

# *The New American Bible*

For more than a quarter of a century, members of the Catholic Biblical Association of America, sponsored by the Bishops Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, have worked to create this translation of the Bible, The New American Bible. This version is derived from the translation of Scriptures from the original languages or from the oldest extant [still existing or not destroyed] form in which the scriptures exist.

Despite all that we have accomplished, we still struggle with the age-old problems of how to order our lives for the glory of God, for the welfare of our neighbors and for the salvation of our soul. The Bible gives us the opportunity to read and meditate on the living word of God. In the passages of the Bible we recognize God's voice and are able to steer our way through life by using the scriptures as our guide.

## **Children & The Bible**

Many times as parents we become overwhelmed by the vast varieties of bibles to choose from and we just don't know which bible to get for our child(ren). If you have a child who is in the 3rd grade or younger, we do not recommend any particular children's bibles. So if you wish to get your child a children's bible to start introducing them to the Word, any one will do. Usually by the 4th or 5th grade, children in our faith formation classes start using the New American Bible. As an alternative, you could review *Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics* is a version to use for young children (or even older teens and if you like pictures...even some adults).

## **Teens & The Bible**

As mentioned above, usually by the 4th or 5th grade, our children are already introduced to the New American Bible in their Faith Formation classes. However, if your child would prefer a bible made specifically with their age group in mind, St. Mary's Press has the New American Bible and other bibles for younger and older teens. They have corresponding study materials on their website. These bibles have illustrations and helpful side bars full of information to help the reader understand the scriptures a little better by providing background information of the scriptures they are reading.

## **Adults & The Bible**

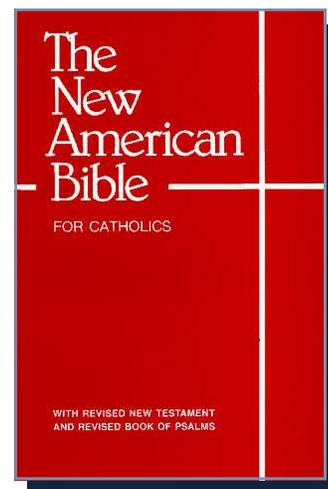
The New American Bible is the version that is most recommended to be used because it is the version used for liturgy. Some of the bibles provide little assistance in reading the Scriptures, which when reading, might require an extensive pre-existing background knowledge of Theology. While other Bibles have a lot of helpful background information which help guide the reader through the Scriptures. Thankfully, there is also a version available for "beginners". Therefore, if you are struggling with your Bible, we suggest that you meet with your Adult Ministry Leader, Liturgy Director, or Pastor and let them help you find the one that is right for you.

## **Where Can I Get a Bible?**

You can purchase The New American Bible (English) for \$5 at our parish main office. Spanish Bibles (different translation) can also be purchased at the main office. You can also visit our parish website at [www.stlukesatholic.com](http://www.stlukesatholic.com) and from the main page, on the right hand column (under Items of Interest), click on "The Bible" and there are links to the Bible on line as well as many other resources. Most major book stores carry this Bible and websites have this version online.

*"We must never forget that all authentic and living Christian spirituality is based on the Word of God proclaimed, accepted, celebrated and meditated upon in the Church."*

Pope Benedict XVI



## **Spotting an Approved Bible**

With so many bibles to choose from, it can be very overwhelming trying to figure out if a bible has the approval of the Roman Catholic Church. So how can you tell? In the bible, usually on page 2, you will see an *imprimatur* and/or an *nihil obstat*. The Church, given teaching authority by Christ and as the conduit for fullness of Truth on this earth, has the obligation to preserve Her sheep from deviations from the Truth and to guarantee them the "*objective possibility of professing the true faith without error*" (Catechism, No. 890). Because of this, the Bishops will look at books published by Catholics on Catholic matters in their dioceses, giving them their "okay" if nothing therein is found to be contrary to the Faith (relevant Canon Law: "Title IV: The Means of Social Communication," ¶ 822-832)

