

RESISTING HAPPINESS



A true story about why we sabotage ourselves,
feel overwhelmed, set aside our dreams, and lack the courage to
simply be ourselves . . . and how to start choosing happiness again!

MATTHEW KELLY

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

STUDY GUIDE

RESISTING HAPPINESS

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Introduction

The right book at the right time can be life changing. *Resisting Happiness* is that book.

We all know the things that will make us happy, but we don't always do them. Why? We're resistant. With his signature combination of the profound and the practical, *New York Times* bestselling author Matthew Kelly helps you learn why we sabotage ourselves, feel overwhelmed, set aside our dreams, and lack the courage to simply be ourselves . . . and how to start choosing happiness again. *Resisting Happiness* will inspire you to break through resistance so you can become the-best-version-of-yourself and start living with passion and purpose.

This study guide is designed to accompany Dynamic Catholic's 2017 Best Lent Ever program. Daily videos from Matthew Kelly and Dynamic Catholic team members provide incredible insights and personal reflections on the chapters of *Resisting Happiness* that will enhance your group's experience with the book. You and your group can sign up at DynamicCatholic.com/LentSignUp to get emails sent straight to your inboxes every day during Lent.

We hope you enjoy *Resisting Happiness*, and we pray this study guide is a useful resource for your Lenten journey.

May God bless you and bring you closer to him each day this Lent,

The Dynamic Catholic Team

Study Guide Purpose and Format

The purpose of this study guide is to help readers dive deeper into *Resisting Happiness* by applying the topics of the book to their everyday lives, specifically in light of the Lenten season. While it has been created primarily for use in small faith groups and book clubs, it can also be used by individuals for personal reflections.

You can request a free copy of *Resisting Happiness* (just pay shipping) at DynamicCatholic.com/GetHappy, or visit DynamicCatholic.com/ShareHappiness to buy books for your whole group at a discounted price (quantities of 6 or more).

The study guide consists of six sessions. We recommend these sessions take place once a week. Depending on the day your group meets, you can start on or after Ash Wednesday, or you can start the first full week of Lent.

Each session follows the same format:

- Opening Prayer**
- Watch Video(s)**
- Discussion Questions**
- Closing Prayer**
- Announcements**

We recommend that a group meets for 60–90 minutes and agrees on a fixed length of time. If your group does not get through all the questions during that time, that is okay. Spend the time on the questions that are most relevant to your group.

It is assumed that participants will have completed the reading assignment before attending each session. We recommend that participants also sign up for Best Lent Ever at DynamicCatholic.com/LentSignUp so they can watch the daily videos throughout Lent. This will help them stay more engaged and will better prepare them for group discussion.

Note: Depending on the day you meet, different videos will be available. You can select the appropriate video from the selection depending on your group's schedule. A new video will be posted each day (Monday through Saturday) during Lent. You can access the videos at DynamicCatholic.com/Videos starting March 1, or visit DynamicCatholic.com/LentSignUp to sign up to receive them in your inbox daily.

Reading Schedule

Session One

SOMETHING IS MISSING

READ PAGES 1-37

Chapter 1: Resistance

Chapter 2: Your Quest for Happiness

Chapter 3: Making Sense of Everything

Chapter 4: Resisting God

Chapter 5: Life Is Messy

Chapter 6: Something Is Missing

Session Two

LIVING SOULFULLY

READ PAGES 39-76

Chapter 7: The Big Question

Chapter 8: Four Words

Chapter 9: Are You Spiritually Healthy?

Chapter 10: Get Busy Living

Chapter 11: Ordinary Things

Chapter 12: Living Soulfully

Session Three

FALLING IN LOVE

READ PAGES 77-119

Chapter 13: Hour by Hour

Chapter 14: Interesting People

Chapter 15: Falling in Love

Chapter 16: No Visitors

Chapter 17: An Unconventional Education

Chapter 18: Tuesday Nights

Session Four

HUNGRY

READ PAGES 121-152

Chapter 19: Bored?

Chapter 20: Learning to Listen
Chapter 21: The Power of Habits
Chapter 22: How Many Sundays Left?
Chapter 23: Attempted Murder
Chapter 24: Hungry

Session Five

THE SECRET TO EXCELLENCE

READ PAGES 153-190

Chapter 25: Breaking the Cycle
Chapter 26: You Cannot Succeed at Anything Without . . .
Chapter 27: The Secret to Excellence
Chapter 28: The Light Is On
Chapter 29: Are You a Pilgrim or a Tourist?
Chapter 30: The First Intervention

Session Six

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

READ PAGES 191-228

Chapter 31: A Weekend Away
Chapter 32: Let Your Light Shine
Chapter 33: Made for Mission
Chapter 34: When God Looks at a Résumé
Chapter 35: Don't Let the Critics Win
Chapter 36: Blessed and Grateful
Chapter 37: Never Get Discouraged

Session One

SOMETHING IS MISSING

Reading: Chapters 1-6

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.

