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*God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.
And God saw that the light was good;
and God separated the light from the darkness.*

Genesis 1: 10

*God called the dry land Earth,
and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas.
And God saw that it was good.*

Genesis 1: 10

*Then God said,
"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..."*

Genesis 1: 26

CHAPTER PLANNING GUIDE

LESSON	OBJECTIVES	OPENING & CLOSING ACTIVITIES	GUIDED EXERCISES	HOMEWORK
Introductory Lesson	Learning Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Course goals and instructional procedures 			Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Chapter 1 through <i>What Catholics Believe About the Bible</i> (pp. 2–4) □ Sidebar: <i>What Does It Mean to Say the Bible Is Divinely Inspired?</i> (p. 3) □ <i>How the Bible Was Written</i> (pp. 4–5) □ <i>The Bible Is Sacred Literature</i> (pp. 5–6)
What the Bible Is (pp. 2–6)	Learning Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ The relationship among Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium □ How Catholics Understand the Faith, including the Scriptures □ The Bible as an inerrant, human-divine creation □ The books of the Bible as works of literature 	Anticipatory Set <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Partner Activity:</i> The nature and purposes of Scripture (p. 3) Closure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Brainstorm</i> reasons people think there are errors in Scripture (p. 5) Alternative Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Write</i> about Scripture as both divine and human (p. 6) 	Paragraph <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium (p. 2) Analyze an Illustration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Adam and Eve (p. 4) Think/Pair/Share <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Writing styles in Scripture (p. 4) □ Discovering the author's intention (p. 5) 	Textbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Study Questions 1–11, 18, 21–22 (p. 33) □ Practical Exercises 1–2 (p. 35) Workbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Questions 1–14 Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>The Bible Is Religious</i> (pp. 6–7) □ <i>Spiritual Senses</i> (p. 7) □ <i>What “Salvation History” Is</i> (p. 8) □ Sidebar: <i>Covenant History</i> (p. 9)
Salvation History and the Senses of Scripture (pp. 6–9)	Learning Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ The literal sense of Scripture □ The three spiritual senses of Scripture □ The Bible as objective history □ The concept of salvation history 	Anticipatory Set <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Think/Pair/Share:</i> Archaeological periods and biblical events (p. 6) Closure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Write</i> about the senses of Scripture (p. 9) Alternative Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Partner Activity:</i> Examples of the spiritual senses of Scripture (p. 9) 	Analyze an Illustration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Biblia Pauperum</i> and the spiritual sense of Scripture (p. 7) Graphic Organizer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ The senses of Scripture (p. 8) 	Textbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Study Questions 12–16, 20 (p. 33) Workbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Questions 15–32 Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Look to the Church for Guidance</i> (p. 10) □ <i>What to Read First</i> (p. 11) □ <i>Pray</i> (p. 12) □ <i>How the Canon Came to Be</i> (pp. 13–14) □ Sidebar: <i>What Is the Canon of the Bible?</i> (p. 13) □ Sidebar: <i>The Canon of Scripture</i> (p. 14)

What Catholics Believe About the Bible

Sacred Scripture is inspired and inerrant. "Inspired"—from a word meaning "breathed in"—means that God himself guided the authors who wrote the books of the Bible. The writers' intellects were enlightened directly by the action of the Holy Spirit to write what God wanted and nothing more. This process took place over several thousand years. The Spirit moved them to write without in any way impairing their freedom to write what was in their intellects. Though God is the principal author of Scripture, the human authors are also true authors because they acted as free, subordinate, intelligent instruments of the Holy Spirit.

"Inerrant" means that it does not err: properly understood, Scripture always teaches truth, never error. "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" (DV 11).

For the Catholic believer, the Word of God alone is supreme. But the Scriptures are not the only source for God's Word, as the Scriptures themselves will tell you.