The procedure works like this: when a Catholic writes a book on faith, morals, theology, liturgy, books on prayer, editions of Sacred Scripture, etc., he will submit his manuscript to his diocese's Censor. If the Censor finds no problem with it, he will give it his stamp, which reads "**Nihil Obstat**," or "*nothing stands in the way.*" He then sends it to the Bishop for his review. If the Bishop finds nothing objectionable, he gives the book his "**Imprimatur**" which means, "*let it be printed.*"

If the Catholic writing the book is a member of a religious order, the manuscript is first sent to his religious superior before it is sent to the Censor and Bishop. If the religious superior finds no impediment to publication, he will give the book his stamp of "**Imprimi Potest**," which means "*it can be printed.*"

Nowadays, after the Imprimatur, you might see these words:

*The "Nihil Obstat" and "Imprimatur" are official declarations that a book or pamphlet is free of doctrinal or moral error. No implication is contained therein that those who have granted the Nihil Obstat and the Imprimatur agree with the content, opinions or statements expressed.*

Please know that the presence of an Imprimatur does not mean that a book is an official text of the Church. It doesn't make the book the equivalent of an encyclical, say. It's not the approval of the work by the Pope or a dogmatic Council, and it's not a stamp of infallibility. It doesn't even mean that everything in the book is accurate, only that there is nothing in it that contradicts Catholic dogma. But, while occasionally a book sneaks through and its Imprimatur later recalled, this procedure is an important way for Catholics to increase their chances of staying error-free with regard to doctrine.

### ***In Summary***

Religious Superior's stamp:	<b>IMPRIMI POTEST</b>	<i>"it can be printed"</i>
Censor's stamp:	<b>NIHIL OBSTAT</b>	<i>"nothing stands in the way"</i>
Bishop's stamp:	<b>IMPRIMATUR</b>	<i>"let it be printed"</i>

*Information above obtained from Fisheaters.com*

## **Approved Translations of the Bible**

*USCCB Approved Translations of the Sacred Scriptures for Private Use and Study by Catholics 1983 - Present*

The 1983 Code of Canon Law entrusts to the Apostolic See and the episcopal conferences the authority to approve translations of the Sacred Scriptures in the Latin Catholic Church (c. 825, §1). Prior to 1983, Scriptural translations could be approved by the Apostolic See or by a local ordinary within a diocese.

What follows is a complete list of the translations of the Sacred Scriptures that have received the approval of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops since 1983.

In addition to the translations listed below, any translation of the Sacred Scriptures that has received proper ecclesiastical approval – namely, by the Apostolic See or a local ordinary prior to 1983, or by the Apostolic See or an episcopal conference following 1983 – may be used by the Catholic faithful for private prayer and study.

*Books of the New Testament, Alba House*

*Contemporary English Version - New Testament, First Edition, American Bible Society*

*Contemporary English Version - Book of Psalms, American Bible Society*

*Contemporary English Version - Book of Proverbs, American Bible Society*

*The Grail Psalter (Inclusive Language Version), G.I.A. Publications*

***New American Bible, Revised Edition (NABRE) [Is most recommended because it is the version used for liturgy]***

*New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition, National Council of Churches*

*The Psalms, Alba House*

*The Psalms (New International Version) - St. Joseph Catholic Edition, Catholic Book Publishing Company*

*The Psalms - St. Joseph New Catholic Version, Catholic Book Publishing Company*

*Revised Psalms of the New American Bible (1991)*

*So You May Believe, A Translation of the Four Gospels, Alba House*

*Today's English Version, Second Edition, American Bible Society*

*Translation for Early Youth, A Translation of the New Testament for Children, Contemporary English Version, American Bible Society*

*Information above obtained from the USCCB website's section on Approved Translations of The Bible in the year 2013.*

# *A Guide to Reading The Bible*

If someone has never read the Bible or is just getting started, the best place to begin is with the New Testament. The Old Testament is always interesting, sometimes confusing, and often sounds strange because we read it without knowing its historical setting, knowing much about the person who wrote it, or the reason why he wrote it, to whom he wrote it to, and so on. Although both the Old & New Testament are important, the New Testament is what Christians really need to focus on, in particular the Gospels. If you want to start reading the Bible on your own we suggest beginning with Matthew, Mark and then Luke, in that order. We do not suggest beginning with John. John's Gospel was the last written and has a lot more theology than the other three and will require having more than just a basic knowledge or understanding of the Bible. The first three Gospels are called Synoptics, called Synoptics because they can be "seen together" and have a similar structure. John's Gospel is not written in that same way.

