



Mass Observation

A guide to working with Catholics



In this short guide we can't express everything about Catholicism but we do capture the key elements of what it means to be Catholic.

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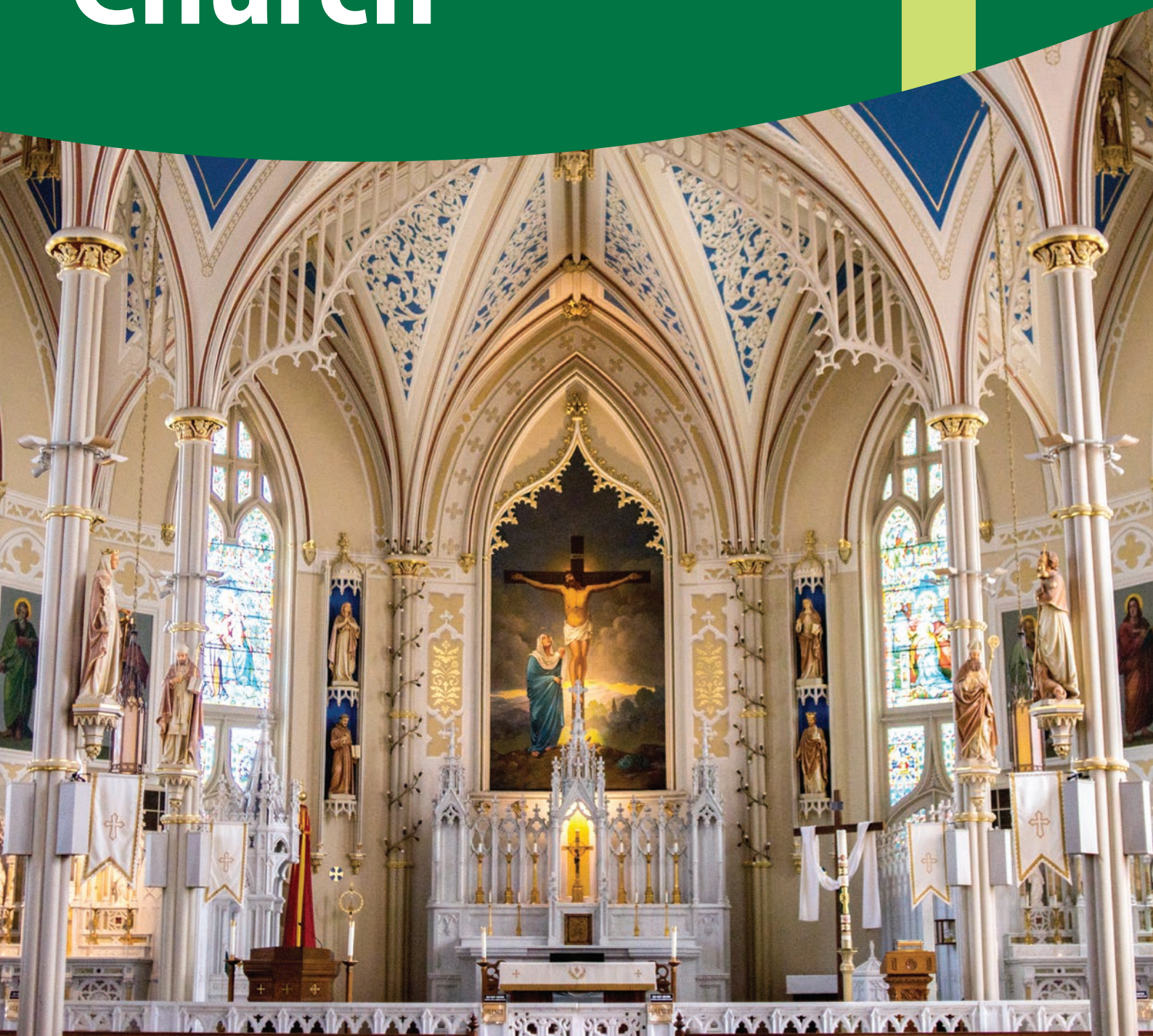
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The Bible is the great story of the marvels of God's mercy. Every one of its pages is steeped in the love of the Father who from the moment of creation wished to impress the signs of his love on the universe...

