Rediscover Catholicism
A Spiritual Guide to Living with Passion and Purpose

Matthew Kelly

Leader’s Guide
OPENING PRAYER for Each Session

Begin with the Opening Prayer

Loving Father,
Open our hearts and minds
and allow us to see the beauty of our faith.
Show us what is possible and fill us with the grace,
strength,
and wisdom to live all the good things
we explore here together.
Send your Spirit upon us so that we can discover your dream
for us to become the-best-version-of-ourselves,
and have the courage to defend and celebrate this true self
in every moment of our days.
We ask you to bless in a special way the hungry, the lonely,
the sick, and the discouraged. Remind us of our duty toward
them and inspire us to be filled with a profound gratitude.
We ask all this through your Son, Jesus.

Amen.
THE PREPARATION AND WELCOME FOR SESSIONS 2-8:

PREPARATION
Prepare a hospitable environment ahead of time. Arrange chairs in a circle, create a prayer table, and have soft music playing in the background. Have nametags and refreshments available for participants as they arrive or at the end of the session.

WELCOME
Greet participants warmly as they arrive. Make an effort to spend a few minutes mingling to help the group feel welcome and at home. Make sure
SESSION 1
INTRODUCTION & WHERE TO FROM HERE?

PREPARATION:
Prepare a hospitable environment ahead of time. Arrange chairs in a circle, create a prayer table, and have soft music playing in the background. Have nametags and refreshments available for participants as they arrive. Greet participants warmly as they arrive.

For this session you will need:
- Extra Copies of *Rediscover Catholicism*
- *Rediscover Catholicism Study Guide* for each participant
- Sign-in sheet for name and contact info
- A calendar with the date/time/place of each session
- Copies of the Prayer Tracking Card
- The Catholics Come Home and 7 Pillars of Catholicism CD

Extra Materials
- The Mass Journal from DynamicCatholic.com
- A bulletin, parish newsletter, or parish directory
- Copies of *Magnificat* or *The Word Among Us.*
WELCOME
Greet participants warmly as they arrive. Make an effort to spend a few minutes mingling with newcomers, making them feel welcome and at home. Make sure everyone gets a name tag. When you are ready, invite participants to sit down. Begin by introducing yourself and any team members. Allow participants to briefly introduce themselves as well.

1. Once introductions are complete, introduce the *Rediscover Catholicism* Small Group Study in these or similar words:

   This *Rediscover Catholicism* study is meant to provide a place where we can share our faith with one another as we discuss the *Rediscover Catholicism* book. We will explore such sample questions as, Are you happy? Are you living an authentic life? How would you like your life to change? What does it mean to walk with God in the modern world? Is Jesus still relevant? Can the ancient traditions of Catholicism help us deal with modern challenges of our lives?

   We hope to create a welcoming environment in which we can explore our faith together. We do not anticipate this to be a place in which we argue specific points. Someone
may say something that you disagree with. We are all at different stages of our spiritual journey and we want you to feel welcome at whatever stage you are. There are no stupid or irrelevant questions, and everyone’s thoughts will be valued. In the end we hope that we will come to trust each other, and discover a deeper relationship with God and gain a fuller appreciation of the Catholic Church.

Are there any questions or concerns before we begin?

2. Pass out the *Rediscover Catholicism* Study Guide to each participant. Explain that this study will last 8 weeks, and that Session 4 and Session 5 will be divided into 2 sessions. Explain that many weeks the session will begin with a short video either from Catholics Come Home or from Matthew Kelly, the author of the book *Rediscover Catholicism*.

3. Pass around and explain the Prayer Tracking Cards. Explain that Session 4 will focus on Prayer but that it would be a good idea to begin with tracking daily prayer. This card is provided to help you to remember to pray daily. There is no test or checking on what you do. This is provided to raise the level of
awareness to pray daily. There are 8 boxes besides each day of the week to correspond with the 8 weeks of this study so that you can track your progress in prayer for the duration of the study. Give some examples of prayer aids like *The Word Among Us* or *Magnificat*. If you have copies of either subscription, pass them out to the participants.

4. If you have purchased the Mass Journal from DynamicCatholic.com pass them out and explain that Session 5 will focus on the Mass and this will be a helpful tool to help you engage in the Mass in a deeper way. (Note: We highly encourage groups to purchase the Mass Journal and make them available to participants. They are only $3 a copy).

5. Pass around the sign-in sheet, explaining that this will only be used to communicate reminders of upcoming meetings.

6. Pass out a parish bulletin, newsletter, and/or parish directory if you decide to do so, explaining that these are for informational purposes. Point out relevant contact information to participants. You may also want to make available the link to Being Catholic, http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/being-catholic/
OPENING PRAYER

INTRODUCTIONS (10 minutes)
Invite participants to briefly share how they heard about Rediscover Catholicism Study, why they decided to take part in this group, and what they hope to get out of it.

