

Sunday School Curriculum through the Gospel of Matthew

by Pax Domini Press ©

Sample Packet

Introduction

At the end of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus mandates His apostles to make disciples by baptizing all nations in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and by "teaching them to observe all things." The teaching, or catechesis, is essential to the baptismal process of becoming a disciple of Christ. One might say that like baptism, it too is a washing, a washing in the Word of Christ, even as Spirit-wrought words from Jesus' mouth are poured over the disciple, each word working God's work – Law and Gospel – upon the hearer. These words, seeds all, generate the kingdom of God in the heart of the hearer. Neither the hearer nor the apostolic teacher makes this kingdom grow, but God gives the growth.

As an essential part of a child's catechesis, the Gospel of Matthew serves as an excellent introduction to Christ's words. The Gospel of Matthew, indeed, was written not as a history book for biblical academics, but as a catechism for disciples. As the New Testament's first book, and as one of the four great testimonies to the Gospel, Matthew's Gospel, from beginning to end, is the project of this curriculum, *Teaching Them to Observe All Things*.

Dr. David Scaer, Matthew scholar and theologian at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, reviewed this curriculum. He writes:

"Many Lutherans know scattered verses from the Bible which they committed to memory as children. Few know the bible book by book. In 'Teaching them to observe all things', Pastor Peter Burfeind takes a young scholar through the Gospel of Matthew from the genealogy to the resurrection. The lessons correspond to the school year beginning in September and take into consideration the liturgical church year. Students who use this material will have a deeper knowledge of what is rightfully called the most important book ever written. Materials are so broadly presented that they can be used also at the high school level. 'Teaching them to observe all things", a verse taken from the conclusion of Matthew', will go along way in showing that Jesus is the revealer and revelation of God."

- Dr. David Scaer

Title	Text	Theme
Jesus' Ancestry	Matt. 1: 1-17	The Old Testament leads to Jesus
The Birth of Jesus	Matt. 1: 18-25	The Birth of Jesus; the meaning of His Name; His humanity and divinity
The Flight into Egypt	Matt. 2	The theme of Epiphany; a light to the gentiles; the feast day of Holy Innocents
John the Baptist	Matt. 3	The work of John the Baptist; the Season of Advent; the baptism of Christ
Temptation and Ministry	Matt. 4	The temptation of Jesus; the calling of the disciples; the beginning of His ministry
The Sermon on the Mount	Matt. 5-7	A read through of the entire sermon; a review of the beatitudes
The Sermon on the Mount	Matt. 5-7	A review of the doctrines of the Sermon on the Mount
Nine Miracles	Matt. 8-9	A review of 9 miracles of Jesus; the manifestation of Jesus' divinity and authority over sin, death, and the devil (Epiphany)
The Sent Ones	Matt. 10	The doctrine of the ministry; the definition of "apostle"; a review of the 12 apostles
Jesus' Ministry	Matt. 11: 1-27	Review of Gospel to this point; Review of John the Baptist; Jesus, the "friend of sinners"

What is unique about this Matthew Curriculum?

This curriculum (Levels 2-4) takes the child through the entire Gospel, from beginning to end. The child will hear the entire Gospel. While the curriculum is set for a typical school year – three quarters from September through May – it could easily be made to extend for four quarters, or even more.

Level 1 material also covers the whole Gospel, but in more childlike language. Each lesson includes the reading for the day in poetic form (about 7-10 stanzas) in addition to some introductory review and explanation.

Assuming the curriculum begins in September, the curriculum includes a lesson on the Reformation set around the time of the end of October. If the curriculum is begun at a different time, this lesson can be skipped and used later.

How does a Pax Domini Press curriculum work?

Purchasers of a Pax Domini Press curriculum receive a CD with four levels of materials. Level 1 is for 4-5 year olds. Level 2 is for 6-7 year olds. Level 3 is for 8-9 year olds. And level 4 is for 10-12 year olds. These designations are approximate, and different congregations will make different determinations as to which levels they will use for their children.

Each level will receive 52 pages of material, four pages per lesson, in PDF format. Lessons include Bible reading, questions on the text, study of relevant situations, review activities, hymn studies, and a variety of other activities. Level 1 material will always have a coloring page or letter-tracing page with each lesson in addition to an extra activity included in the Activities folder on the CD. The teacher's manual for Level 1 also provides other activities to be done for the littler children.

Teachers may do what they wish with the PDF files. They may simply print them out in color or black and white. They may print them in booklet form if the congregation's copier has that capability, or they may print them in booklet form at a copy professional. Booklet's may also be purchased through Pax Domini Press for a price significantly cheaper than most commercial copy professionals.

