

CATHOLICS AND THE BIBLE

January 24, 2021

Third Sunday
in Ordinary Time



Pope Francis recently designated the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time as Word of God Sunday. The Catholic Church draws from two forms of Revelation: Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture. The pope desires to raise awareness of and reflection upon the Holy Word. The Church is the steward of Scripture. She gave us the canon (the list of accepted books in the Bible). The Mass is saturated with Scripture from beginning to end. As Catholics, we encounter more Scripture on Sunday than any other Christian denomination.

Despite all this Catholics sometimes lack familiarity with the Word of God. No matter your level of understanding, this should never be the case.

present in the written word throughout the Bible! These verses describe the Incarnation of Christ, where Jesus is fully divine, fully human, and without sin.

“IGNORANCE OF THE SCRIPTURES IS
IGNORANCE OF CHRIST.”

:: St. Jerome

There is another connection between the Incarnation and Scripture. We believe that the Scriptures have both God and man as their author,

St. Jerome has written “Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.” The Gospel of John provides great insight into this truth: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us...” (John 1:1, 14). This truth informs us that Christ is

and as such are inspired and inerrant. We trust that the human authors were guided by the Holy Spirit. Human beings put stylus to papyrus, but it was God guiding the message (cf. 2 Peter 1:20-21). The result is that the Scriptures are inspired — literally “God-breathed” (2 Timothy 3:16). As a result, the Word of God has a character, quality, and



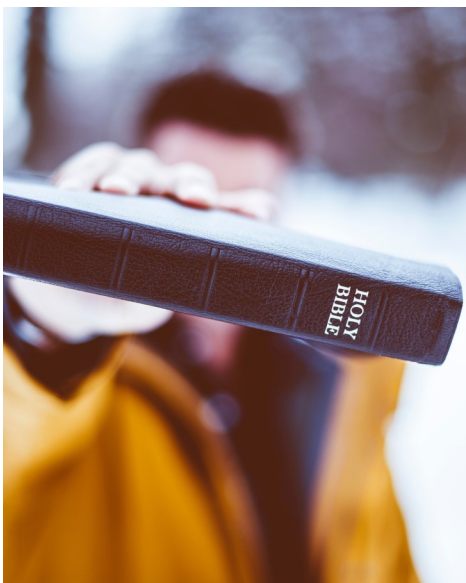
Watch the video:
youtu.be/LmEq3WQo0FI

dynamism that transcends merely human words. God's Word is convicting, redeeming, and transformative.

Lastly, the Scriptures require proper interpretation and the Magisterium is uniquely authorized in this capacity.

If we want to know Christ intimately, we need to pray daily with the Scriptures, such as through *lectio divina*. We need to probe the depths of Scripture with the aid of commentaries, guidebooks, or instruction. God wants to encounter us daily in the Word, to encourage, guide, and transform us.

Find your Bible, blow off the dust, and open it. Christ awaits!



"SINCE, THEREFORE, ALL THAT THE INSPIRED AUTHORS OR SACRED WRITERS AFFIRM SHOULD BE REGARDED AS AFFIRMED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE BOOKS OF SCRIPTURE FIRMLY, FAITHFULLY, AND WITHOUT ERROR TEACH THAT TRUTH WHICH GOD, FOR THE SAKE OF OUR SALVATION, WISHED TO SEE CONFIDED TO THE SACRED SCRIPTURES."

:: *Dei Verbum* (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), no. 11

Family Discussion Questions

1. What would you do if Jesus knocked on your door and asked to chat with you? Why?
2. How is reading the Bible similar to two people becoming friends and growing in friendship?
3. How can your family take steps to routinely encounter Christ in his Word?

Family Challenge

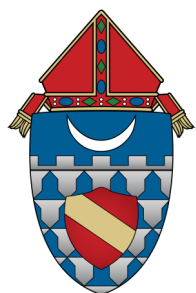
Have each person read, think, and pray about the Gospel reading from this Sunday. Sometime this week meet as a family and share how God spoke to you about this passage.

Additional Videos

- How do Catholics Interpret the Bible?: youtu.be/Ryf5SjFQaG8

Other Resources

- [The Bible in a Year Podcast](#)
- [Reading the Bible: A Study Guide](#) by Timothy R. Carmody (Paulist Press, 2004)



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