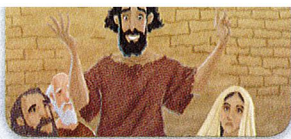


Looking Ahead

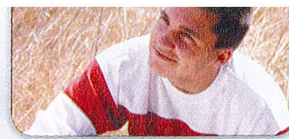
In this chapter, the Holy Spirit invites you to ►



EXPLORE how Baruch called the Israelites to know God's plan.



DISCOVER that God reveals himself and his plan in Scripture.



DECIDE how you can respond to God's Word proclaimed at Mass.



The Word of God


? With the Internet, seeking and finding information today is literally at our fingertips. To what extent do you trust all of the information available to you?

You can trust God's Word in the Bible. Take a few moments to carefully read these words from the Bible! Listen to what the writer of this psalm is saying about the Word of God:

*Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light for my path.
I make a solemn vow
to keep your just edicts. . . .
Your decrees are my heritage forever;
they are the joy of my heart. . . .
Sustain me by your promise that I may live;
do not disappoint me in my hope.*

PSALM 119:105-106, 111, 116

? How does this passage from Sacred Scripture help you to grow in faith?



Disciple Power

The Gift of Knowledge

Part of the gift of faith is the desire to know God better. By accepting God's gift of faith, the Holy Spirit perfects our faith with gifts, such as wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. In other words, part of our response in faith is to know God more fully. The light of reason aids us in our journey to love, serve, and know God.

THE CHURCH FOLLOWS JESUS

The Prophet Baruch

There was a time when God's people seemed to have very little hope. They were confused about life, and they had difficulty in understanding God's Word. It was a time of great infidelity by the Israelites to the Covenant. It was a time known as the Exile.

During the Exile, the Israelites were forced to leave their homeland and live in the country of their conquerors, the Assyrians and the Babylonians. During this time of suffering, God sent Baruch the Prophet and other prophets to speak to his people in Babylonia.

Baruch's message is found in the Book of Baruch. This six-chapter book contains different kinds of writing. This passage is part of a poem:

Hear, O Israel, the commandments of life:

listen, and know prudence! . . .

You have forsaken the fountain of wisdom!

Had you walked in the way of God,

you would have dwelt in enduring peace. . . .

All who cling to [wisdom] will live,

but those will die who forsake her.

Turn, O Jacob, and receive her:

walk by her light toward splendor.

BARUCH 3:9, 12-13; 4:1-2

In this poem, Baruch tried to help God's people understand both how their suffering had happened and how they could find true happiness in God. So even in difficult times, you can find comfort in knowing that if you cling to God's way, peace will endure. This means that the grace of faith can open your eyes to God's plan of saving love. The gift of knowledge will help you to recognize how what happens in your life can help you understand God's plan of saving love.

Activity When you pray to God, what image comes to your mind? Draw it here.

Divine Revelation

Through Sacred Scripture, God reveals himself and his plan of Salvation. By the gift of faith, we seek to understand better his Revelation. As we grow in our understanding, we also grow in faith.

In the Book of Exodus, one of the books in the Pentateuch, God reveals his name to Moses and reestablishes the **Covenant**, or solemn commitment of fidelity between God and his Chosen People, the Israelites.

One day while he was tending sheep, Moses saw a bush that was in flames yet was not consumed by the fire. Curiously approaching this strange sight, Moses heard a voice coming from the bush, saying

“Moses! Moses! . . . I am . . . the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. . . Come, now! I will send you to Pharaoh to lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.”


EXODUS 3:4, 6, 10

You can just imagine how confused Moses must have been. So he asked,

“[W]hen I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ if they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what am I to tell them?” God replied, “I am who am. . . [T]ell the Israelites: I AM sent me to you.”

EXODUS 3:13-14

Through this Old Testament story, God shares his name with Moses, with the Israelites, and with all people. He says, “I am who am.” In Hebrew, that name is YHWH. By naming himself YHWH, God is letting us know that he alone is the Creator and source of all that exists. In revealing his name to Moses, God also established a personal relationship with the Israelites through Moses. Therefore, God reveals to all people that he is always with us. Wherever we are, God is.

