

Dear Padre,

If St. Matthew was an apostle, why do we have Gospels from other writers who were not apostles of Jesus? Since he knew Jesus personally, wouldn't his Gospel be the definitive one?

There are two assumptions that need to be addressed. One is that the Apostle Matthew is the same as the evangelist Matthew. The book's title, the Gospel According to Matthew, was added to the text in the second century. Whether it was written by the same Matthew or someone else, it still traces back to the experience of the apostles. The Scriptures are the inspired word of God, and Christians can rely on the truth of the Gospel message through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

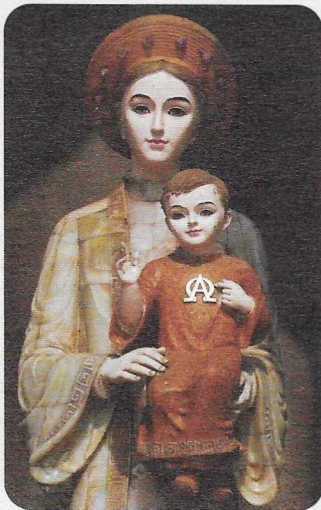
The other assumption is that one Gospel is somehow more "definitive." All four Gospels are the inspired word of God. A Gospel is not a history of the life of Christ. It is a collection of stories that each evangelist arranged in a specific way so that they would make sense to a particular audience. For the Gospel of Matthew, the audience was predominantly Jewish, but these Jewish Christians were being excluded from mainstream Judaism and perhaps were wondering among themselves if Jesus was really the Messiah for whom they had waited so long. Matthew's Gospel asserts repeatedly that Jesus is a true Israelite who fulfills Old Testament prophecies, while also reinterpreting the Law of Moses in a new direction that includes all nations. ●



Fresco of Apostle St. Matthew the Evangelist by Pietro Gaqliardi / Renata Sedmakova

The Redemptorists / DearPadre.org

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS



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May the Virgin Mary help us make of our lives a hymn of praise to God in response to his call and in the humble and joyful fulfillment of his will. But let us remember this: there was a moment in each of our lives in which God made himself present more strongly, with a call.

ANGELUS, ROME,
JANUARY 17, 2021

MONDAY

January 15

Weekday

1 Sm 15:16-23

Mk 2:18-22

TUESDAY

January 16

Weekday

1 Sm 16:1-13

Mk 2:23-28

WEDNESDAY

January 17

St. Anthony, Abbot

1 Sm 17:32-33, 37,

40-51

Mk 3:1-6

THURSDAY

January 18

Weekday

1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7

Mk 3:7-12

FRIDAY

January 19

Weekday

1 Sm 24:3-21

Mk 3:13-19

SATURDAY

January 20

Weekday

2 Sm 1:1-4, 11-12, 19,

23-27

Mk 3:20-21

SUNDAY

January 21

Third Sunday in

Ordinary Time

Jon 3:1-5, 10

1 Cor 7:29-31

Mk 1:14-20

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