Levels 2-4 also include memory verses and glossary of terms at the end of their materials.

What is in this sample packet?

This sample packet includes three different lessons, beginning with Level 1, Level 3, and Level 4. Each lesson is four pages.

What about Teacher's Editions?

Because teacher's often sacrifice going to Bible Study in order to teach Sunday School, Pax Domini strives to provide extra material that will challenge the teacher as well. With this curriculum is not only included a teacher's manual for each level that will provide answers, suggestions, and a brief outline of the theme for the day, but also a commentary for each lesson on the Gospel of Matthew.

The Beatitudes

Introduction

Jesus means "He saves us from our sins." Immanuel means "God with us." Jesus is God, Who has come to be with us and to save us from our sins.

He was baptized, and the Father declared, "You are My beloved Son." The Holy Spirit came down as a dove.

Then Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He remained faithful to the Lord God. He defeated the devil for us. He crushed the devil under His feet.

There are many blessings for us because of Jesus. A blessing is a good word or a good thing that comes from God. We ask God to bless our food, so that it will be good for us.

Jesus says that we are blessed. He teaches this in His first words to us in the Gospel of Matthew. These are called the Beatitudes.



The Beatitudes

Disciples by the Lord were called
They followed Him, their nets they left.
And on the mountain Jesus sat
To teach them how by Him they're blessed.

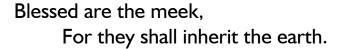
Here are His teachings, one by one: "Beatitudes," they're known by name. Each one begins with "Blessed are..."

Each beatitude begins the same.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

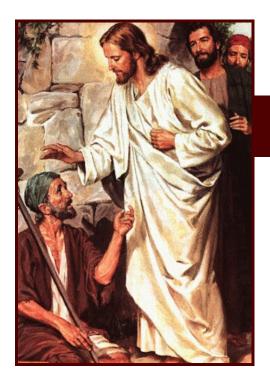


Blessed are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.

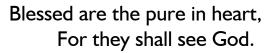




Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.



Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.







Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad,

for great is your reward in heaven,

for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



Lesson One - Jesus' Ancestry

Theme The fulfillment of the Old Testament is Jesus Christ.

Text Matthew I: I-I7

Memory Matthew 1: 21 – "You shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

Terms Geneaology – A list of a person's forefathers.

Begot - "Gave birth to."

Generations – The life of a forefather, to the time they gave birth to a son.

Captivity – Slavery.

Introduction

There are four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We will be learning the Gospel of Matthew this year. At the end of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says to Eleven disciples: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and Io, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen."

Disciples are made by baptism and by teaching. This year, we will be taught all things that Jesus taught in the Gospel of Matthew. As Jesus has promised, He is with us to the end of the age.

The Gospel according to Matthew begins with Jesus' ancestry. This ancestry is a genealogy listing all the names of Jesus' fathers and forefathers going all the way back to Abraham.

Some of the names are familiar. Most of the names are



St. Matthew writes his Gospel.

not. The names retell the history of the Old Testament. By including these names the Gospel is showing that Jesus' life is a continuation of the Old Testament. In fact, the life of Jesus is what the whole Old Testament was leading to!

Matthew 1:1-17

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king.

David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and

his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations.

- (I) Find and underline the names of the "Patriarchs," Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:
- (2) Put a box around these famous kings using the hints given:

defeated (oliath)		
o _	_ o _	_ o _	(the wisest man
ever)			

D ____ D (the "Anointed One", he



Here is the Tree of Jesse, Jesus' family tree. Why does one of them have a harp? Who is at the top of the

(3) Put a circle around the four women mentioned in the genealogy: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and "the wife of Uriah."

Genealogy

A genealogy is a list of a person's forefathers. To help understand what a genealogy is, write out your own genealogy as far back as you can go. If you know, write out the birth date and the day of death of each forefather:

Forefather	born in	died
Father:		
Grandfather		
Great Grandfather:		
Great Great Grandfather:		

Christocentricity: The Whole Old Testament is about Jesus!

With your teacher's help, take a bible and do the following exercises:

- © Find where the Old Testament ends and the New Testament begins. Which is bigger?
- C Look up the first book of the Bible. Find chapters 17, 21, and 29. What is this book? Which forefathers of Jesus are found in these chapters?
- Which books of the Old Testament are named after Jesus' forefathers or foremothers?
- C The longest book of the Bible was written by King David. What is this book?

The Bible: All about Jesus!

Yes, the whole Old Testament is about Jesus. Even though Jesus had not yet been born, every word is someway about Jesus.