 Look up and read Deuteronomy 6:4-9. What is God asking of you?

FAITH FOCUS

In what ways did God reveal himself and his love for all people through the Bible?

FAITH VOCABULARY

biblical inspiration

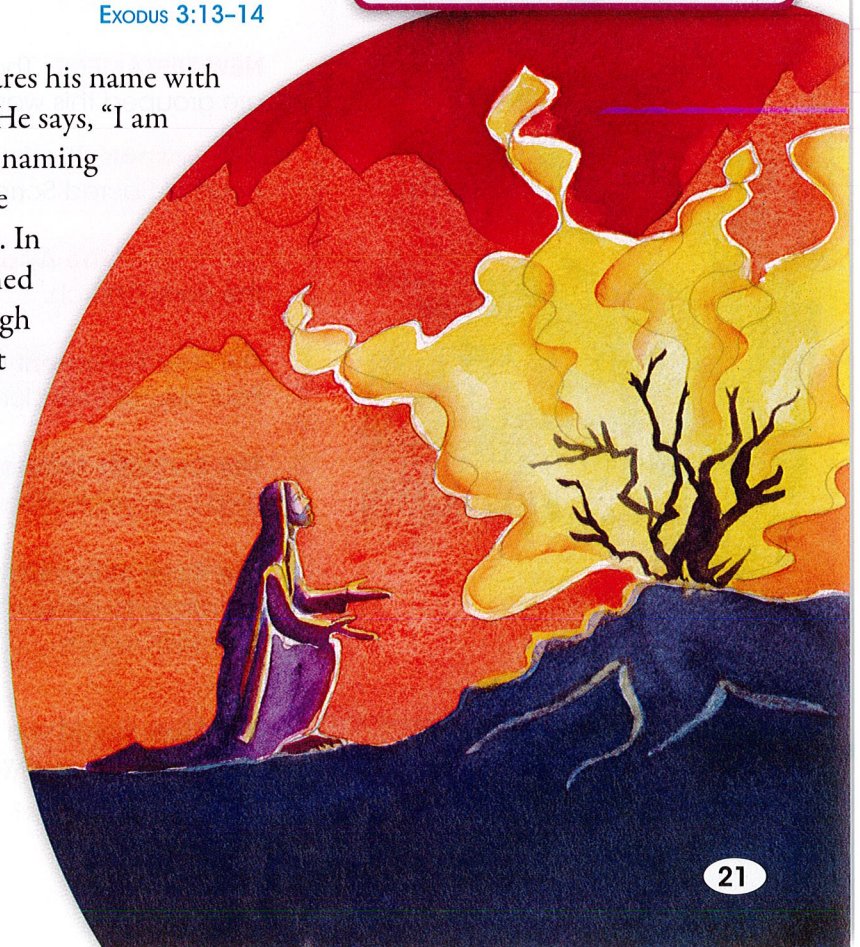
This is the Holy Spirit guiding the human writers of Sacred Scripture so that they would faithfully and accurately communicate what God intended to reveal.


canon

The word itself means “standard” or “official list.” Thus, the canon of Scripture is the official list of books included in the Bible.

Covenant

This is the solemn commitment of fidelity that God and the People of God made with one another, which was renewed in Christ, the new and everlasting Covenant.





Faith-Filled People

People of God

The People of God are the descendants of Abraham to whom God made the promise, "I will make of you a great nation, / and I will bless you. . . / All the communities of the earth / shall find blessing in you" (Genesis 12:2, 3). We, the Church, are the People of God by right of our Baptism. A person who has faith in Jesus Christ is a member of the Church, the People of God.

The Inspired Word of God

The Bible, or Sacred Scripture, is the inspired Word of God. This means that God inspired or guided human authors so that they wrote what he intended to reveal. We call this **biblical inspiration**. The various human writers of Sacred Scripture wrote only the truths about God and his plan of love for us that God revealed for our salvation.

