

Christian Faith is about JESUS CHRIST, the story of Jesus Christ.

We believe in ONE GOD, with 3 Divine Persons:

THE FATHER	is the creator	CREATION
THE SON	is the redeemer	REDEMPTION
THE HOLY SPIRIT	is the sanctifier	SANCTIFICATION

CREATION

Gen. 1:26-27 Let us make man according to our image and likeness.

Image – we are not just bodily beings, we have souls.
we are also spiritual being like God.

Likeness – we have the capacity to:

KNOW

LOVE

FREE

Gen. 2:7 God breathed into the nostril of man and man started to live.

Our breath is the breath of God RUAH YAHWEH

We share in the DIVINE LIFE of GOD, Eternal Life

Both creation story establishes the DIGNITY OF HUMAN BEINGS

THE FALL

The disobedience of Adam and Eve. They ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge.

“You will be like God.”

As consequence, we lost the Divine Life ... Death entered the scene.

THE PROMISE

Gen. 3:15 “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

Proto evangelion, the First Gospel, the First Announcement

THE PREPARATION

To fulfill the promise of redemption God let humanity to participate in the Work of Redemption. It was a long preparation ...

God called and chose a particular people, who became the **CHOSEN PEOPLE OF GOD** – Israel

First God called the **PATRIARCHS**:

Abraham
Isaac
Jacob (Israel)

God also called **KINGS**:

Saul
David
Solomon

Likewise, God called the **JUDGES**:

Deborah
Gideon
Samson

PROPHETS:

Isaiah
Jeremiah
Ezekiel
Daniel

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISE

Anunciation – Gabriel announced to Mary that she will be the mother of the Messiah. **MARY** gave her YES – the mystery of **INCARNATION**. The important role of the **BLESSED VIRGIN MARY – the Mother of God**

Immaculate Conception Perpetual Virginity Assumption

Nativity – Jesus was born and live among men (creatures)

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JESUS

His ministry was consisting of **WORDS** and **DEEDS**

Jesus preach and teach

Jesus performed miracles, healed and cured the sick

He called and chose 12 men whom he called **APOSTLES**

He established His **CHURCH**

In the Church He instituted the **SACRAMENTS**

The **HIGHLIGHT** of the Ministry of Jesus was the **PASCHAL MYSTERY**

PASSION

DEATH

RESURRECTION

Through the Paschal Mystery of Christ, humanity was redeemed – we now have the opportunity to once again share in the Divine Life of God.

ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN

Mission accomplished! Jesus returned to the Father ...

PENTECOST

The Holy Spirit descended to Mary and the Apostles

The start of the **ministry of the Church** established by Christ.

Apostolic Time - **ACTS OF THE APOSTLES**

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Charism of the Church

The spread of the **NEW WAY...** the **spread of CHRISTIANITY**

THE CHURCH FATHERS

The Church Fathers are the early Christian theologians, bishops, and writers who lived in the first centuries after Christ and helped formulate, explain, and defend the teachings of the Church.

St. Clement of Rome

St. Ignatius of Antioch

WHO IS MATTHEW?

Matthew the Apostle and Evangelist is traditionally identified as one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus and the author of the Gospel according to Matthew.

1. His Identity in the New Testament

- Matthew is also called Levi, the son of Alphaeus (cf. Mt 9:9; Mk 2:14; Lk 5:27).
- He was a tax collector, a profession despised by Jews because it was associated with Roman occupation and corruption.
- Jesus called him directly: "Follow me." Matthew immediately left everything and followed Him.

2. Apostle of Mercy and Conversion

- Matthew's call highlights Jesus' mercy toward sinners.
- His transformation shows that no one is beyond God's call.
- The banquet Matthew hosted for Jesus symbolizes the inclusive nature of the Kingdom of God.

3. Matthew as Evangelist

- The Church traditionally holds that Matthew wrote the first Gospel.
- His Gospel is particularly addressed to Jewish Christians, emphasizing:
 - Jesus as the Messiah foretold in the Old Testament
 - Fulfillment of prophecy ("This happened to fulfill...")
 - Jesus as the new Moses and authoritative teacher
- It contains key teachings such as:
 - The Sermon on the Mount
 - The Lord's Prayer
 - The Great Commission (Mt 28:16-20)

4. Symbol and Legacy

- Matthew's symbol among the four Evangelists is the man (or angel), highlighting the humanity of Christ.
- Tradition holds that he later preached the Gospel in regions such as Ethiopia or Persia, and he is honored as a martyr, though details vary.