St. Paul reminds the Thessalonian believers (2 Thes 2:15) that they must hold fast to the traditions that the Apostles have passed down either in writing or by word of mouth. "Stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter." Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition form one source from which the Word of God comes to us, as the New Testament itself tells us.

The true interpretation of both Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition is expressed in the infallible teaching of the Church, the Magisterium. "Infallible" means that, because of the divine help of Christ himself, the Church cannot teach error in matters of Faith and morals.

What does it mean to say the Bible is divinely inspired?



The Holy Spirit enlightened the intellects of many different specific authors over thousands of years so they could conceive all that which God wanted them to write and nothing more. Divine inspiration infallibly moved the will of each sacred author—without impairing his freedom in any way—to write what was in his intellect. Divine inspiration assisted the human author to use the correct language and expressions to describe what was being infallibly written.

This means God is the principal author of Scripture; the human authors are also true authors. These sacred authors were free, intelligent, subordinate instruments of the Holy Spirit. Because of this, each book of the Bible is inspired and can at the same time be called the work of God and of the human author. There is nothing in Scripture not inspired by God. "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim 3:16).

The Holy Spirit, principal author of the Bible, can guide human authors in the choice of expressions in such a way that the latter will express a truth the fullest depths of which the authors themselves do not perceive. This deeper truth will be more fully revealed in the course of time and discerned in the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

What the Bible Is (pp. 2–6)

OBJECTIVE

- ❑ The relationship among Sacred Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium
- ❑ How Catholics understand the Faith, including the Scriptures
- ❑ The Bible as an inerrant, human-divine creation
- ❑ The Bible as works of literature

BASIC QUESTION

- ❑ In what two ways is the Word of God transmitted, and who has the authority to interpret it authoritatively?
- ❑ How do the Catholic faithful understand the content of their Faith, including the Bible?
- ❑ What is the relationship between the human and divine authorship of the Sacred Scriptures?
- ❑ Why is it important to understand the books of the Bible as works of human literature?

KEY IDEA

- ❑ The Word of God is transmitted by Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, and its authoritative interpretation has been entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church.
- ❑ The Church is a guide to understand the Faith, including the Sacred Scriptures.
- ❑ The Bible was written by inspired Sacred Authors who wrote only what God wanted; consequently, it is true and without error.
- ❑ To understand the Bible, one needs to take into account the authors' intentions, which can be discovered through literary modes and circumstances.

ANTICIPATORY SET

Explain to the students St. Paul wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy near the end of his life when he was in prison for having preached the Gospel. St. Paul had ordained St. Timothy a bishop and gave him advice to carry out his ministry.

Have each student complete a **focused reading** on 2 Timothy 3: 10—4:5, using the following question:

- ❑ What is the nature of Sacred Scripture, and what are its purposes?

Have each student work with a **partner** to focus on verse 16, and, using a dictionary if necessary, explain what the verse means.

God is the source of Scripture. It is useful to teach the Faith, prove what is not in accord with the Faith, correct behavior that goes against the Faith, and train people how to live according to God's will.

GUIDED EXERCISE

Have the students **analyze the illustration** of the Garden of Eden (p. 9), and then lead a **class discussion** using the following question:

- ❑ What four vignettes of the story of Adam and Eve does the artist portray?
- The creation of Adam
- The forming of Eve from Adam's body
- The eating of the forbidden fruit
- The expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- ❑ **What does it mean to say the Bible is *literature*?**
The Bible uses literary forms and techniques to convey meaning.
- ❑ **In addition to varying literary devices, what other difficulty do people face when reading the Bible?**
The Bible is ancient, so people have to try to understand the way the authors saw the world.
- ❑ **What is the first rule to understand the Bible as literature?**
One must understand the literal sense first.
- ❑ **What is the literal sense?**
It is the immediate and direct meaning of the text.
- ❑ **What does a literary analysis of Genesis uncover?**
The structure portrays creation as a kind of Temple.
- ❑ **What is the difference between *literal* and *literalistic*?**
Literal refers to the intended meaning. A *literalistic* interpretation understands everything literally regardless of intention.