The Bible contains seventy-three books in its **canon**, or official list. These books, or writings, make up the Old Testament and the New Testament.

OLD TESTAMENT. The forty-six books of the Old Testament are often grouped this way:

The Pentateuch The first five books of the Bible are called the *Pentateuch*, a term that means "five containers." These books, which are also called the written Torah, tell of God revealing himself and establishing the Covenant with the Chosen People, the Hebrews or Israelites.

The Historical Books The sixteen historical books tell of how God's people sometimes lived the Covenant well and at other times did not.

The Wisdom Books The seven books of wisdom share advice on how to live the Covenant.

The Prophetic Books The eighteen prophetic books remind God's people to be faithful to the Covenant and that God will always be faithful to them.

NEW TESTAMENT. The twenty-seven books of the New Testament are grouped this way:


The Gospels The four written accounts of the Gospel are the heart of Sacred Scripture because Jesus Christ is their center.

The Acts of the Apostles The Acts of the Apostles tells the story of the early Church.

The New Testament Letters The thirteen Epistles, or letters, of Saint Paul help us to understand our faith in Jesus and how to live that faith.

The Catholic Letters Eight other letters in the New Testament also help us to understand and live our faith.

The Book of Revelation This final book of the Bible encourages Christians to remain faithful to Jesus when they suffer because of their faith in him.

 How would you describe, in your own words, what biblical inspiration is? What does God reveal to us in the Pentateuch? In the Gospels?

The Covenant

The story of the Covenant begins in the Book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible. It continues to unfold with more and more detail even to the last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation. The following are some highlights found in the Old Testament:

- God promised that from Eve's descendants would come one who would conquer the tempter, the devil (read Genesis 3:14-16).
- God entered a Covenant with Noah and promised that all living things will continue as long as the world lasts (read Genesis 9:9-17).
- God promised Abraham that he would be the father of a great people (read Genesis 12:1-3).
- At Mount Sinai, God promised Moses and the Israelites that he would be their God. They promised that they would be his people and live the Law he revealed to them (read Exodus 19:4-6).
- The prophets chosen by God reminded his people to live the Covenant and announced a new and everlasting Covenant in the Messiah (read Jeremiah 32:36-43 and Ezekiel 37:26-28).

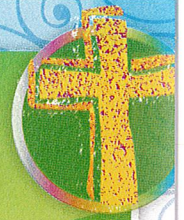
In the New Testament, Jesus revealed that he is the Christ, the Anointed One or Messiah, the new and everlasting Covenant. In him and through his work, all people can live faithfully according to the will of God. In Jesus Christ, God's final Covenant with the world has been made now and forever.

Even though God reveals himself through Sacred Scripture and through the Sacred Tradition of the Church, he remains a mystery beyond our full comprehension. Because God is the source of all, he is due our worship. We are to praise and thank him for initiating and maintaining the Covenant.

Activity Look up and read one of these three passages. Then write one word or image that tells something about the Covenant.