Reading and understanding the Bible involves much more than just opening up the Bible and reading it. If you really want to get everything you can from reading the Bible, it will take possibly using a study guide, attending classes or workshops that help you through the readings, or possibly attending Bible Study groups that read and discuss the Bible as a community, maybe even doing all of the above.

Also – in the New American Bible (which is the version authorized by the Roman Catholic Church for liturgical use), there are notes at the beginning of each of the books of the Bible that give a great introduction and explanation of what each of the following books contain.

Whatever you decide to do, the fact that you feel the calling to open up the Bible and read it is a great first step. Reading the Bible is truly a labor of love and will be there to guide you through life.

Below is a more extensive suggested reading list to follow on how to read your Bible . Hopefully you will find that reading the books of The Bible in this order will help bring you to a better understanding of the Word of God.

*May your journey through the Word be an enriching, spiritual, and inspirational experience.*

## ***Old Testament***

- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Genesis          | 7. 1 Kings        |
| 2. Exodus 1-20      | 8. Amos           |
| 3. Deuteronomy 1-11 | 9. 2 Kings        |
| 4. Joshua           | 10. Ezra/Nehemiah |
| 5. Judges           | 11. 1 Maccabees   |
| 6. Samuel 1 & 2     | 12. Daniel        |
|                     | 13. Malachi       |

## ***New Testament***

### **Gospels**

Matthew, Mark, & Luke  
Acts  
Galatians  
1 Corinthians  
Hebrews  
James  
John

For more information and links to resources, visit [www.stlukesatholic.com](http://www.stlukesatholic.com) and click on **The Bible** under Items of Interest.

## **Study Guide Options**

Here are some additional references that you can use to help you through better understanding the Word of God.

### **Children**

There are no Scripture Studies Guides created for children, however, you can get help in explaining the Word at a child's level through the use of Our Sunday Visitor's website which provides a Children's section which includes a Question of the Week, Sunday Readings & Background, Activity of the Week, and even Saint of the Week to help explain Scripture to our children at their level.

### **Teens**

St. Mary's Press has the New American Bible for younger and older teens. They have corresponding study materials on their website.

Loyola Press has a series of 6-week Scripture study courses based on specific books of the Bible. These are designed to take young people deeper in their understanding and living of the Word of God.

Our Archdiocese's Office of Evangelization & Catechesis **Word of God** web page ([www.archgh.org/wog](http://www.archgh.org/wog)) has a lot of good study resources. See the Family Resource section. Many of these are from Catholic catechetical publishers which help families (age specific groups) break open the Sunday Scriptures. Most are free.

### **Adults**

There are many Scripture Study Guides available for adults. Here are a few suggestions if you are looking for a study guide.

**\*Little Rock Scripture Study**

**\*Threshold Bible Study**

**\*Six Weeks With the Bible**

**\*Ignatius Catholic Bible Study**

**\*Denver Catholic Biblical School Program** - This is a series of 4 books which takes you on a 4 year journey and is a more in depth and intense program which includes workbooks.

New American Bible - Proâ€™s and Conâ€™s Overall, the New American Bible is a relatively good English translation of the Bible. Very little Roman Catholic "influence" is seen in the renderings the translation makes. The inclusion of the Apocrypha, the "higher critical" background of the translators, and the inconsistency of the translation method, though, prevent us from recommending the New American Bible as a primary Bible translation. New American Bible - Sample Verses John 1:1, 14 "â€œIn the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in th Louis F. Hartman and Myles M. Bourke, eds., The New American Bible, Translated from the Original Languages, with Critical Use of All the Ancient Sources, by Members of the Catholic Biblical Association of America. Sponsored by the Bishopsâ€™ Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press.