Watch Video(s)

Watch Day 1: Resistance

Other recommended video options include:

Day 3: Making Sense of Everything

Day 6: Something Is Missing

(Visit DynamicCatholic.com/Videos to see which videos are available at your group's meeting time.)

Discussion Questions

1. What is one way that you have encountered resistance?
2. Are you as happy as you could be? In chapter two of *Resisting Happiness*, the author asks us to give ourselves a happiness score between 1 and 10 over the past three months. What score would you give yourself?
3. Lent is a great time to take a step back and look at our lives. In what area of your life do you need to place God at the center?
4. Have you ever wanted something good for someone more than they wanted it for themselves?
5. What hard battle are you fighting?
6. In chapter five, the author says we are called to put ourselves in the middle of the mess of the world and work to make a difference, however small. What does that mean to you in light of the Lenten call to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving?
7. Has restlessness ever pushed you to become a-better-version-of-yourself?

Closing Prayer

The Dynamic Catholic Prayer

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.

Announcements

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is chapters 7–12.
- If you haven't signed up for Best Lent Ever yet, go to DynamicCatholic.com/LentSignUp to get daily videos sent straight to your inbox. Matthew Kelly and the Dynamic Catholic team members will provide inspiration and insights that accompany each chapter of *Resisting Happiness*.
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).

Session Two

LIVING SOULFULLY

Reading: Chapters 7-12

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.

Watch Video(s)

Watch Day 7: The Big Question

Other recommended video options include:

Day 9: Are You Spiritually Healthy?

Day 12: Living Soulfully

(Visit [DynamicCatholic.com/Videos](https://www.DynamicCatholic.com/Videos) to see which videos are available at your group's meeting time.)

Discussion Questions

1. In chapter seven, the author explains how resistance keeps us busy and distracted from the things that will help us grow. How have you seen this so far in your Lenten journey?

2. Prayer changes everything. How has prayer impacted your life?

3. In chapter eight, the author presents four words from the Our Father as the greatest challenge of Christianity: “Thy Will Be Done.” How is God calling you to live out those words this Lent?

4. Our image of God is the lens through which we see ourselves, others, and the world.

a) How do you see God?

b) How do you see that influence other areas of your life?

5. If you died today, what would you wish you had done differently?

6. In what area of your life is God inviting you to become a-better-version-of-yourself this Lent?

7. What does it mean to live soulfully? And what does it mean to live soulfully during the Lenten season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving?

Closing Prayer

The Dynamic Catholic Prayer

Loving Father,

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and make myself available to you.

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in order for me to carry out the mission
and experience the joy you have imagined for my life.

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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.

Announcements

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is chapters 13–18.
- Watch the Best Lent Ever videos each day this week.
- Let your family and friends know they can request a free copy of *Resisting Happiness* by visiting DynamicCatholic.com/GetHappy, and invite them to sign up at DynamicCatholic.com/LentSignUp for Best Lent Ever.
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).

Session Three

FALLING IN LOVE

Reading: Chapters 13-18

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.

Watch Video(s)

Watch Day 13: Hour by Hour

Other recommended video options include:

Day 15: Falling in Love

Day 17: An Unconventional Education

(Visit DynamicCatholic.com/Videos to see which videos are available at your group's meeting time.)

Discussion Questions

1. In chapter thirteen, the author says the primary purpose of work is to help us become the-best-version-of-ourselves. How would this approach impact your work?

2. What is an ordinary activity that you can transform into a prayer?

3. Is there a story in the Gospels that has inspired you?

4. In what way is God inspiring you to become a continuous learner this Lent?

5. In chapter sixteen, the author says one of life's most essential lessons is learning to be alone.
 - a) What does he mean by that?

 - b) How can you learn to be alone this Lent?

6. During Lent we are called in a particular way to generosity, not only with our finances, but also with our time and our hearts.
 - a) Have you ever reached out to someone who was lonely?

 - b) Have you ever thought about being the answer to someone's prayer?

7. Have you ever gone to daily Mass? If so, how did the experience impact you?

Closing Prayer

The Dynamic Catholic Prayer

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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.

