

ALIVE IN CHRIST

GRADE 7

Jesus Christ and the New Testament

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Our Sunday Visitor

Model of Wisdom

♥ Let Us Pray

Leader: Loving God, we praise and thank you for your presence with us. Teach us and heal us. Fill our hearts with your wisdom that we may always live within your peace.

“Teach us to count our days aright,
that we may gain wisdom of heart.” **Psalm 90:12**

All: God, we need your Good News. Give us your wisdom!

✚ Scripture

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers.

When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, “Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety.”

And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man.” **Luke 2:46–52**

Have you ever thought...

- Did Jesus always know he was God’s Son?
- How does knowing God’s plan help us to be happy?

Getting Started

In this chapter you will reflect upon the need for wisdom in our daily lives and how Jesus' wisdom answers that need. In the Sermon on the Mount, especially the Beatitudes, we discover the wisdom of Jesus that he calls us to live by.

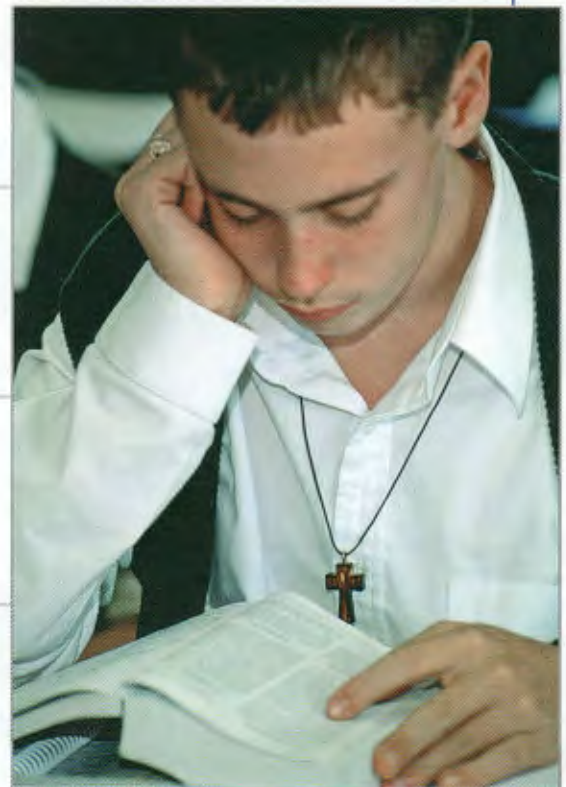
Catholic Faith Words

- wisdom
- Kingdom of God
- parable
- Sermon on the Mount
- Beatitudes

Fill in the chart with words or phrases that describe Jesus and his teachings. Use the letter at the beginning of the line as the first letter of your word or term. One is done for you.



Jesus and His Wisdom	
W	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
I	Invited all people to make God the priority in their lives and to trust in the Father's will
S	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
D	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
O	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
M	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



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IDENTIFY

Words to Live By The dictionary defines wisdom as an understanding of what is true, right, or lasting; common sense; or learning. As people of faith, wisdom is more. It involves seeing as God sees.

In your own words, write a definition for wisdom from a Catholic perspective.



Who in your life has been a source of Catholic wisdom?

What are some words of wisdom you live by?



Christ with the Doctors. S. Luke 2.

Jesus, the Wise Teacher

What made Jesus different from other teachers?

When Jesus started teaching, the people listening to him probably had questions: “Who will help us know God’s will? Who can make life better?” Jesus gave the answers to these questions, and more!



Scripture

“Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs unless God is with him.”

John 3:2

A Teacher Like No Other

Once people heard Jesus’ words, they realized he was different. He spoke the truth, even when it was difficult to hear. He encouraged people to follow God’s ways, even when it wasn’t easy. He spoke across social barriers. He astounded the crowds with authority given to him by his Father.

We know that Jesus possessed definitive **wisdom**, the spiritual gift that helps us to know about the purpose and plan of God. Wisdom leads us to see things as God sees so that we might live holy lives. Jesus challenged the commonly accepted understanding of his time. He did not accept stereotypes or judge others by their social or economic status. He spent time with women, children, people who had undesirable jobs, and those who were poor, sick, or in special need. Jesus got to know those most ignored in society. In all of these ways, he showed the dignity of every person he met.