In order to preserve the Church in the purity of the faith handed on by the apostles, Christ who is the Truth willed to confer on her a share in his own infallibility. By a "supernatural sense of faith" the People of God, under the guidance of the Church's living Magisterium, "unfailingly adheres to this faith" (LG 12; cf. DV 10). (CCC 889)

Because we have both Scripture and Tradition, interpreted for us by the Magisterium, the *Catechism* tells us, "The Christian faith is not a 'religion of the book'" (108). Instead, Christianity is a religion of the Word of God, and the Word of God—Jesus Christ—is still living today and will live forever.

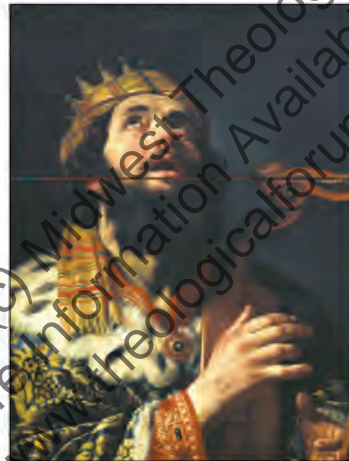
But Scripture is the way we come to know who Jesus is. As St. Jerome declared, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ." If you want to feel at home in the Kingdom of God, then the Bible is your map. If you want to understand whom you receive in Holy Communion, then you need to understand how God was preparing his people for centuries before he finally gave us the Bread of Life in the Eucharistic Liturgy.

All Sacred Scripture is but one book, and this one book is Christ, "because all divine Scripture speaks of Christ, and all divine Scripture is fulfilled in Christ" (Hugh of St. Victor, *De arca Noe* 2, 8; PL 176, 642; cf. *ibid.* 2, 9; PL 176, 642-643). (CCC 134)

"The Word of God is living and active," wrote St. Paul (Heb 4:12), "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." To live in a way that truly pleases Jesus Christ, we need to study—and meditate on—the Bible. That is a divinely-revealed way to get to know what Jesus Christ is like.

How the Bible Was Written

The Bible is a collection of many works written by different authors at different times and in different languages. Those different authors had different ways of thinking and writing. Some of them wrote beautiful poetry, as in the Psalms. Others, like St. Luke, wrote detailed history based on accurate research. Some, like Ezekiel, had symbolic visions that they wrote down. Some simply recorded facts, like the catalog of the tribes of Israel recorded in Numbers. Some books are written in a very simple style; others, like Ecclesiastes, are philosophical and intellectual. Just as with writers of other books, the personalities of the authors come through in what they wrote.



The works that make up the Bible are different from other writings. Even though they were written by human authors, the ultimate author of the whole Bible is God. The human authors wrote in their own styles, but they wrote what God wanted them to write. So, unlike any human book, the Bible is completely free from error. Of course, we need to remember that the Bible is teaching us the way to salvation. The sacred authors presented their message in ways the people of their own time could understand, so sometimes their ideas of physics or astronomy seem outdated to us. But the real truth that God wanted us to learn is presented without error. Everything in it is true.

King David, the youngest of the eight sons of Jesse, is credited with the authorship of the Psalms. His story is told in 1 Samuel 16 through 1 Kings 2:12. King David reigned ca. 1000-960 BC.

GUIDED EXERCISE

The Bible contains a tremendous variety of writing styles. This is due to its many different authors, writing about different events and for different reasons across millennia.

Conduct a **think/pair/share** to look up the following biblical passages and match each with the category that most accurately fits the passage. (Be sure to rearrange the categories when writing them on the board.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| ❑ Luke 1: 1–4 | Accurate history |
| ❑ Song of Songs 2: 8–13 | Beautiful poetry |
| ❑ 1 Chronicles 2: 1–17 | Family genealogy |
| ❑ Romans 6: 1–4 | Complicated theology |
| ❑ Revelation 12: 1–6 | Symbolic vision |

The inspired books teach the truth. "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." (CCC 107)

That doesn't mean everything in Scripture is easy to understand. But the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, helps us understand how to find the truth in the books of the Bible in light of the living Tradition.