How can this be when Jesus has not even been born yet?

The Bible has many <u>prophecies</u> about Jesus. Prophecies are words said about Jesus before He came. For example, there is a prophecy that says that Jesus' hands and feet would be pierced. How did Jesus fulfill this prophecy?

The Bible also has many <u>foreshadows</u> of Jesus. A "foreshadow" is a shadow which lets you know that someone is coming before you see that person. Jesus has many foreshadows in the Old Testament.

The whole Bible paved the way for Jesus to be born, to live among us, to die on the cross for our sin, to rise again, and to sit at God's Right Hand. It was all part of God's plan!

A Family Tree

To the right is Jesus' family tree. Answer the following questions:

What is in the middle of the tree, toward the top?

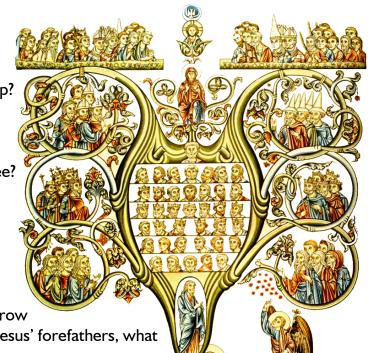
How is this like the "fruit" of the tree?

Who might that be at the bottom of the tree? How is he like a "root" of Jesus?

Who is Jesus' oldest forefather?

Where might we be in the tree?

The Bible talks about the "Branch" which will grow from the "stem of Jesse." Looking at the list of Jesus' forefathers, what might this mean?



Look at the following statements from the Old Testament on the left. Find the statement on the right which best shows how Jesus fulfilled that statement on the left.

"Then they will look on Me whom they pierced."

"Bethlehem...out of you



King David: David was the first of many kings who were ancestors of Jesus.
They were anointed King, therefore called "Messiah."

shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel."

____ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward.

- a. We have all sinned, but God has put our sins on Jesus. He has died for all our sins.
- b. Jesus ascended to sit at the right hand of the Father.
- c. Jesus was born in Bethlehem.
- d. After Jesus died, the soldier pierced Jesus with the spear.
- e. When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit came upon Him, and Jesus began His ministry.

_____ The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

Word Search: Find the Fathers!

With the hints given, find the forefather in the word search:

I.) He was in the Flood.

2.) He was the father of Isaac.

3.) He was the first man created.

4.) He was anointed king of Israel.

5.) The "stem of ____."

6.) He was Isaac's son.

7.) Find him in Genesis 49: 9-10.

AJESUBON

BBURNAJM

IJRDOSAA

CEJAACCB

MSODHHOS

ESSAGABD

TFHMFFMA

THDAVIDE

Lesson Three - The Flight into Egypt

Theme Jesus is a Light unto the Gentiles

Text Matthew 2

Matthew 5: 16 – Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father Memory

in heaven.

Scribes – Jews who studied and made copies of the Old Testament. **Terms**

Prophecies - Promises in the OT about Who Jesus would be and what He would do.

Martyr - One who is killed for confessing Jesus.

Introduction

When Jesus was older, many people were troubled by Him. He was crucified by those who were troubled by Him. But even when Jesus was a baby, many were troubled by Him. Why were people troubled by Jesus?

Jesus is a king. He came to claim His kingdom. He came to rule over sin, death, and the power of the devil. He came to rule for us and on our behalf. He defeats our enemies for us. This is why He is called the "messiah" or the "christ." "Messiah" and "Christ" mean "the anointed one." Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be King of kings. All the prophets prepared the way for Jesus the King to come.

But Jesus' kingdom is not of this world. He did not seek an earthly kingdom. His is a kingdom of forgiveness, life, and salvation. His kingdom comes through the Word and Sacrament. His kingdom will become fully manifest when He returns. Then, all people will know that Jesus is the King of kings. But now, Jesus' kingdom is hidden.

The wise men came searching for Jesus to worship Him as king, and they went to King Herod to find out where Jesus was. Herod feared for his throne and did not want anyone else to be king but himself. He was troubled by Jesus, and he wanted to kill Him.



Christ the King

Read Matthew 2. Fill in the correct answer as the story is read.

1.)	Wise men came from the		·	
2.)	King	feared that Jesus mig	nt try to be king.	
3.)	The prophecy said that Jesus	would be born in	.	
4.) When the wise men saw Jesus, they fell down and			Him.	
5.)	An angel warns Joseph to tak	e his family to		
6.)	Herod killed		when he was deceived by the	e wise men

7.) Jesus and His family lived in	after coming back from Egypt
-----------------------------------	------------------------------

Thought question: Who else came "out of Egypt"? Why is it important that Jesus also came "out of Egypt"?