➤ **Think of someone you believe sees things and people as God does. What is this person like?**

Ordinary Words, Extraordinary Meaning

Jesus knew things were not perfect in the lives of the people. They needed to turn to God and work on their relationships with one another. They needed forgiveness.

Those who heard Jesus sensed that he was different. He was connected to what was important and truly right. He encouraged people to change how they lived. Jesus wanted his followers to know the true meaning of forgiveness and the way to live by God the Father’s will. He spoke often about God’s rule in people’s lives and hearts, harkening people to the **Kingdom of God**—

God's rule of peace, justice, and love. Jesus talked about things that were difficult to describe, so he often taught using parables.

A **parable** is a short story Jesus told using examples from everyday life or nature to illustrate moral or spiritual truths. Parables sometimes end with a twist or a surprise, and people didn't always understand the meanings. He used examples from everyday life to give a religious or moral lesson, or to emphasize God's love.

Sometimes Jesus spoke in parables when he was challenged by someone who wanted to trap him in his words. In the Gospel according to Luke a scholar tried to test Jesus. He asked, "Who is my neighbor?" to clarify the law, "love your neighbor as yourself." In response, Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan (see Luke 10:30–35). This parable would have surprised Jesus' listeners. The Jewish people and Samaritans of Jesus' time had religious and ethnic differences. They would not have expected the Jewish men to ignore one of their own, or the Samaritan to help a man considered to be the enemy.

There are more than thirty parables in the Gospels, including the well-known parables of the Mustard Seed, the Sower, the Lost Sheep, the Rich Fool, and the Prodigal Son.



Catholic Faith Words

wisdom the spiritual gift that helps us to see God's purpose and plan for our lives. Wisdom is also one of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Kingdom of God God's rule of peace, justice, and love that exists in Heaven, but has not yet come in its fullness on Earth

parable a short story Jesus told using examples from everyday life or nature to illustrate moral or spiritual truths

READ AND REFLECT

Choose a parable with which you are not very familiar. Locate, read, and reflect on it. Then use your own words to describe its meaning.

The parable:

Its meaning:

A Unique Message

How are Jesus' words surprising and challenging?

Jesus taught everywhere he went. He preached in homes and synagogues, in boats, on the road as he walked, and on the shores. He gathered with his disciples on hilly areas as the crowds followed him, hoping to hear his message or to receive his healing touch. He offered words of wisdom throughout his public ministry, and in the Gospel according to Matthew, many of these teachings are collected into what is known as the **Sermon on the Mount**.

Words and Actions

Have you ever been told that actions speak louder than words? Or that you need to not only say what's right, but also do what's right? Jesus tells us something similar.

Jesus said if you listen to his words, and you pattern your actions on his words, you will have a good foundation. It's like building a house on solid rock. The winds will blow, and the rains will fall, but the house will stand. The strong foundation of Jesus' words will hold up your actions that are based on hearing and believing those words.

WHERE IT HAPPENED

The Gospels do not tell us exactly where Jesus gathered his disciples and the crowds in Galilee. The geography of this part of Galilee contains elevated hills with many associated level places. Some archeologists and people who study the Bible think parts of the Sermon on the Mount took place at Mount Eremos, overlooking the Sea of Galilee. It is often called the Mount of Beatitudes.

Go to the Source

Read *Matthew 7:24–29* and think about why the analogy of a house's foundation ended the Sermon on the Mount.

But if you don't listen to the words of Jesus, it will be like building your house on sand. Your life will have no foundation. The winds and rain will knock it down easily. (See Matthew 7:24–29.)