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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.

Announcements

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is chapters 19–24.
- Watch the Best Lent Ever videos each day this week.
- If you are enjoying this experience, please visit DynamicCatholic.com/TheMission to learn more about the Dynamic Catholic mission and all the ways they are working to re-energize the Catholic Church.
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).

Session Four

HUNGRY

Reading: Chapters 19–24

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.

Watch Video(s)

Watch Day 19: Bored?

Other recommended video options include:

Day 21: The Power of Habits

Day 24: Hungry

(Visit DynamicCatholic.com/Videos to see which videos are available at your group's meeting time.)

Discussion Questions

1. What is your favorite thing about the Mass?

2. What does it mean to be a good listener?
 - a) With your loved ones?

 - b) With your body?

 - c) With your conscience and your soul?

 - d) And with God?

3. How do you think using a Mass Journal could enhance your experience of the Mass?

4. Our lives change when our habits change. When was the last time you set out to intentionally create a life-changing habit?

5. If you had one Sunday left, what would you do?

6. What does it mean to give truth a place of honor in your life?

7. What are you hungry for?

Closing Prayer

The Dynamic Catholic Prayer

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and make myself available to you.

Help me to become the-best-version-of-myself
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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.

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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.

Announcements

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is chapters 25–30.
- Watch the Best Lent Ever videos each day this week.
- If you liked the idea of a Mass Journal, you can visit DynamicCatholic.com/FreeMassJournal to request a free copy (just pay shipping).
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).

Session Five

The Secret to Excellence

Reading: Chapters 25-30

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.

Watch Video(s)

Watch Day 25: Breaking the Cycle

Other recommended video options include:

Day 28: The Light Is On

Day 29: Are You a Pilgrim or a Tourist?

(Visit DynamicCatholic.com/Videos to see which videos are available at your group's meeting time.)

Discussion Questions

1. How have you overcome a big struggle in your life?
2. Why is fasting one of the most powerful tools in the spiritual life?
3. Who has coached you in your spiritual journey?
4. Do you think holiness is possible for you?
5. Have you faced resistance when it comes to confession? What can you do to overcome it?
6. What does it mean to be a pilgrim? How can that perspective impact your Lenten journey and beyond?
7. What is one thing that you could do to grow spiritually this Lent?

Closing Prayer

The Dynamic Catholic Prayer

Loving Father,

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and make myself available to you.

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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.

Announcements

- The reading assignment for our next gathering is chapters 31–37.
- No matter how long it has been, we encourage you to go to Reconciliation this week.
- If you want a simple and powerful way to share the Catholic faith with other people, visit DynamicCatholic.com/ShareHappiness and order six copies of *Resisting Happiness* for just \$18 (including shipping) and give them to your family and friends.
- Our next gathering will be . . . (date, place, and time).

Session Six

Let Your Light Shine

Reading: Chapters 31-37

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.

Watch Video(s)

Watch Day 30: The First Intervention

Other recommended video options include:

Day 33: Made for Mission

Day 34: When God Looks at a Résumé

(Visit DynamicCatholic.com/Videos to see which videos are available at your group's meeting time.)

Discussion Questions

1. Has a friend ever encouraged you to be a-better-version-of-yourself?
2. What has been your biggest struggle this Lent? What is holding you back?
3. How are critics distracting you from what God is calling you to do in the present moment?
4. How can a habit of gratitude transform your daily life?
5. How available are you to God at this time?
6. What mission do you think God is calling you to right now?
7. The author says happiness is a choice, and resistance almost always stands between you and happiness. Are you going to choose happiness?

Closing Prayer

The Dynamic Catholic Prayer

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
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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.

Announcements

- If you want to have an impactful Holy Week, we encourage you to visit DynamicCatholic.com/Videos, even if you have not participated in Best Lent Ever so far. The program will have special videos for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday that will enhance your spiritual journey.
- If you enjoyed *Resisting Happiness*, the next title we would recommend is Matthew Kelly's *Rediscover Jesus*. Kelly takes you on a 40-day spiritual journey to encounter Jesus—the amazing friend who is going to help you answer life's tough questions.
- If you participated in Best Lent Ever and want to continue getting daily inspiration, you can visit DynamicCatholic.com/DailyQuote to sign up for Dynamic Catholic's Daily Reflections.

On behalf of everyone here at Dynamic Catholic, we want to thank you for taking this journey through Lent. We pray that you and your loved ones have a happy and blessed Easter!

 **Dynamic Catholic**

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