

# GOSPELS

## *Introduction*

*“Gospel” could mean many things: the Good News that Jesus announced; the preaching of the Good News; and the writings that gather that Good News.*

*In the Gospels we find a lot of history, the deeds and sayings of Jesus, and a lot of geography, the places where these things happened. But the intention of an evangelist is not to narrate facts and sayings as a reporter: they want to transmit their faith, their Faith in Jesus the Son of God. That is why their narrations are colored by their faith in Jesus; Jesus is alive from the faith in The Risen One.*

*These books were written with materials gathered from previous writings. The deeds and sayings of Jesus had witnesses, especially his closer and more constant disciples. When Jesus left this world, the communities of believers repeated in the Eucharist these deeds and sayings of Jesus. And when people wanted to be part of the community of believers they were taught the deeds and words of Jesus.*

*These writings were oral traditions first. There was no need to put them into writing because the witnesses were still alive and would not allow deviations. Little by little, with the passage of time and the disappearance of witnesses, the need to put it in writing arrived. At the beginning there were only fragments: stories of the Passion, collections of miracles, collections of sayings, of parables... These collections were used in the Eucharist and in catechesis.*

*Starting around the years 60 or 70, there were people who gathered these catechesis and made out of them a continuous writing about the activity of Jesus. These are our Gospels. These were not the only ones written. In the latest part of the First Century many “gospels” were written, but the Christian communities paid more attention to some of them over others to the point that some were rejected as not worthy of faith. Finally the four that we know today were accepted as “canonical”, that is, completely trustworthy and these are: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.*

*The first three ones are called “Synoptic” because they complement each other to the point that we could almost construct a detailed life of Jesus. The fourth gospel, called the gospel of John, is quite different in its presentation and style.*

*It seems that the first to be written was the one of Mark, and that Matthew and Luke knew it and copied it almost entirely adding materials from other sources that Mark did not know.*