VIDEO: “Epic” – Catholics Come Home
Cue up the “Epic” video from Catholics Come Home. Introduce the video in these or similar words:

In the Introduction of Rediscover Catholicism, Matthew Kelly spends some time talking about the impact that Catholicism has had on the world. You may have seen this short commercial from Catholics Come Home already, but it makes the same point in a profound way.

DISCUSSION
Focus on the following questions in your discussion. Not every question needs to be asked and discussed. You may choose from among these questions.

1. What was one thing that struck you from this video about the Catholic Church?
2. Describe the moment in your life when you most enjoyed being Catholic?
3. This is a very hopeful book, and yet the author is not afraid to confront the very real
challenges we face as a Church at this moment in history. As you reflect on the future of Catholicism:
   a. What are you most concerned about?
   b. What are you most hopeful about?
4. In what ways is God calling you to a bigger future at this time in your life?
5. What makes you proud to be a Catholic today?

CLOSING PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS
The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part One (chapters One through Five)
   • Let your family and friends know they can request a free copy of *Rediscover Catholicism* by visiting DynamicCatholic.com
   • Please start using your Prayer Tracking Card, and your Mass Journal (if available)
   • Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).
Session 2
PART ONE: WE BECOME WHAT WE CELEBRATE

PREPARATION

For this session you will need:
- The Catholics Come Home and 7 Pillars of Catholicism CD
- Extra copies of Rediscover Catholicism

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

VIDEO: “Movie” – Catholics Come Home
Cue up the “Movie” video from Catholics Come Home. Introduce the video in these or similar words:

In chapter 3 of Rediscover Catholicism, we read that God wants us to be happy. That God gave us a yearning for happiness that constantly preoccupies our hearts, which serves as a spiritual navigation instrument to lead us to God.

In this short video from Catholics Come Home we see how our life’s choices can lead us away from God. The people in this video realize their need for God and find that they can always come to God for true peace, happiness, and forgiveness.
DISCUSSION

1. Can you relate with anyone in this video clip? Have you ever had the experience of drifting away from God, yet desiring to be forgiven?

2. How are you influenced by the philosophies of individualism, hedonism, and minimalism? Give examples.

3. In Chapter Three the author quotes, “The desire for God is written on the human heart . . .” (Catechism of the Catholic Church). In what ways do you yearn for God?

4. How would you describe your relationship with Jesus? Is he friend, mentor, coach, savior, spiritual director, role model, distant God, or historical figure? Where do you see opportunities for this relationship to grow?

5. How does embracing Catholicism as a way of life make you a better version of yourself?

6. In Chapter Five the author discusses the identity crisis that we are struggling with as a Church. If your life were put under a microscope, would there be sufficient evidence to convince a jury of your peers that you were truly Catholic? What would that evidence be?

CLOSING PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Two (chapters Six through Eleven).
• Continue to encourage participants to utilize the Prayer Tracking Card, and the Mass Journal
• Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).
Session 3
PART TWO: THE AUTHENTIC LIFE

PREPARATION

For this session you will need:
- The Catholics Come Home and 7 Pillars of Catholicism CD
- Extra copies of Rediscovering Catholicism

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

VIDEO: “Testimonial” – Catholics Come Home
Cue up the “Home” video from Catholics Come Home. Introduce the video in these or similar words:

In this short clip we hear multiple stories of people who drifted from the Church and from a relationship with God. In Chapter 6 of Rediscover Catholicism, Matthew Kelly quotes Henry David Thoreau that most men “lead quiet lives of desperation.” You will find in these testimonies how these people were able to leave behind their lives of desperation and find a more authentic life in the Catholic Church – one where they could become the best-version-of-themselves.

DISCUSSION
1. Is the quiet desperation that Henry David Thoreau speaks of, and the people in the
video clip talk about, present in your life? Have you ever felt that way?

2. God calls us to be holy, yet we struggle with being holy. Why is being holy a struggle?

3. Now that you are reading *Rediscover Catholicism*, do you find yourself thinking about the-best-version-of-yourself in the moments of the day?

4. In Chapter Eight the author offers short biographies of Francis of Assisi, Mother Teresa, John Vianney, Thomas More, and John Paul II.
   a. Which biography inspired you the most?
   b. Which person did you know the least about before?
   c. How did the stories encourage, challenge, or inspire you to live differently?

5. If you had to give yourself a score between one and ten (ten being total commitment), how would you rate your commitment to doing the will of God in your life?