**Pope Francis, Apostolic Letter,
Misericordia et misera, 2016**

The Catholic Church



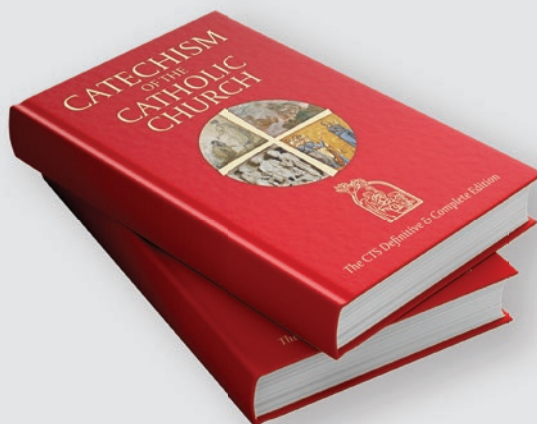
Origins and Ethos

The word *Catholic* comes from the Greek and means universal. It's been used since the second century and is found in the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian creeds.¹

The statement that we believe in '*one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church*' expresses a desire for unity across space and time and at the heart of the Catholic faith is a profound longing for a Church that is one and universal.

The global unity of the Catholic Church is central to its identity. It has a unity but it is not uniform. Catholicism is diverse. The Catholic Church includes 23 autonomous churches, each with their own rites and canon law, from the Coptic Catholic Church in Egypt to the Syro-Malabar Church in India.

There's also a rich variety of theological and spiritual traditions: Benedictine, Franciscan, Dominican, Carmelite, Cistercian and Ignatian to name just a few.



The **Catechism of the Catholic Church** contains a full description of the essential and basic beliefs of Catholicism.²

It's the Handbook that tells Catholics about the Catholic faith and what the Catholic Church believes on almost everything.



YouCat is the **Youth Catechism** version of this Handbook.³

¹ These are known as the ecumenical or universal creeds. These creeds are a statement of the Catholic faith going right back to the third and fourth centuries.

² www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM

³ www.youcat.org/

All Catholics are Christians but not all Christians are Catholics.

The Catholic Church maintains that sometime after the recorded events of the book of Acts, the Apostle Peter became the first bishop of Rome, and that the Roman bishop was accepted by the early church as the central authority among all of the churches. The Church teaches that God passed Peter's apostolic authority onto those who later filled

his seat as bishop of Rome (also known as the Pope). This teaching is called 'apostolic succession'.

The Catholic Church claims that it can trace an unbroken line of popes back to St Peter, according to its interpretation of Matthew 16.19, that Christ built his church upon Peter.



Apostolic Succession

Catholic beliefs

Shared in common with most Christian denominations

GOD
is the omnipotent, loving creator of the universe.

JESUS CHRIST
is the Son of God made man.

HOLY SPIRIT
the third person of the Trinity.

THE TRINITY
three persons in one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

JESUS WAS BORN, DIED AND ROSE FROM THE DEAD
around 2,000 years ago.

THE BIBLE
the collection of books accepted as the authentic, inspired record of the revelations made to mankind by God about himself and his will for all people. Divided into the Old and New Testaments to distinguish between the Jewish and Christian traditions.

VIRGIN BIRTH
Jesus was born from a virgin called Mary through the Holy Spirit without a human father and born while Mary was still a virgin.

BAPTISM
Catholics believe in baptism as a physical sign of becoming a Christian, with infant baptism as the norm.

SIN
came into the world through Adam.

THE CREED
is the summary of our Faith (we use the Nicene and Apostles' creeds).

THE SECOND COMING
Jesus will return to this world but we don't know when this will be.

EVERY PERSON IS MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD
Catholics believe in the dignity and equality of all people.

PRAYER, ALMSGIVING AND FASTING
are of central importance.

BODILY RESURRECTION
when Jesus returns to earth, he will physically raise all those who have died, giving them back the bodies they lost at death. Our resurrection bodies will not die and will be freed from suffering and pain (cf. 1 Corinthians 15.35 - 44, 1 John 3.2).

HEAVEN
the ultimate end and fulfilment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness where we are completely at one with God. By Jesus' death and resurrection, he has 'opened' heaven to us.

AUTHORITY
the Church's authority or office to establish doctrines and teachings of the faith which followers are required to believe and share.