The wise men come from distant lands to worship Jesus: Jesus is King of kings, a Savior for all nations.

A Light unto the Gentiles

The wise men were not Jews. They were gentiles. A gentile is a non-Jew.

Jesus is a Savior for all people. He is not just a Savior for Jews or any other nation. He is a Savior for Jews, gentiles, white people, black people, Chinese, Indians, Russians, Brazilians, Canadians, and Danes. He is a Savior for Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, and Sufis. They do not believe in Him, but He is still a Savior for them. By the wise men coming to Jesus, we know that Jesus is a Savior not just for Jews, but for all people.

Sometimes the wise men are called "kings," as in the song, "We, Three Kings of Orient Are." When they bowed down to Jesus, they showed that Jesus is the King of kings. Jesus is a King for all people!

Epiphany: The Season of Light

This story of the wise men is told on the feast day of Epiphany. Look at some of the interesting facts about Epiphany and discuss them:

- © Epiphany occurs on January 6. How many days after Christmas is that?
- © Epiphany often has many themes of light. Why is that?
- The Season of Epiphany focuses on how Jesus is the divine King Who rules over sin, death, and the devil for us. Why is the story of the wise men a good way to begin the Season of Epiphany?
- Jesus was given gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Why might Jesus have been given gold? Frankincense was used as funeral spices. Myrrh was used with sacrifices. Why might Jesus have been given those spices? What does using incense in church mean?



Using a hymnal, find the "Epiphany" section. Using the clues below, find a hymn which talks about the clue:

- I. Epiphany is about light.
- 2. The wise men were led to Bethlehem.
 - 3. A star led the wise men to Jesus.
 - 4. Epiphany means "manifest."
 - 5. "Manifest" means "to appear."
- 6. The first Sunday after Epiphany is about Jesus being baptized.
 - 7. In Jesus' Baptism, He was anointed king.
 - 8. Ancient prophets foretold about lesus.

Word Search

With the help of a hymnal and a bible, fill in the blanks based on the clues given and find the word in the puzzle.

- I. Epiphany is about Jesus being hailed as a king. Jesus was in fact anointed as a king. In the hymn, "Hail to the Lord's Anointed," Jesus is called the "greater son" of which great king?
- 2. Based on Matthew 2: 16, many people think that Jesus was _____ years old when the Holy Family went to Egypt.
- 3. Herod feared that Jesus would steal his kingdom. But in the hymn, "When Christ's Appearing Was Made Known," we find out that Jesus' kingdom is not of this what?
- 4. A feast day on December 28 remembers "The Holy_____." These are those children who died because of King Herod's jealousy.
- 5. One of the Epiphany hymns says that Jesus is one with the Whom?
- 6. If someone were to claim that Jesus is not God, we could point him to one of Jesus' names, _____, which means, "God with us."
- 7. We learn in the hymn, "To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord," that Jesus was baptized by whom?
- 8. This hymn talks about Jesus changing water into wine, healing palsied limbs, and defeating the devil. At the end of the hymn, the refrain teaches that Jesus is "God in made manifest."

 I C X R I I F H L

 M N O P B N L O F

 M A N E H O W L S

 A F T O N T E A P

 N D J O C S R E R

 U F A T H E R A Y

 E R I V A N N L E

 L H C R I O R T E

 B L O O D D O G S



The Wise Men give gifts to Jesus

December 28: Holy Innocents

December 28 is a feast day, the day on which the Church remembers the Holy Innocents. The holy innocents are those children under two years old who were killed by King Herod. He killed these children trying to get Jesus.

Look up the hymn, "Sweet flowerets of the martyr band" in the hymnal. Answer the following questions:

Who wrote this hymn?

When did he write this hymn?

Who translated this hymn into English?

Who wrote the tune of this hymn?



The murder of the innocents

A "martyr" is someone who dies for Jesus. What is special, according to this hymn, about these martyrs?

Pray together the collect for the feast day of Holy Innocents:

O Almighty God, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings has ordained strength and made infants to glorify You by their deaths, mortify and kill all vices in us and so strengthen us by Your grace that by the innocency of our lives and the constancy of our faith, even unto death, we may glorify Your holy name; through Jesus Christ Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, world without end. Amen.

What is the meaning of this collect?