6. In what way did you Rediscovering Catholicism by reading Part Two of the book?

**CLOSING PRAYER**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Three, chapters Twelve through Thirteen.
• Continue to encourage participants to utilize the Prayer Tracking Card, and the Mass Journal
• Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).
Session 4
PART THREE: THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY – CONFESSION & DAILY PRAYER

PREPARATION

For this session you will need:
- The Catholics Come Home and 7 Pillars of Catholicism CD
- Extra copies of Rediscover Catholicism

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

VIDEO: “Confession” and “Daily Prayer” – The Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality
Cue up the “Confession” video from the 7 Pillars of Spirituality (and prepare to cue up the “Daily Prayer” video. Introduce the video in these of similar words:

We are going to watch two short videos talking about Confession and Daily Prayer, two of the “7 Pillars of Catholic Spirituality”. Let’s open our books to page 147 to remind ourselves why the 7 Pillars of Spirituality are important for us. [on page 147 read from “One of the greatest tragedies of modern Catholicism......to the end of the chapter ending on page 148]
DISCUSSION

1. Confession: What insight from the video or the chapter made you rethink your attitude toward confession?
2. Do you have any questions or concerns about going to Confession?
3. Have you been using your Prayer Tracking Card? How has your life improved with a more consistent approach to daily prayer?
4. Do you feel empowered when you have the answers to questions people ask about Catholicism? What could you do on a regular basis to increase your knowledge about the Catholic faith so that you will have more and more answers to share with others?

CLOSING PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Three, chapter 14.
- Continue to encourage participants to utilize the Prayer Tracking Card, and the Mass Journal. Ask participant to bring their Mass Journal to the next meeting.
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).
Session 5
PART THREE: THE SEVEN PILLARS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY – THE MASS

PREPARATION

For this session you will need:
- The Catholics Come Home and 7 Pillars of Catholicism CD
- Extra copies of Rediscover Catholicism

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

VIDEO: “The Mass” - The Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality
Cue up the “The Mass” video from the 7 Pillars of Spirituality. Introduce the video in these or similar words:

In Chapter 14 of Rediscover Catholicism, the author points out that the Mass is the center of Catholic tradition, yet the general consensus today is that Mass is boring. In this video Matthew Kelly will show how the Mass can be powerfully relevant and life transforming for you.

DISCUSSION
1. What was one thing Matthew Kelly said in the video that inspired you to engage more deeply in the Mass?
2. Use only if these items have been made available. Have you used the *Magnificat* or *The Word Among Us* to meditate on the Mass Readings? If so, how has that helped you prepare for Mass?

3. Have you used your Mass journal to help you engage with the Mass? What has that experience been like? How has God spoken to you in the Mass?

4. In Chapter 14, the author encourages you to rediscover the wonder of Mass. Have you ever had an experience of marvel, wonder or mystery at Mass?

5. In the section “A Quick Journey through the Mass” the author gives some practical ideas to engage in each part of the Mass. Have you tried any of his suggestions? Did it help you engage more deeply in the Mass? Which of these suggestions might be the biggest help for you?

**Closing Prayer**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Three, chapter 15 “The Bible” and Chapter 17 “Spiritual Reading.”
- Continue to encourage participants to utilize the Prayer Tracking Card, and the Mass Journal. Ask participant to bring their Mass Journal to the next meeting.
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).
Session 6
PART THREE: THE SEVEN PILLARS OF
CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY – THE BIBLE &
SPIRITUAL READING

PREPARATION

For this session you will need:
- The Catholics Come Home and 7 Pillars of Catholicism CD
- Extra copies of Rediscover Catholicism
- Rosaries to pass out at the end of the Session (and Guides to pray the Rosary)

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

VIDEO: “The Bible” and “Spiritual Reading” - The Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality

Cue up the “The Bible” video from the 7 Pillars of Spirituality. (Prepare to cue up “Spiritual Reading” after “The Bible” video) Introduce the videos in these or similar words:

The following two videos deal with The Bible and with spiritual reading. In chapter 15 of Rediscover Catholicism, Matthew Kelly gives us an overview of the Bible, making the case that “God wants us to discover the many surprises that he has tucked away in the pages of the Bible.
In Chapter 17 we learn about the practice of spiritual reading showing us that beyond the Bible there are many spiritual writers who can be of assistance to us in our adventure of salvation.

**DISCUSSION**

1. *The Bible:* What is your favorite story from the Bible? Why?
2. *The Bible:* What did you learn about the Bible that you did not know before?
3. *Spiritual Reading:* What is the last really good Catholic book you read? If you read a great Catholic book for fifteen minutes every day for the rest of your life, how would your life and spirituality improve?

**CLOSING PRAYER**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Note that the group has formed a good relationship and is enjoying the time together. If you would like to continue beyond the eight weeks we can do this. Please think about this in the next few weeks.
- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Three, chapter 16 “Fasting” and Chapter 18 “The Rosary.”
- Continue to encourage participants to utilize the Prayer Tracking Card, and the Mass
Journal. Ask participant to bring their Mass Journal to the next meeting. Only if the Mass Journal is being used.

