

# PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

The Second Vatican Council called for a renewed encounter with Jesus Christ through the reading of Sacred Scripture. When we read Scripture we don't just encounter words on a page; we encounter a person. As *Dei Verbum 21* says: "For in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love and speaks with them; and the force and power in the word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons, the food of the soul, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life. Consequently these words are perfectly applicable to Sacred Scripture: 'For the word of God is living and active' (Heb. 4:12) and 'it has power to build you up and give you your heritage among all those who are sanctified' (Acts 20:32)."



The Council goes on to issue one of its most powerful exhortations in *Dei Verbum 25*: "This Sacred Synod also earnestly and especially urges all the Christian faithful . . . to learn by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures the 'excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ' (Phil. 3:8). 'For ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.' Therefore, they should gladly put themselves in touch with the sacred text itself, whether it be through the liturgy, rich in the divine word, or through devotional reading, or through instructions suitable for the purpose and other aids which, in our time, with approval and active support of the shepherds of the Church, are commendably spread everywhere. And let them remember that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that God and man may talk together; for 'we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the divine saying.'"

*Dei Verbum 26* : "In this way, therefore, through the reading and study of the sacred books 'the word of God may spread rapidly and be glorified' (2 Thess. 3:1) and the treasure of revelation, entrusted to the Church, may more and more fill the hearts of men. Just as the life of the Church is strengthened through more frequent celebration of the Eucharistic mystery, similar we may hope for a new stimulus for the life of the Spirit from a growing reverence for the word of God, which 'lasts forever' (Is. 40:8; see 1 Peter 1:23-25)."

## GO DEEPER BY:

Reading the rest of [Dei Verbum](#).

## PHASE 2 IS UNDERWAY

Now that we're a month or so into phase 2 of our Go Make Disciples initiative, hopefully your parish has begun to implement parts of its Parish Evangelization Plan. After several months focused primarily on planning, now is the time to focus on implementing. As we move from the season of Epiphany toward Lent, these next few months are a great time to focus on growing in holiness through daily prayer, keeping Sundays holy, doing penance on Fridays, and frequenting the sacrament of confession.

## EQUIPPING FOR MISSION

"Becoming a true Catholic evangelist requires more than just knowledge of the Faith, a certain style, or even success. Your life must reflect the fact that Jesus Christ is active, makes a difference, and has healed your heart. As an evangelist, you are held to a higher standard and your personal life needs to be a fitting witness to your evangelization. How can you do this? The answer is simple: prayer. Prayer creates a true Catholic evangelist because the Holy Spirit is the cause of conversion."

Listen to this podcast episode of [Every Knee Shall Bow](#) on how prayer creates a true Catholic evangelist.

## SEEKING HOLINESS

### A NOTE FROM THE BISHOP

Lectio Divina is an ancient prayer practice of focused meditation on the Scriptures. Find a quiet place, open your Bible, start with one of the Gospels, and read the passage slowly several times. Let the words, the scene, the meaning of the text, fill your heart and mind. What is Jesus saying and doing? Put yourself in the narrative. What are you feeling and thinking? What phrase, sentence, image, stands out? Meditate on that for a while. Let your reflection move into prayer, as you speak your heart to the Lord. Finally, is there a resolution or action that inspires you from this prayer? How will you live the meaning of this prayer today?

### LEARN MORE

Read [What Is Lectio Divina?](#) from the Evangelical Catholic; or watch [What Is Lectio Divina?](#) on Ascension Presents.

### HOMEWORK

Do this at least once before your next team meeting. Spend at least 15 minutes praying slowly and reflectively over a short passage of Scripture.

## YEARLY FORMATION NEWSLETTER TOPICS

### MAY 2021

The Mission

### JUNE 2021

Missionary Discipleship

### JULY 2021

Evangelization

### AUGUST 2021

How to Evangelize

### SEPTEMBER 2021

Jesus + The Story | Faith

### OCTOBER 2021

Our Baptismal Call | Courage

### NOVEMBER 2021

Holy Mass | Charity

### DECEMBER 2021

Reclaiming Sunday | Justice

### JANUARY 2022

Daily Prayer | Hope

### FEBRUARY 2022

[Praying with Scripture | Lectio](#)

### MARCH 2022

Self-Denial | Moderation

### APRIL 2022

Monthly Confession | Humility

## NOT A COMMITTEE MEETING

A note for parish staff and evangelization teams: **Think outside the box. Meet in homes. Share meals or drinks together. Discuss your faith, your parish, and what God is saying to you in prayer.**