5. Feast Day and Patronage

- Feast Day: September 21
- Patron Saint of: tax collectors, accountants, bankers, and civil servants

Summary

Matthew stands as a powerful witness to Christ's mercy: a sinner called, an Apostle chosen, and an Evangelist inspired—showing how God transforms ordinary and broken lives into instruments of the Gospel.

If you want, I can also give a very short catechetical version, a homily outline, or a comparison with the Synoptic Gospels.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL CONTEXT OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

1. Date and Place of Composition

- Date: Commonly dated c. AD 70–90.
- Place: Likely written in Syria, often associated with Antioch, where a strong Jewish-Christian community existed.
- The Gospel reflects a community after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple (AD 70), yet deeply rooted in Jewish tradition.

2. Intended Audience

- Primarily Jewish Christians.
- Readers were familiar with:
 - the Law (Torah)
 - the Prophets
 - Jewish customs, feasts, and Scriptures
- The community was experiencing tension and separation from mainstream Judaism, especially from the Pharisaic/rabbinic movement.

3. Relationship with Judaism

- Matthew shows deep continuity with Judaism, presenting Jesus as:
 - the Messiah
 - the Son of David
 - the new Moses
- At the same time, the Gospel reflects conflict:
 - strong critiques of the scribes and Pharisees (Mt 23)
 - disputes over interpretation of the Law
- This reflects the “parting of the ways” between synagogue and Church.

4. Fulfillment of the Old Testament

- Matthew frequently uses fulfillment formulas:
 - “This took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet...”
- Over 60 Old Testament references, more than any other Gospel.
- Jesus is portrayed as the fulfillment—not the abolition—of the Law (Mt 5:17).

5. Cultural and Social Setting

- The community lived in a Greco-Roman world but retained a Jewish worldview.
- Issues addressed include:
 - persecution and marginalization
 - leadership and authority in the Church
 - moral righteousness and hypocrisy
- Matthew emphasizes ethical living, not mere legal observance.

6. Ecclesial Context

- Matthew is the most “ecclesial” Gospel:
 - Only Gospel to explicitly use the word “Church” (ekklesia) (Mt 16:18; 18:17).
 - Strong focus on:
 - authority of Peter
 - community discipline
 - forgiveness and reconciliation
- Shows the Church as the true people of God, gathered around Christ.

7. Christological Emphasis

Matthew presents Jesus as:

- Emmanuel – “God with us” (Mt 1:23)
- Teacher with divine authority
- King and Judge
- Universal Savior, climaxing in the Great Commission (Mt 28:19)

8. Mission to the Gentiles

- Begins with a Jewish focus (genealogy, Magi, fulfillment of prophecy).
- Gradually opens to the Gentiles:
 - Magi (Mt 2)
 - faith of the centurion (Mt 8)
 - final command to all nations (Mt 28:19)
- Reflects a Church transitioning from Jewish roots to universal mission.

Summary

The Gospel of Matthew emerged from a Jewish-Christian community struggling with identity, persecution, and continuity after the fall of Jerusalem. It proclaims that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the fulfillment of Israel's Scriptures, and the foundation of the Church's life and mission.

MATTHEW'S CHRISTOLOGY

Matthew's Christology presents **Jesus as the Messiah, Son of God, Emmanuel, and authoritative Teacher**, who fulfills Israel's Scriptures and inaugurates the Kingdom of Heaven. It is **deeply Jewish, ecclesial, and universal**.

1. Jesus as the Messiah (Christ)

- Matthew opens with a **genealogy** tracing Jesus to **Abraham and David** (Mt 1:1), affirming His messianic identity.
- Repeated **fulfillment formulas** ("This took place to fulfill...") show Jesus as the realization of Old Testament promises.
- Titles used:
 - **Son of David**
 - **King of the Jews**
- Jesus fulfills messianic hopes not through political power, but through **obedience, suffering, and self-giving love**.

2. Emmanuel: "God with Us"

- Matthew uniquely emphasizes Jesus as **Emmanuel** (Mt 1:23).
- This theme frames the entire Gospel:
 - Beginning: "*God with us*" (Incarnation)
 - End: "*I am with you always*" (Mt 28:20)
- Jesus shares in God's divine presence and authority.

3. Son of God

- Jesus is proclaimed **Son of God**:
 - at His Baptism (Mt 3:17)
 - at the Transfiguration (Mt 17:5)
 - by the centurion at the Cross (Mt 27:54)
- Sonship expresses:
 - unique intimacy with the Father
 - divine authority
 - obedience unto death

4. New Moses and Definitive Teacher

- Matthew presents Jesus as the **new Moses**:
 - escape from Herod parallels Moses' escape from Pharaoh
 - Sermon on the Mount parallels Sinai
- Unlike Moses, Jesus teaches **with His own authority**:

"You have heard... but I say to you."