- Explain to participants that next week we will be discussing the Spiritual practices of fasting, and praying the Rosary. Encourage participants to practice fasting from something, and to pray a Rosary. Pass out Rosaries and a guide to praying the Rosary if you have it. Available on line: http://www.kofc.org/un/en/resources/cis/devotionals/4772.pdf http://www.how-to-pray-the-rosary-everyday.com/rosary-guide.html

- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).
Session 7

PREPARATION

For this session you will need:
- The Catholics Come Home and 7 Pillars of Catholicism CD
- Extra copies of Rediscover Catholicism

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

VIDEO: “Fasting” and “The Rosary” - The Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality
Cue up the “Fasting” video from the 7 Pillars of Spirituality. (Prepare to cue up “The Rosary” after the “Fasting” video) Introduce the videos in these or similar words:

Our final 2 pillars of the 7 Pillars of Spirituality are fasting and the Rosary. In the chapter on fasting, the author makes the connection between our human desire to love and be loved and the spiritual practice of fasting. In the chapter on the Rosary, Matthew Kelly describes how this simple prayer can lead to real peace.
DISCUSSION

1. *Fasting:* What would be the hardest thing for you to fast from for one day each week? Would you consider giving up that one thing for one day each week?

2. *The Rosary:* When was the last time you prayed the rosary? If it is not part of your spiritual routine, why don’t you pray it more often? Do you have any questions about how to pray the Rosary?

CLOSING PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Remind the group that we will be able to continue in a small group and continue to pray and discuss together. Next we will ask if you would like to continue in a small group.

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is Part Four (chapters Nineteen through Twenty-one).

- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).
SESSION 8
PART 4: NOW IS OUR TIME

PREPARATION

For this session you will need:
- The Catholics Come Home and 7 Pillars of Catholicism CD
- Extra copies of Rediscover Catholicism

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

DISCUSSION

1. Now that you have read Rediscover Catholicism and have participated in this group, do you feel inspired to get more involved in the Church? How are you being called to contribute?

2. If the Church’s future is going to be bigger than its past, it seems education and evangelization are key.
   a. How can you become better educated about Catholicism?
   b. What are some simple ways that you can evangelize in your circle of influence?

3. It seems everybody wants the Church to change in some way or another. When you and I change for the better, the Church changes for the better. Are you willing to change?
4. In what areas of your life are you a leader? How did Chapter Twenty challenge your leadership style?

5. Jesus’ message over and over in the Gospels was, “Do not be afraid.” What are you afraid of? How is that fear stopping you from being all God created you to be (the-best-version-of-yourself)?

6. If our lives genuinely improve only when we grow in virtue, what virtue are you being called to pray to the Holy Spirit for at this time?

7. In what ways did you Rediscover Catholicism by reading this book and participating in this small study group?

8. How many people do you know who need to read this book? How are you going to encourage them to read it? Explain how to get copies.

CLOSING PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- We have mentioned staying together as a small group. We will pass around this paper if you would like to continue. Our parish has resources for us to use to pray and discuss. We can chose to meet weekly, every other week or twice a month.

- If you enjoyed Rediscover Catholicism, the next title we would recommend for you is Confessions of a Mega Church Pastor. It is the story of how and why the pastor of one of America’s largest mega-churches
became Catholic. To order your copy, visit DynamicCatholic.com. After that we recommend James Martin’s *My Life with the Saints*. Both titles are available through the Dynamic Catholic Book Program.

- Ninety percent of Catholics have never visited their local Catholic bookstore. We would like to encourage you to visit your Catholic bookstore sometime in the next couple of weeks and explore the incredible Catholic books that are available.

- Thank you for taking part in our study of *Rediscover Catholicism*. We hope that it has ignited your faith in a new way, and that you will share some of what you have learned here with others in your circle of influence.
CLOSING PRAYER

Thank everyone for their openness and participation and end each discussion with the following prayer from (where?)

Loving Father,
I invite you into my life today
and make myself available to you.
Help me to become the-best-version-of-myself
by seeking your will and becoming a living example
of your love in the world.
Open my heart to the areas of my life that need to change
in order for me to carry out the mission
and experience the joy you have imagined for my life.
Inspire me to live the Catholic faith in ways that are dynamic and engaging.
Show me how to best get involved in the life of my parish.
Make our community hungry for best practices and continuous learning.
Give me courage when I am afraid,
hope when I am discouraged,
and clarity in times of decision.
Teach me to enjoy uncertainty and lead your Church to become all you imagined it would be for the people of our times.
Amen.
i This Leader’s Guide is a revision of the free Study Guide found on DynamicCatholic.com webpage: http://www.dynamiccatholic.com/sites/default/files/pdfs/Rediscover_Cath_SG.pdf