Sample of Teacher's Guide with Level 4:

Lesson Five – Temptation and Ministry (Matthew 4)

Commentary

When Jesus was baptized, He was declared to be the Son of God. His baptism marks the beginning of His ministry, which was bearing the sins of the world. At His baptism, the cross was placed on His shoulders. It is appropriate, then, that the Holy Spirit lead Him into the wilderness to be tempted. For the wilderness is the symbol of the trials and tribulations of this world. Israel herself did not enter the Promised Land until she had wandered in the wilderness for 40 years after leaving Egypt. This was her trial.

Jesus, as the representative of Israel, underwent the same trial, with drastically different results. For He answered the devil's temptations – each one of them – with words from the Book of Deuteronomy, words which Moses preached to Israel after their own wandering in the wilderness. Where Israel failed repeatedly in the wilderness – and so needed Moses' words – Jesus fulfills Moses' words and obeys them perfectly.

The temptations leveled by Satan at Jesus offer much insight on the devil's methods. First, he quotes the Word of God. Indeed, the devil often perverts God's own Word to tempt people. Second, he tries to get Jesus to doubt that He is truly the Son of God. "If you are the Son of God, then command that these stones turn into bread." One might apply this same temptation to those who are baptized in the Church, who become the children of God: "If you are a child of God, why isn't such and such happening? Why can't you do this or that? After all, the Bible says such and so!" This temptation weighs heavy on many a Christian.

In the second temptation, Satan tempts Jesus with words dangerously similar to a popular modern phrase, "Let go and let God." The similarity between Satan's temptation and this popular piety should cause some alarm. If the phrase means that a Christian will repent of his worry and willfulness and trust that God is providing and that He is guiding things according to His gracious will, then the phrase may be accurate. However, the phrase becomes a dangerous temptation when it is implied that God will only work His will once someone "lets Him." Or, the phrase will mimic Satan's exact temptation if it is seen as an encouragement to "take that leap of faith into the darkness." Such "leaps of faith" test the Lord in exactly the manner Jesus rejects.

The final temptation can be confusing. It seems to say that Satan has authority on earth, and that it is given to him to execute his authority as he wishes on the earth, even handing it over to Jesus. In fact, the Scriptures convey this truth quite clearly (Luke 4: 6; Eph. 2: 2; cf. Job). It should be remembered that Jesus came to this earth as a stranger in a strange land. He came to release those who had become prisoners and slaves in this strange land. With each victory over the devil, Jesus increased His kingdom, which to this day has been supplanting Satan's kingdom. This world, then, is a battleground between two kingdoms, the kingdom of the devil and the kingdom of God. However, the kingdom of God comes by way of the cross, which often means pain, suffering, and sacrifice as it did for Jesus. In this final temptation, Satan in a sense tempts Jesus with a spot at his own right hand, a position of power which would not entail the cross.

Lesson Plan

Lesson Theme: Having been baptized and declared the Son of God, Jesus is led by the Spirit to be tempted. Beginning His ministry of defeating the devil for sinners, Jesus withstands each temptation.

Lesson Goals:

- 1.) To show that Jesus defeats the devil's temptations for sinners.
- 2.) To understand that the devil goes after those who are baptized and are children of God.
- 3.) To see that the devil often uses God's own Word to tempt His children.
- 4.) To apply Jesus' responses to the devil's temptations to temptations Christians experience today.

Suggestions:

- C Paint a mental picture of "the devil's territory," the wilderness, a place of desolation, the haunts of jackals and vultures.
- C Discuss fasting, and the possible discipline of fasting during Lent.
- C Discuss the Season of Lent as a 40 day period of fasting and penitence for the Christian.

Answer Key

Thought Question (pg. 18): Because even Jesus submitted to the Word of God. He was human and therefore living a life of submission to the Word of God.

The 40 Days of Lent (pg. 18):

C Because Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days

- C The people of Israel
- C He was doing what Israel did, defeating the temptations that Israel could not endure (which is the reason why He quoted from Deuteronomy each time, the book comprising Moses' words to Israel at the end of their wandering.)

Jesus' Baptism: Our Baptism (pg. 19): 1, 3, 2, 1, 2.

Jesus of Nazareth: Jesus lived in Nazareth as a fulfillment of the prophecy. The Gospel there is compared to a light in the darkness.

The Call of the Twelve (pg. 19-20)

- 1. Repent
- 2. Fishers of men
- 3. Called
- 4. Synagogues

Fishers of men (pg. 20): d, a, c, b.

The Divine Call: (pg. 20):

- 1. No, because not everyone is called.
- 2. One becomes a pastor by being taught Jesus' teachings, being called by Him, and by being ordained to teach and do the Sacraments. Jesus must call the pastor.
- 3. Jesus calls and ordains the pastor through the Church and her ministers.