

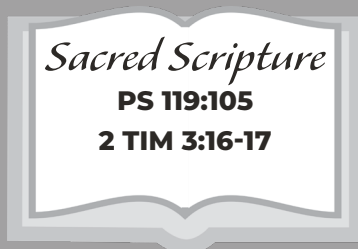
FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES

THE BIBLE

TOPIC: What is the Bible and where does it come from?

REFERENCES:

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
NO. 133



CREED	LITURGY	LIFE	PRAYER
nos.	nos.	nos.	nos.
50-143	1100-02, 1154-55, 1184, 1349	1785, 1964-1966	2653-54, 2662

MATERIALS

- Family Bible
- Books of the Bible tabs (provided by parish to be used in Week 2 At-Home Mission Activity)
- Alternate option: [Bible Bookmarks](#) for children to decorate
- To prepare for upcoming sessions, watch “[Teaching Kids to Navigate the Bible](#)” by Religion Teacher

Goal(s):

- Families will learn about God’s Revelation and how those truths have been handed on through Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture.
- Families will learn that the Catholic Church gathered and approved the final books that would be in the Bible.
- Families will learn that the Bible is the inspired word of God and a book about their spiritual family and that God continues to speak to them through His word in Sacred Scripture.

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,
We entrust our family to you and ask for your blessing and protection. We love you Lord Jesus with all our hearts and we ask that you help our family become more like the Holy Family. Help us to be kind, loving, and patient with one another. Give us all the grace we need to become saints and your faithful disciples. Amen.

ICE BREAKER

Answer the question: If you were on a deserted island and had only your favorite book with you to read, which one would it be?

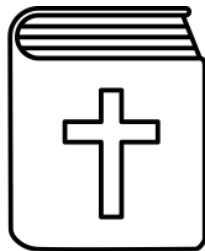


TEACH

1. Hook/Question

Which came first, the Church or the Bible?

(Take a variety of answers without confirming an answer.)



2. Introduce Topic

We are going to learn about where our faith comes from and then about Sacred Scripture and why the Bible is important for us.



3. CONTENT

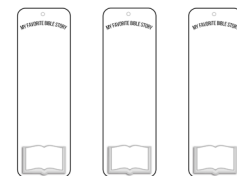
Review: Let's start with a quick review! For those who did Families Forming Disciples last year, you may remember that we learned that Jesus, the divine Son of God, came to earth to rescue and save all humanity from sin and death, to teach everyone about God's love for us, and to establish a Church, a people who would spread the word of God throughout the world. Jesus, in His very Person and through His actions and words, revealed who God is, and revealed our destiny as His sons and daughters. Jesus knew He was not going to walk the earth forever, but He promised to be with us always. Therefore, after He ascended into Heaven, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the Apostles at Pentecost, and the Church came to life! The Lord planned that His work would continue through His Church. It was a Church that was for everybody, the Catholic Church, and her members were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Following Jesus' instructions, the Apostles, who were the Church's first pope (St. Peter) and bishops, traveled to faraway places to introduce people to Jesus and share the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus' saving victory over sin and death. The Apostles taught and shared about their experiences with the Lord, spread the Christian way of worship through the Mass and the example of Christian love (charity), and built up the community of the Church, making, molding, and sending new disciples on mission. As they were traveling and proclaiming the Gospel, some of the Apostles and the disciples who journeyed with them wrote letters and books about Jesus' life that explained His teachings and saving work. The Catholic Church continued to gather these letters and books, with the writings of the ancient Jews, into one book that we know today as the Bible.

Ask: So which came first, the Church or the Bible?

Answer: The Church. (Note the understanding that by "Bible" here we mean the Old Testament and New Testament together.)

Consider having younger children begin creating their Bible bookmarks (see materials list) while the lesson is being taught, since much of the concepts will be difficult for younger children to understand.



CONTENT CONTINUED:

Ask: Where do Catholics get our faith?

Explain: Our faith comes first from God, who revealed Himself to us in various ways throughout history and most fully in Jesus. We know what God has said and done because those truths have been shared through the Church's Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture. Tradition and Scripture (the Bible) are closely connected. In fact, the Bible tells us to hold fast to Tradition, and Tradition tells us to hold fast to the Bible.

Some people may wonder: Why, if we already have the Bible, do we need Sacred Tradition?

The Bible is the written account or story of God's words and actions. It is God's Word in written form, but God's Word is bigger than the written words of Sacred Scripture alone.