Catholic Faith Words

Sermon on the Mount the summary of key teachings of Jesus found in the Gospel according to Matthew

> **What can you do to become a person who connects your words and your actions?**

Teachings from the Mount

- | | |
|--|--|
| • You are the salt of the earth. | • When you give to the poor, don't brag about it. |
| • You are the light of the world. | • Ask and you will receive. |
| • Our Father is in Heaven; how holy is his name. | • Seek and you will find. |
| • When you pray, don't use loud and fancy words. | • Knock and the door will open. |
| • When you fast, don't try to look glum and hungry. | <p>Underline which of these teachings you think people most need to hear and act upon today. Draw a star next to the teachings that are hardest for you to hear or act on.</p> |
| • Where your treasure is, your heart is, too! | |
| • Don't judge others harshly, or you will be judged harshly. | |

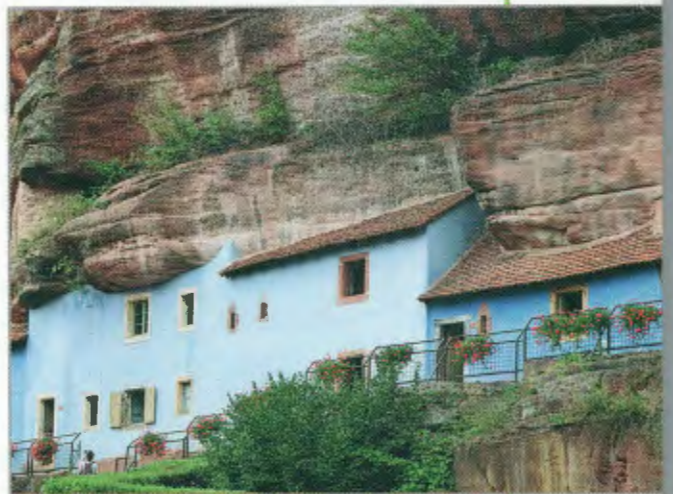


NAME

Name three words or phrases to describe Jesus' wisdom found in the Sermon on the Mount.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What question would you ask Jesus about the points he made in these teachings?



Divine Words for Wise Living

What do the Beatitudes teach us about our relationships with God and others?

The part of the Sermon on the Mount that people are perhaps most familiar with is the **Beatitudes**, Jesus' teachings on the meaning of and path to true happiness. The word *beatitude* means "happiness or blessedness." In the Beatitudes, Jesus asks us to align our spirit and our will with God. Only when we rely on God's grace and the guidance of the Spirit, can we find the eternal blessedness, or holiness, to which God calls all of us. In the Beatitudes, Jesus sets forth for us a path of discipleship, with expectations of how

to live in relationship with one another. In the Beatitudes we find the values of the Kingdom of God, and the attitudes and behaviors of Christians living in God's Kingdom now and always.

The Beatitudes are recorded in two Gospels: Matthew and Luke. The two accounts are similar, but different.

Catholic Faith Words

Beatitudes Jesus' eight teachings about the meaning and path to true happiness; they depict the way to live in God's Kingdom now and always, working toward the eternal holiness or blessedness to which God calls all people

Fill in the missing words based on the passages in both Matthew and Luke.



The Beatitudes

The Words in Matthew 5:3–12

Blessed are:

- the _____ in spirit
- those who mourn and the _____
- those who _____ and thirst for righteousness
- the merciful and the _____ in heart
- the peacemakers
- those who are persecuted for righteousness
- you when people revile you because of _____

The Words in Luke 6:20–26

Blessed are you:

- who are poor
- who are hungry now
- who _____ now
- when people _____ you, on account of the Son of Man

Woe to you:

- who are _____
- who are full now
- who are _____ now

Go to the Source

Read both versions of the Beatitudes to find out how each of these groups of people will be blessed.

The Message

The account in the Gospel according to Matthew focuses on the spiritual and religious virtues of God's Kingdom. Luke's account emphasizes the social and economic inequality of the time. In both, we find Jesus' teaching that happiness comes from trusting in God no matter what is happening now. We will know true happiness when God's Kingdom has come in its fullness. In the meantime, being obsessed with material things or current good fortune will keep us from seeing and living the real values of God's Kingdom.



WRITE

The Beatitudes assure those who are in need of God's help and compassion and our trust that God will make all things good and that we can receive eternal happiness with him in Heaven, regardless of our current circumstances. Write two Beatitudes for adolescents that address their suffering or needs. For example, "Blessed are those whose neighborhoods are filled with violence and fear, trusting that God will bring you peace."

