jesus’ Body and Blood in the Eucharist and also to refer to the entire Church.
6. We experience Christ in the celebrant, the priest or bishop who presides over the liturgy. We experience Christ in the Liturgy of the Word, which is most of the first half of the Mass. The homily offers a reflection on how we can put the teachings from Scripture into practice.
7. We experience Christ in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, which is most of the second half of the Mass. The various forms of the Eucharistic Prayer contain many biblical images and phrases.

Article 78: The Lord’s Prayer: An Essential Conversation

1. Prayer is lifting up of one’s mind and heart to God.
2. Although there are a multitude of prayers and ways of praying, the Lord’s Prayer is the most central prayer to our faith.
3. The Lord’s Prayer is made up of seven petitions, or requests, for grace or blessings from God.
4. It [the Lord’s Prayer] has an essential role in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist.
5. It [the Lord’s Prayer] is a prayer held in common with other Christians.



Article 79: The Right Thing to Do: Morality in the Bible

1. When we face dilemmas concerning what is right and wrong, we are walking within the realms of morality.
2. Praying regularly and reading and studying the Bible are key ways to establish a foundation for a good moral life.
3. We should all be familiar with some proven biblical guidelines for our moral faith: the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Great Commandment, to name a few.
4. Mary, the Mother of God, offers us an unparalleled role model and an example of faithfulness and obedience to God.
5. If there is any one moral law that Jesus placed above any other, it would be the Law of Love. Jesus is our shining example of what it means to live a moral human life.

Article 80: *Lectio Divina*: Listening to the Word

1. Listening to God is absolutely necessary if we want to deepen our spiritual life.
2. One way we can do this is by reading Scripture using an ancient form of prayer called *lectio divina*. *Lectio divina*, a Latin term meaning “divine reading,” is a form of meditative prayer focused on a Scripture passage.
3. In fact, since ancient times, this spiritual practice has been compared to a cow quietly chewing its cud. It has become a symbol of how we are to ruminate on the Word of God.
4. Start with a few minutes of silence to calm your mind before proceeding through these four stages: lectio (reading), meditatio (meditation), oratio (prayer), and contemplatio (contemplation).
5. Sometimes afterward, people like to add another stage called actio (action).

Article 81: Common Catholic Devotions

1. Devotional prayers, also known simply as devotions, are personalized prayers that have developed outside the liturgy of the Church but lead us to it. Two of the most well-known and commonly practiced devotions are the Stations of the Cross and the Rosary.
2. In the years after Jesus’ Resurrection and Ascension, early Christians would sometimes make pilgrimages to Jerusalem. While there, they prayerfully walked the Via Dolorosa (Latin for “way of sorrow”), the path Jesus walked in the last hours of his life.
3. The Stations of the Cross became a popular devotion in the Middle Ages. Because it was not easy to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, churches developed a “virtual” way for people to travel the Via Dolorosa, creating artistic representations of the events in Jesus Christ’s Passion and death.
4. The Rosary is a devotional prayer that honors the Virgin Mary and helps us meditate on Christ’s life and mission. As we pray each decade, we meditate on an event from Christ’s life. The events are grouped into three categories, called “Mysteries,” that focus on Jesus’ birth, Passion, and Resurrection. They are the Joyful Mysteries, the Sorrowful Mysteries, and the Glorious Mysteries, respectively.



5. In 2002, Pope Saint John Paul II added another series called the Luminous Mysteries, which focus on Christ's public ministry.
6. Praying the Rosary is a meditative experience that offers a deep sense of peace that springs from God's grace.

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Endnote Cited in a Quotation from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Second Edition

1. *Dei Verbum* 25, cf. *Phil* 3:8 and St. Jerome, *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri xviii* prol.: J. P. Migne, ed., Patrologia Latina (Paris, 1841–1855) 24, 17b.