Jesus taught so many important truths when He walked the earth that no one could keep up with all of them. In fact, St. John was one of Jesus' best and beloved friends, and he wrote at the end of his Gospel, a story he wrote about the life of Christ, that "Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written" (John 21:25).

John is saying to us that there are many important teachings and truths about our faith that were never written down in Scripture but were taught by word of mouth or in other ways. Spoken teachings or other truths shared outside of Scripture make up part of "Sacred Tradition" with a capital "T" (Tradition not only includes the Church's doctrine but also her worship and life, including the witness of the saints).

Ask: Can you think of an example of a Catholic Tradition (big "T") that is not explicitly written in the Bible?

Explain: One example of a Sacred Tradition would be the prayer, the Apostles Creed. We pray it at the beginning of the Rosary and sometimes at Mass. It is a prayer from the first few centuries of the early Church, reflecting the faith of the Apostles. It's a major prayer because it states what we believe as Christians (creed is a statement of faith). You will not find the prayer itself in the Bible, because it's a Tradition that was developed alongside Scripture and handed on by word of mouth and eventually in written form, serving as a rule of faith that helped guide the early Church and her interpretation of Sacred Scripture.

Another example is the word "Trinity." The mystery of God as Three Divine Persons is present throughout Scripture in various ways, but you'll never see the word "Trinity."

St. Paul tells us these traditions (or Traditions) are crucial and that we should hold onto them, no matter what. He wrote in his letter to Christian friends in Thessalonica, "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter" (2 Thess. 2:15).

Watch: *God's Story; The Bible*
(4:51)



4. FAMILY CONVERSATION

a. What is your favorite story from the Bible, and why is it your favorite?

b. First families reflect and discuss the question together, and then catechists facilitate large group sharing.

5. MISSION

First, Introduce Mission Activity

Introduce Mission Activities: Mission Activities are to be done at home during Week 2 and to be shared at the gathering of families on Week 3.



Last, Model for the Families

Show your home altar and share with the families your own answers to your family faith tree questions. Tell about your favorite Bible story and show the families you rosary. (If meeting in person, you can show a photo of your home altar and items.)

Second, Explain Activity

- a. Watch one or both of the videos about the Bible.
- b. Insert the tabs in your family Bible, or, for younger children, watch The Catholic Books of the Bible Song.
- c. Answer the Family Faith Tree questions:
 - i. Who in your family or in your life was the first person that you know, knew or heard of, who had a strong faith in God and who handed it onto others?
 - ii. To whom did he or she hand on the faith? Then, to whom did that person hand on the faith?
 - iii. Do you have a picture of that first or second person, a sacramental or any other special object that belonged to him/her? If so, bring this item to the next gathering of families.
 - iv. To whom do you want to hand on your faith?
- d. Read and discuss your favorite Bible story.
- e. Pray a decade of the Rosary around your home altar or prayer corner while meditating on that story.
- f. Prepare to share all of this at the Week 3 gathering of families.

6. REVIEW & CLOSE IN PRAYER

Review briefly the goals of the lesson and remind everyone of the expectations for Weeks 2 and 3.

Option 1: Pray together the Our Father.

Option 2: Lord Jesus, may you bless each of the families that have gathered together today. Help us to grow continually closer to you. This we pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

SUPPORTING QUOTES FROM CHURCH DOCUMENTS

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013), no. 174:

“Not only the homily has to be nourished by the word of God. All evangelization is based on that word, listened to, meditated upon, lived, celebrated and witnessed to. The sacred Scriptures are the very source of evangelization. Consequently, we need to be constantly trained in hearing the word. The Church does not evangelize unless she constantly lets herself be evangelized. It is indispensable that the word of God “be ever more fully at the heart of every ecclesial activity”. God’s word, listened to and celebrated, above all in the Eucharist, nourishes and inwardly strengthens Christians, enabling them to offer an authentic witness to the Gospel in daily life. We have long since moved beyond that old contraposition between word and sacrament. The preaching of the word, living and effective, prepares for the reception of the sacrament, and in the sacrament that word attains its maximum efficacy.”

Pope Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini* (2010), no. 1:

“‘The word of the Lord abides forever.’ This word is the Gospel which was preached to you” (1 Pet 1:25; cf. Is 40:8). With this assertion from the First Letter of Saint Peter, which takes up the words of the Prophet Isaiah, we find ourselves before the mystery of God, who has made himself known through the gift of his word. This word, which abides forever, entered into time. God spoke his eternal Word humanly; his Word “became flesh” (Jn 1:14). This is the good news. This is the proclamation which has come down the centuries to us today.