1. _____

2. _____

IN SUMMARY Catholics Believe

As Catholics, we turn to Jesus as our source of wisdom.

- Jesus' wisdom came from being the Son of God; he looked at the world with that perspective.
- He taught through his words and actions. In his Sermon on the Mount, he gave advice

and specific direction that emphasize just living, honoring God, and making our actions reflect our beliefs.

- Jesus' Beatitudes challenge us to live by the values of God's Kingdom and to understand that true happiness comes from the hope of eternal life with God.

Our Catholic Life

Jesus is a model of wisdom for us. To gain some of that wisdom and apply it to our own lives, we need to take the time to learn Jesus' teachings, and pray for guidance when making decisions. There are **steps you can take** to find the right answer to hard questions, including: giving yourself plenty of time to think about what you should do, listening to your conscience, considering what the Bible and the Church teach, asking for help and courage in prayer, and being confident in your decision once you've thought and prayed about it. Wisdom helps you make the right choices, and that helps strengthen your relationship with God and others.

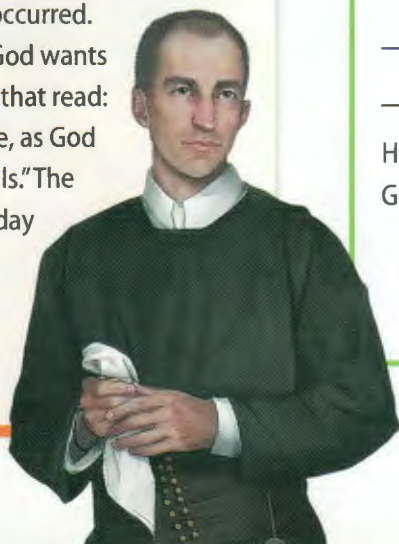


> When have you relied on God's wisdom to help you make a decision? How did it feel?

People of Faith

Saint Gerard Majella, 1726–1755

One day, Gerard Majella was visiting a family and dropped his handkerchief. When one of the daughters tried to return it, Gerard told her to keep it because she might need it some day. Years later, after Gerard had died, the girl was pregnant and her baby was in danger of dying. Remembering the handkerchief, she prayed to Gerard to help her. She gave birth to a healthy baby! Many pregnant women began to pray to Gerard and many miracles occurred. To remind himself of what God wants from us, Gerard kept a note that read: "Here the will of God is done, as God wills, and as long as God wills." The Church celebrates his feast day on **October 16**.



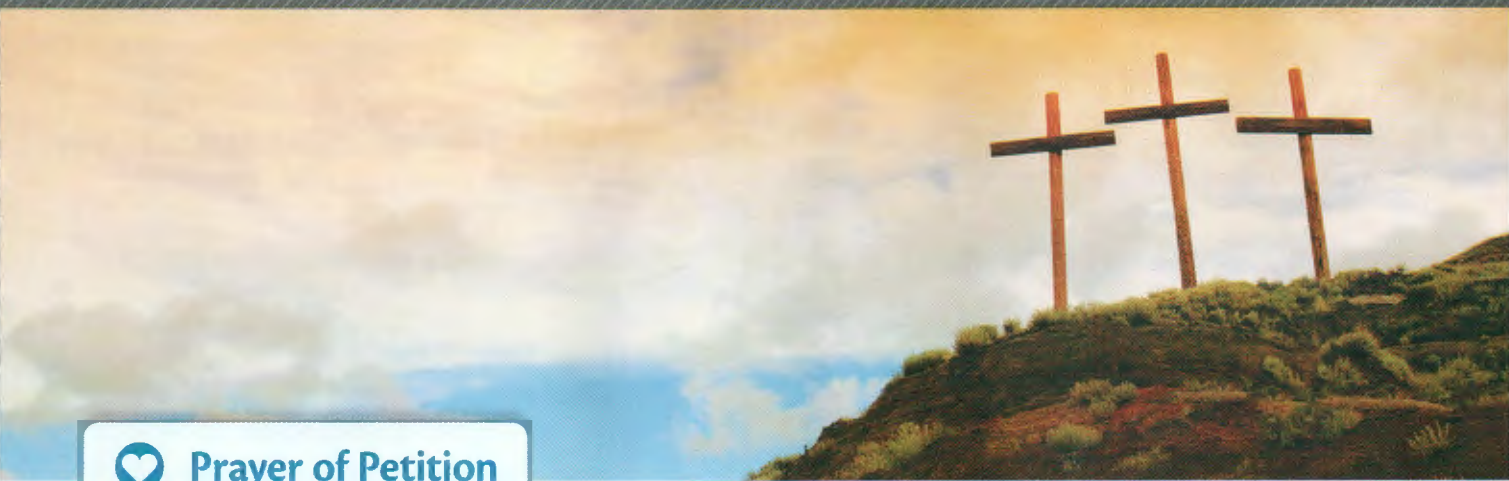
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IDENTIFY