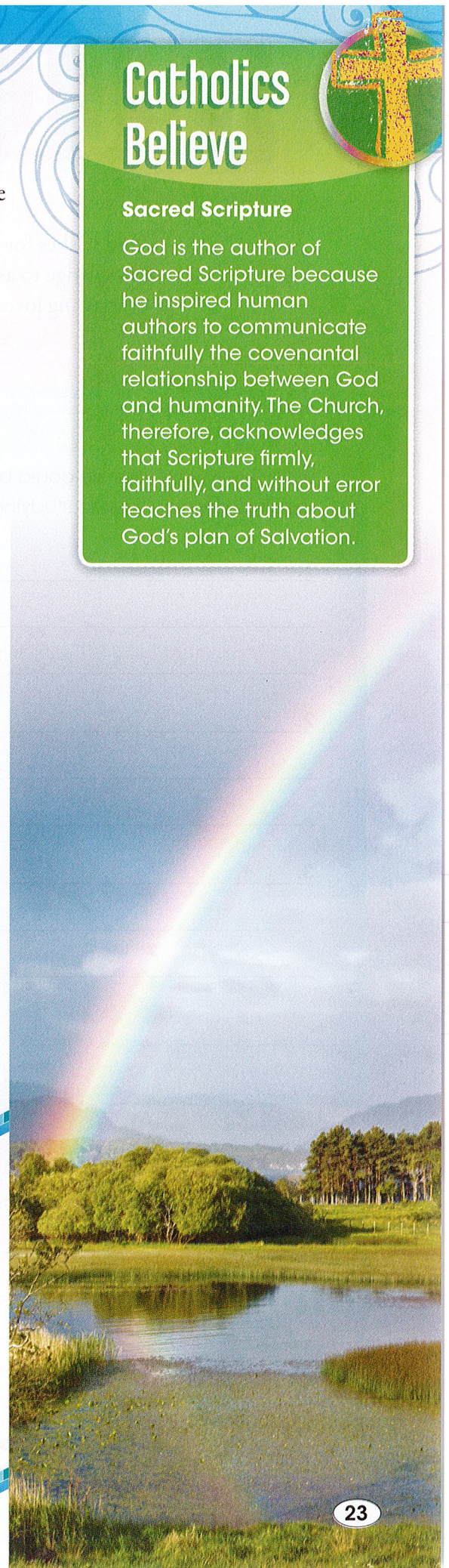
GENESIS 9:9-17 GENESIS 12:1-3 EXODUS 19:4-6

Catholics Believe



Sacred Scripture

God is the author of Sacred Scripture because he inspired human authors to communicate faithfully the covenantal relationship between God and humanity. The Church, therefore, acknowledges that Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teaches the truth about God's plan of Salvation.



I FOLLOW JESUS

God wishes for all people to respond to him in faith. We can use the gift of knowledge to assist us in growing in faith. The Scriptures reveal to us God's plan of everlasting love.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

Write three ways your life could be changed by reading, listening to, and studying the Bible.

1.

2.

3.

MY FAITH CHOICE

This week, I will read and listen to the Sunday Gospel and respond to it. I will



Pray: "Lord, fill my mind and heart so that I may proclaim your Word to others. Amen."

Chapter Review

Write a paragraph describing the Church's teaching about Sacred Scripture. Be sure to include at least these terms: Bible, canon, Covenant, and inspiration.

