

WHAT YOUR RCIA TEAM NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT THE BIBLE



A conversation with Greg Pierce

Greg Pierce is the president of ACTA Publications in Chicago, which publishes *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language, Catholic/Ecumenical Edition*, a fresh, compelling, insightful, challenging, faith-filled translation of the Bible into contemporary idiomatic American English.

1. Why is biblical literacy important for Catholics?

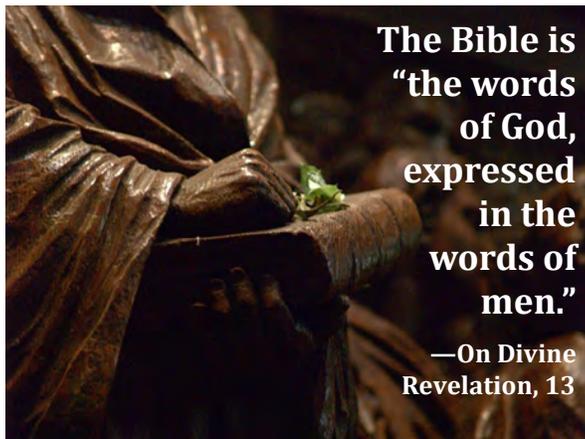
- Scripture is the source of faith
- Scripture is food for the soul
- Scripture is the font for spiritual life (CCC 131)
- All forms of Christian instruction are nourished by Scripture (CCC 132)



"Prayer" by graur razvan ionut | freedigitalphotos.net

"Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ." —Saint Jerome

2. What is the Bible? How is it the Word of God?



"Trinity Church Pulpit Detail: Holly on Martin Luther's Bible" by takomabelot | Flickr

Two elements of the Word of God

Sacred Scripture

- Scripture is God's self-revelation
- The Bible is not simply a list of commandments
- The Bible is an encounter with the mystery of God

Sacred Tradition

- Both Scripture and Tradition flow "from the same divine well-spring [and] come together in some fashion to form one thing." (On Divine Revelation, 9)
- This teaching is in contrast to some Protestant churches that identify the Word of God as Scripture alone.

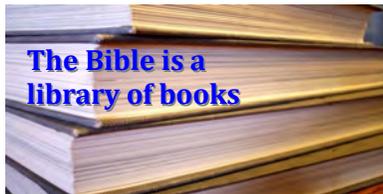
"The Magisterium is not superior to the Word of God, but is its servant. It teaches only what has been handed on to it."

—On Divine Revelation, 10

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3. What we need to know about the Bible



The Bible is a library of books

Seven books are considered canonical by Roman Catholics, but not by all Protestant traditions: Judith, Tobit, Baruch, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), Wisdom



The Bible is divinely inspired



The Bible is true

"Big Waves" weirdo15 | stockxchng; "Watcher" Melissa Wiese | Flickr

4. How to read the Bible

1. Start with the gospels
2. Continue with the psalms
3. Add on the letters from the New Testament
4. Explore the Old Testament last
5. Read liturgically
6. Read the introductions from the NAB

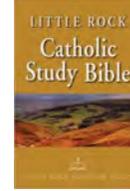
Translations of the Bible



New Jerusalem Bible: A poetic translation that has a lyric quality.



New Revised Standard Version: Used in the liturgy in Canada. Also used in colleges and seminaries for study.



New American Bible Revised Edition: Used in the United States liturgy. Has excellent introductions to each book of the Bible.



The Message: A contemporary idiomatic American English translation. Meant to be a supplement.

Two translations of John 3:16-18 (Gospel for Most Holy Trinity Sunday)

New American Bible Revision Edition

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

The Message

This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. Anyone who trusts in him is acquitted; anyone who refuses to trust him has long since been under the death sentence without knowing it. And why? Because of that person's failure to believe in the one-of-a-kind Son of God when introduced to him.

5. What impact will greater knowledge of the Bible have on our RCIA processes?