- Jesus is the **definitive interpreter of the Law**, not abolishing it but fulfilling it (Mt 5:17).

5. Jesus and the Kingdom of Heaven

- Jesus is the **proclaimer and embodiment** of the Kingdom.
- His miracles, parables, and forgiveness reveal God's reign already at work.
- He will return as **Son of Man and Judge**, bringing the Kingdom to completion.

6. Suffering Messiah and Son of Man

- Matthew integrates glory and suffering:
 - Jesus predicts His Passion three times.
 - He fulfills Isaiah's **Suffering Servant**.
- The title **Son of Man** highlights:
 - humility and suffering
 - eschatological authority and judgment

7. Risen Lord and Universal Savior

- The Resurrection confirms Jesus' divine identity.
- Jesus declares:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Mt 28:18).

- His mission extends to **all nations**, making His Christology universal.

8. Ecclesial Dimension of Christology

- Matthew links Christology to the **life of the Church**:
 - authority entrusted to Peter
 - binding and loosing
 - enduring presence of Christ with the community
- Jesus remains active as **Lord of the Church**.

Summary

Matthew's Christology proclaims Jesus as:

- **Messiah and Son of David**
- **Emmanuel, God with us**
- **Son of God and Son of Man**
- **New Moses and authoritative Teacher**
- **Crucified and Risen Lord**
- **Universal King and Judge**

In Matthew, Jesus fulfills Israel's hopes, establishes the Church, and calls all peoples into the Kingdom of Heaven—**God present, saving, and reigning in Christ.**

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL EXPLAINED

1. Meaning of the Term

Matthew uniquely prefers the phrase “Kingdom of Heaven” (instead of “Kingdom of God,” common in Mark and Luke).

- This reflects Jewish reverence for the divine name—“heaven” serves as a respectful substitute for “God.”
- The meaning is the same: God’s sovereign reign, not a physical territory.

2. Central Theme of Matthew

The Kingdom of Heaven is the organizing theme of Matthew’s Gospel.

- Jesus begins His public ministry proclaiming:
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mt 4:17).
- John the Baptist announces the same message (Mt 3:2), showing continuity between promise and fulfillment.

3. Present and Future Reality

Matthew presents the Kingdom as both already present and not yet fully realized.

- Present: The Kingdom is active in Jesus’ words, miracles, forgiveness, and authority.
- Future: Its fullness will come at the final judgment and the return of the Son of Man.

This tension calls disciples to faithful living while awaiting fulfillment.

4. The Kingdom and Righteousness

- Entry into the Kingdom requires a righteousness that surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees (Mt 5:20).
- This righteousness is:
 - interior, not merely external
 - rooted in obedience, mercy, humility, and love
- The Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7) outlines Kingdom ethics.

5. Parables of the Kingdom

Matthew contains a rich collection of Kingdom parables, especially in Matthew 13:

- Sower – reception of the Word
- Weeds and Wheat – coexistence of good and evil until judgment
- Mustard Seed and Yeast – hidden yet powerful growth
- Treasure and Pearl – supreme value of the Kingdom
- Net – final separation at the end of time

These parables show that the Kingdom grows quietly, mysteriously, and decisively.

6. The Kingdom and the Church

- The Kingdom is greater than the Church, but present in and through the Church.
- Matthew highlights the Church's role in:
 - proclaiming the Kingdom
 - forming disciples
 - exercising authority and forgiveness (Mt 16:18–19; 18:18)
- The Church is the instrument and sign of the Kingdom until its completion.

7. The Kingdom and Judgment

- Matthew strongly emphasizes accountability and judgment:
 - Parables of the Ten Virgins, Talents, and the Sheep and Goats (Mt 25).
- Belonging to the Kingdom requires perseverance and concrete action, especially love of neighbor and care for the poor.

8. Universal Scope of the Kingdom

- Though rooted in Israel's hopes, the Kingdom is open to all nations.
- The Gospel culminates in the Great Commission (Mt 28:19):
"Make disciples of all nations."

Summary

In Matthew's Gospel, the Kingdom of Heaven is God's active and saving reign, present in Jesus, experienced in the Church, demanding radical righteousness, and awaiting final fulfillment. It calls believers to conversion, faithful discipleship, and mission—here and now, in view of eternity.