

Scripture and Tradition

Revelation Itself

- In His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will (see Eph. 1:9) by which through Christ, the Word made flesh, man might in the Holy Spirit have access to the Father and come to share in the divine nature. (Dei Verbum 1)
- This is achieved through all of revelation, which reaches climax in the person of Christ.
- Christ is the “mediator and fullness of revelation” (DV 2).
- We can continue to grow in our understanding of God with what we have been given, but there is no more public revelation after Christ.

The Catholic View of Scripture

- St. Jerome, a 5th century priest and doctor of the church states, “Ignorance of Scripture is Ignorance of Christ.”
- Catholics read a passage from the Old Testament, New Testament, and Gospel at every Mass. We cycle through the whole Bible every three years.

The Dual Authorship of Scripture

- 2 Tim 3:16 – “All scripture is inspired by God”
- Inspiration, or “God-Breathed”, is the Holy Spirit working in the human authors to produce scripture.
- But in addition to this, “God chose men and while employed by Him they made use of their powers and abilities” (DV 11).
- We don’t know exactly how this works! We but we teach that everything God wanted written is written, God is 100% truly the author. But the human author also wrote with their own styles, technics, and knowledge... they are 100% the author.
- Because it is *inspired*, we accept scripture “as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings” (Dei Verbum 11)
- Because there is a human author, we can study things like literary form and literary devices in scripture.

Tradition

- Jesus did not leave us a textbook, but the experiences of his life with his apostles and followers.
- John 21:25 - But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.
- Jesus sent his Apostles out to the world. We find great things in those taught by his apostle’s students, such as St. Ignatius of Antioch, who was taught directly by Peter.

Magisterium

- The Magisterium is given the task of “authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, (8) has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church... This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it ” (DV 10)

Small Group Discussions I

- Introduce yourself to your small group.
- Discuss your relationship to Scripture. Has it inspired your life? Have you found meaning in Scripture? What is your view of what scripture? Do you come from a Sola Scriptura background? Or one that didn't read scripture?

Small Group Discussion II

- Why do you think the Church from earliest times chose to use the word revelation, or unveiling, to describe how God has communicated to us?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the fullness of God's Revelation of Himself to us?
- Why do you think the Church from earliest times chose to use the word revelation, or unveiling, to describe how God has communicated to us?
- Catholics believe there is a difference between Sacred Tradition and the tradition of men. What do you think is the difference?
- Do you believe that Jesus taught his disciples things that are not in scripture? What sorts of things do you think these include? Do you think he intended this to be a part of his teaching?
- How do you think the first apostles taught? Did they use scripture or scripture and tradition? Would they have been aware of this? Would they have tried to preserve this? Do you think the Holy Spirit had a role in this?
- James 2:19 reads: "You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder." James is saying that demons believe in God and yet do not have faith. How is faith more than believing?
- Are you looking forward to reading Scripture? Or rereading it? Why?

Inspired: God and Man

Literal vs. Figurative? Literary

Literary Genre

- The Bible as God's loving communication with each of us
- What we mean when we say the Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit
- The Catholic approach to interpreting Scripture correctly
- How the Church discerns which books are part of the Bible (the canon of Scripture)
- How we can know with confidence that the Bible contains God's revelation for our lives
- How to start studying the Bible and praying with God's Word

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» Why is it true that "ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ"?

Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light for my path." What does this passage mean to me? Am I willing to read God's Word in Scripture with an open heart and mind, expecting that God will give me insights for my life?

Reflect on the following quote from Pope St. Gregory: "The Holy Bible is like a mirror before our mind's eye. In it we see our inner face. From the Scriptures we can learn our spiritual deformities and beauties. And there too we discover the progress we are making and how far we are from perfection." How might thinking of the Bible as a mirror and as a way to learn about my spiritual progress make a difference in how I listen to the readings at Mass? What can I do to be better prepared for the Scripture readings each week?