Think of an important decision or difficult situation you or someone you know is facing right now. What would the wisdom of the world lead you to do?

What would the wisdom of Jesus found in the Beatitudes or Sermon on the Mount lead you to do?

How could you see things differently, as God does?



Prayer of Petition

All: Lord God, Creator of all things, true source of light and wisdom, graciously let your light give me understanding.

Leader: Lord God, send your wisdom through our parents and families, our teachers, our pastor and church. Help us too, to find that light in the example of your Saints. May we welcome this light and the wisdom it brings.

All: Give me the eyes to see your plan for a good and meaningful life in a world that can be disordered and sinful.

Leader: Lord, sometimes it seems that darkness overwhelms us. We live in a world where there is often violence and disrespect for human life and dignity. Sometimes, we contribute to that darkness. Too often, we're selfish or say mean things that hurt others. Help us to see everyone as you see them. Let your light overcome the darkness.

All: Help me to remember the gift of your truth that I have learned as a child, and help me to understand your will more each day so that I may make choices that reflect your love.

Leader: God, help us to work hard at learning. Learning about your world, the work of your hands will help us draw closer to you. Let us keep in our hearts Saint Thomas Aquinas' insight that all learning begins in realizing that you are the source of all Truth.

All: Grant me the talent of being clear in my explanations and the ability to express myself with kindness and respect for another's point of view.


Leader: God, sometimes we're careless in the way we speak. We brag, we "stretch the truth," or we say something just to be noticed. Guide us in speaking carefully and thoughtfully, as disciples of Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

All: Direct my talents and interests, and help me discover your plan for my life. Give me the perseverance to complete the journey to serve you through my work. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader: God, you know how often we are tempted to quit trying. Remind us to ask for your help. Encourage us in all we do.

All: Amen.

Prayer for Students by Saint Thomas Aquinas

 Sing or play "You Are the Way"

Go to aliveinchrist.osv.com for an interactive review.

A Work with Words Solve the word search to find words that complete the sentences.

H A P P I N E S S
 J H N Q U P M N V
 M L D I A A O R L
 J I N Q T R V Y U
 W S A T D A R A K
 D T H T F B B Z E
 B E F O L L O W R
 W N E L I E H T D

- The word Beatitude means _____.
- In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said you need to _____ and _____ his words to have a strong foundation in life.
- A short story Jesus told using examples from everyday life or nature to illustrate moral or spiritual truths is a _____.
- The Beatitudes are found in the Gospels according to _____ and _____.

B Check Understanding Complete each sentence with the correct term from the Word Bank.

holiness	Kingdom
Good Samaritan	blessedness
truth	Son of God
true happiness	Sermon on the Mount
Prodigal Son	

- The _____ is the summary of Jesus' key teachings found in the Gospel according to Matthew.
- Jesus preached the message of God's _____.
- In the Beatitudes we learn about the meaning of and path to _____.
- God calls each of us to eternal _____.
- Jesus taught with authority because he was the _____.
- Jesus' Parable of the _____ is a good example of how his wisdom crossed social barriers and cultural norms.

C Make Connections Write a brief response to the question: What wisdom does Jesus have to offer us and how can following it make a difference in your life?
