

Dear Padre,

The Bible is critical to our Christian lives, but why is it so hard to understand?

The Bible is a unique piece of literature—perhaps the most distinctive in the world. In fact, it is not just one publication. The word *Bible* derives from a word meaning “library.” The Bible is a library of books—seventy-two books, to be exact—dating from antiquity, written and edited by authors known and unknown. It contains, as any library would, a vast array of literary forms and expressions. It covers more than 3,000 years of history. Reading and understanding the Bible, and living up to its precepts, is indeed a formidable task and will take us all a lifetime to do.

The first key to the Bible is noting that this isn’t just the work of human authors: it is the word of God. We acknowledge the human element of the Bible, the authors’ lived experience, the historical circumstances that form the background of the revelation. But we believe unequivocally that the truth and meaning of the Bible is the inspiration of God. The Catholic view is that God was able to reveal truth through the work of sacred writers.

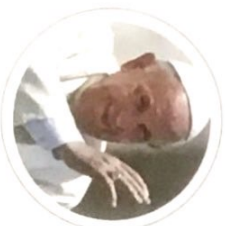
The Scriptures are layered accounts. They begin with historical facts, followed by years of oral tradition, and ending with the author’s final version.

The best way to familiarize yourself with Scripture is to find a good Bible-study program or group. This will acquaint you with the history of Israel, the times and culture in which the Bible was written, and its rich variety of literary forms. Enjoy your biblical journey.

—Fr. Joseph Morin, CSSR
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A WORD FROM Pope Francis

We must ensure that in the usual activities of every Christian community, in parishes, in associations, and movements, there actually be at heart the personal encounter with Christ who communicates himself to us in his word, because, as St. Jerome teaches us, “ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.”

—ADDRESS TO CATHOLIC BIBLICAL FEDERATION, JUNE 19, 2015

Calendar

Monday

AUGUST 10
St. Lawrence,
Deacon and Martyr
2 Cor 9:6-10
Jn 12:24-26

Tuesday

AUGUST 11
St. Clare, Virgin
Ez 2:8-3:4

Mt 18:1-5, 10, 12-14

Wednesday

AUGUST 12
Weekday

Ez 9:1-7, 10:18-22
Mt 18:15-20

Thursday

AUGUST 13
Weekday
Ez 12:1-12

Mt 18:21-19:1

Friday

AUGUST 14
St. Maximilian Kolbe,
Priest and Martyr
Ez 16:1-15, 60, 63
or 16:59-63

Mt 19:3-12

Saturday

AUGUST 15
The Assumption of the
Blessed Virgin Mary
Rv 11:19a;

12:1-6a, 10ab
1 Cor 15:20-27
Lk 1:39-56

Sunday

AUGUST 16
Twentieth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Is 56:1, 6-7
Rom 11:13-15, 29-32
Mt 15:21-28

Our Parish COMMUNITY

August 9, 2020
Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
1 Kgs 19:9a, 11-13a
Rom 9:1-5
Mt 14:22-35

Who Are the People of God?

This is still an unresolved theological issue. For so long the resolute answer of many was: the Roman Catholic Church is the people of God. However, the Second Vatican Council’s Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*) opened the Church’s understanding to include all Christian denominations, paraphrasing Ephesians 4:4-5: “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one Baptism” (*UR* 2). The council went even further in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*), “calling together a people made up of Jew and Gentile, making them one, not according to the flesh but in the Spirit. This was to be the new People of God” (*LG* 9).

To be united with Protestants is one thing; to be united with Jews is quite another. For centuries, many interpreted the New Testament to say that the Jews lost favor with God. Such thinking supported—even caused—various forms of anti-Semitism, ethnic and religious persecution, and killings. We realized how wrong this thinking was. Vatican II quotes

today’s second reading and later states: “This sacred synod wants to foster and recommend...mutual understanding and respect which is the fruit, above all, of biblical and theological studies as well as of fraternal dialogues” (Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions [*Nostra Aetate*], 4).
We may have corrected some grievous errors in this matter, but we have not gotten much further than Paul did in resolving the issue. However, he experienced “great sorrow and constant anguish in my heart” (Romans 9:2) because of the separation. Do we?
—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- The original followers of Jesus were simply different kinds of Jews.
- Much of our Christian religious tradition is grounded in the Old Testament.

[Peter] became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him.

MATTHEW 14:30-31