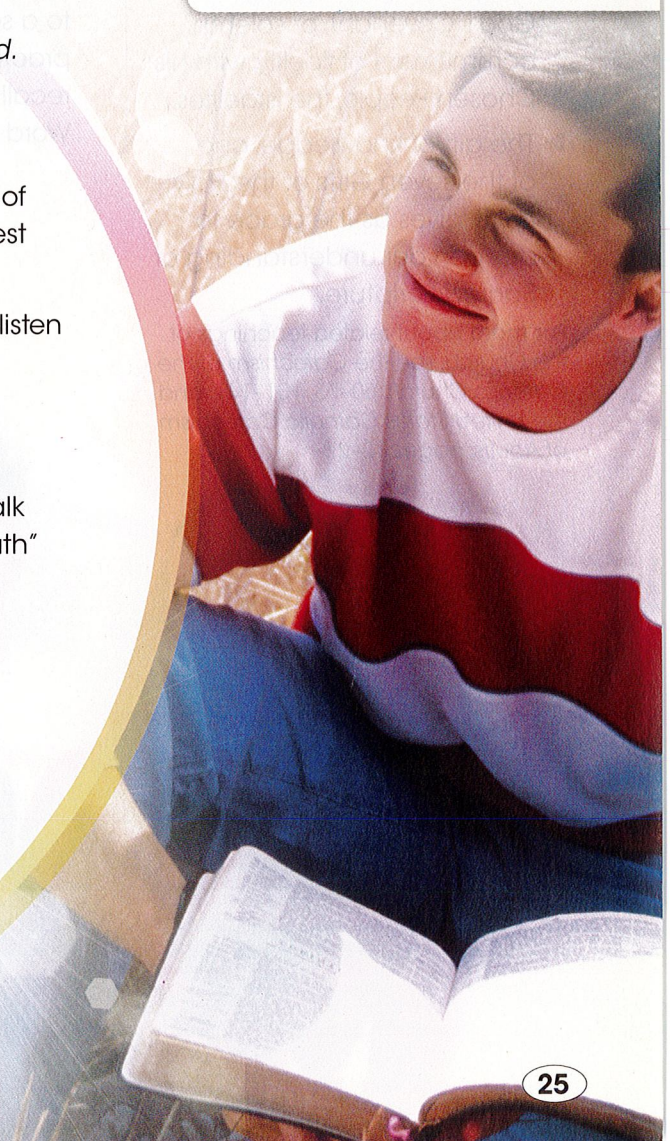
▶ TO HELP YOU REMEMBER

1. The Holy Spirit guided the human writers of Sacred Scripture to faithfully and accurately tell what God intended to reveal.
2. Through the Bible, God reveals himself and his loving plan of Salvation for the world and all people.
3. The Bible tells the story of the Covenant into which God entered with his people. In his only Son, Jesus Christ, God established his Covenant forever.

Your Word Is Light

Lectio divina, or "divine reading," is an ancient prayer of meditation. Along with vocal prayer and contemplation, it forms the three main expressions of prayer. Follow these steps to spend quiet time with God, reading and listening to his Word.

1. Open your Bible to a favorite passage or one from this chapter. Sit quietly.
2. Be aware that God is present by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit within you. Sign your forehead, lips, and chest over your heart with a small sign of the cross.
3. Imagine yourself in a safe place where you can talk and listen to God.
4. Reverently and slowly read the Scripture passage you selected.
5. Speak to God with words, images, or ideas. Take time to talk and listen to God. Say, "Your word, LORD, is a light for my path" (based on Psalm 119:105).
6. After a few quiet moments, ask the Holy Spirit, "What is your Word saying to me?" Write down any key words or phrases that you remember. Listening with an open heart can help you to be receptive to God speaking to you through his Word.
7. Make a faith decision and put God's Word into action. Realize that the goal of *lectio divina* is simply being with God by praying the Scriptures.



With My Family

This Week ...

In Chapter 2, "The Word of God," your child learned:

- ▶ The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of Scripture to express God's Word faithfully and truthfully as a gift to all people.
- ▶ The heart of Sacred Scripture is the Gospel because Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, is the heart and fullness of God's Revelation.
- ▶ Sacred Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teaches the truth about God's plan for Salvation.
- ▶ Sacred Scripture reveals God's Covenant, or solemn commitment of fidelity, with his Chosen People, the Israelites.
- ▶ The gift of knowledge, one of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, gives us the grace to deepen our understanding of Sacred Scripture.

For more about related teachings of the Church, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 50-73, 101-141, and the *United States Catholic Catechism of Adults*, pages 12-27.

Sharing God's Word

Read together 1 Thessalonians 2:13 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Emphasize that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

We Live as Disciples

The Christian home and family is a school of discipleship. Choose one of the following activities to do as a family, or design a similar activity of your own:

- ▶ Make a special place in your home to display a Bible. This is called "enthroning" the Bible. Open the Bible each day to a selected passage. This practice can help the family recall the importance of the Word of God in our daily lives.

- ▶ Include the reading of Scripture to begin your family mealtime prayers. Invite a different family member to select a passage each day. During the meal, have family members share what the passage means to them.
- ▶ As a family, carefully watch and listen to the news events that are making the headlines. Now imagine that you are a prophet called to remind others about the Covenant. As a family, discuss how you would encourage one another to live as a family according to God's will.

Our Spiritual Journey

Praying together is one of the main practices of a disciple of Jesus. In this chapter, your child practiced the *lectio divina* form of prayer. Read about this prayer on page 25. Make this a form of prayer that your family regularly prays together.



For more ideas on ways your family can live as disciples of Jesus, visit

www.BeMyDisciples.com