How did that inspiration work? Inspiration is one of the great mysteries of our faith—a mystery very much like the mystery of the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. Like Christ himself, the inspired books of the Bible are fully human and fully divine. The two natures are inseparably united but still distinct. Jesus Christ, the Word of God incarnate, took on the weakness of human flesh, becoming a true man. In the same way, the Bible, the Word of God inspired, takes on the weakness of human language, becoming a book that humans can understand.

The Bible Is Sacred Literature

The Bible is sacred literature because God is its author. Because Sacred Scripture is written in human language, it is possible for humans to understand it. Understanding it correctly, however, sometimes requires some preparation.

The first thing to remember about Scripture is that it is *literature*. That means it uses literary forms and techniques to convey its meaning. Unless we understand how those forms and techniques work, we cannot understand the meaning the inspired authors wanted to convey to us.

There are many different kinds of literature (stories, poems, dialogue, figurative language, and others) in the Bible, and the sacred writers used many different literary techniques. Because they lived at different times and had different personalities, they used those techniques differently. Those differences make reading Scripture endlessly fascinating.

We also need to remember that the Bible is *ancient* literature. Even the most recent books of the New Testament were written almost two thousand years ago. The authors of Scripture did not write the same way modern authors write. To understand what they meant to say, we have to understand the way they saw the world.



Prophet Jeremiah lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem.

In Sacred Scripture, God speaks to man in a human way. To interpret Scripture correctly, the reader must be attentive to what the human authors truly wanted to affirm and to what God wanted to reveal to us by their words (cf. DV12 § 1). (CCC 109)

In order to discover the sacred authors' intention, the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture, the literary genres in use at that time, and the modes of feeling, speaking, and narrating then current. "For the fact is that truth is differently presented and expressed in the various types of historical writing, and in other forms of literary expression" (DV12 § 2). (CCC 110)

GUIDED EXERCISE

Conduct a **think/pair/share** using the following question:

- How can the Sacred Author's intention be discovered in a particular passage of the Bible?

The reader must take into account conditions of time and culture; the genre; and the modes of feeling, speaking, and narrating.

CLOSURE

Put the students in groups of three or four to **brainstorm** reasons people might think there are errors in the Bible.

- Some people deny God is the author of Scripture.
- Some misunderstand that the authors described things in a way people of their time understood and not in modern terms.
- Some misunderstand the literary genres of the authors.
- Some misunderstand the Sacred Authors' intentions.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

- Study Questions 1–11, 18, 21–22 (p. 33)
- Practical Exercises 1–2 (p. 35)
- Workbook Questions 1–14
- Read "The Bible Is Religious" through the sidebar "Covenant History" (pp. 6–9)

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- Why is the Bible *literature*?

The Bible uses literary forms and techniques to convey its meaning.

- How does the Book of Genesis shed light on Jeremiah 4: 23?

Jeremiah drew on imagery from the creation narrative to communicate how terrible God's judgment would be against Judah. It was as if God would *uncreate* Judah.

- What does it mean to describe a Sacred Author's *intention*?

Intention describes what the Sacred Author wanted to affirm and what God wanted to reveal by his words. Extension: In every book of the Bible there are two intentions: what the Sacred Author intended and what God intends. God's intention often goes beyond the intention of the Sacred Author; for example, many passages in the Old Testament foreshadow Christ without the Sacred Author having realized it.

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

Have each student write a **paragraph** exploring the parallel between the human-divine authorship of the Bible and the human-divine Incarnation of God.

Briefly **share** answers (cf. "How did that inspiration..." [p. 5] for one possible answer.)