PERSONAL ENCOUNTER
we encounter Christ individually as well as in the Sacred Scriptures; in the Eucharist; the Church community, the wider world and especially in the poor.

Some other things that Catholics believe:

Canon of Scripture – the Church discerned which writings are to be included in the Bible. This complete list is called the canon of Scripture. It includes 46 books for the Old Testament (45 if we count Jeremiah and Lamentations as one) and 27 for the New Testament (see page 19 for the complete list of books in the Bible).

Catholic Social Teaching - Catholic social teaching addresses social justice issues at every level of society, distribution of wealth and the role of the state. Although it first came to prominence in the 19th century, its roots originate from many concepts in the Bible and in the writings of Catholic thinkers such as St Thomas Aquinas and St Augustine. This thinking is shared by many other Christians and religions.

The seven principles of Catholic social teaching are:

- Dignity of the human person at all ages and all stages of life
- Call to family, community and participation
- Rights and responsibilities of every person
- Preferential option for, and with, people who are poor
- Dignity of work and the rights of workers
- Solidarity
- Care for God's creation

Infallibility – the doctrine that in specified circumstances the Pope is incapable of error in pronouncing dogma. Infallibility is extremely rare with the last infallible teaching being the doctrine of Mary's bodily assumption into heaven (i.e. she didn't die) decreed in 1950.

Central importance of **The Mass** (also known as Holy Communion and the Eucharist) which is said every day throughout Catholic churches worldwide - (Matthew 26.26-30; Luke 22.14-20; John 6.51).

The Mass has two parts that form a whole – the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Word is the part where the Bible is read, prayed, explained and digested. It helps to prepare to receive the Eucharist (Holy Communion). The cycle of readings enables Catholics, over a three-year period, to reflect on a significant amount of Scripture (see section on the Lectionary on page 20).

Original Sin – the inclination to sin or evil intrinsic to human beings, which we inherited from Adam as a result of the Fall (except for Mary, the mother of Jesus) - (Genesis 3.1-5; Romans 5.12-21; Revelation 12.9).

Purgatory – after death, Catholics believe that they go either to heaven or to hell. They believe that many people go through purgatory before reaching heaven. Purgatory is a place or state of cleansing. (2 Maccabees 12.44-45. Catholics also cite other texts in their understanding of purgatory such as Matthew 12.32 and 1 Corinthians 3.10-15). When a person dies, prayers are said for their soul so that their time in purgatory will be shortened before being received into heaven.

Salvation – Catholics believe that they are saved by God's grace alone. They can do nothing, apart from God's grace, to receive the free gift of salvation. They also believe that they have to respond to God's grace through faith and works - (John 3.16; Romans 8.9-11; James 2.14-26).

Transubstantiation – the bread and wine in the Eucharist become the body and blood of Jesus Christ – they do not change in form but in substance. This is not cannibalism since Catholics celebrate Jesus in his resurrected body rather than in his human form - (Matthew 26.26-30; Luke 22.14-20; John 6.51).

Seven Sacraments

Catholics have seven sacraments that all have a biblical basis. Sacraments are outward signs of invisible grace. The sacraments are divided into three groups to express their purpose, comprising those of initiation, service and healing.

Sacraments of Initiation

Baptism (*Mark 16.16; Matthew 28.18-20; John 3.5; Romans 6.4; 1 Peter 3.21*)

Entry into the church and freedom from original sin. Done as a baby unless a convert to Catholicism.

Holy Eucharist (*Matthew 26.26-30; Luke 22.14-20; John 6.51*)

Known as Mass or Holy Communion. Received from about 7 years old unless an adult converts to Catholicism.

Confirmation (*Isaiah 11.2-3; John 3.3-5; Acts 8.14-17*)

By being sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit by a bishop, believers are strengthened in their Christian life. Usually done between 11 – 14 years old.

Sacraments of Service

Marriage (*Matthew 19.1-11; Hebrews 13.4*)

Between a man and a woman only and until death. Divorce is prohibited and invalid although it is recognised in civil law. The Catholic Church grants annulments under specific circumstances. These are different from divorce as annulments recognise that those marriages were never sacramentally valid in the first place.

Holy Orders (*Romans 15.15-16; 2 Timothy 1.6-7*)

The ordination to become a priest, for men only.

Sacraments of Healing

Reconciliation (*John 20.19-23; 2 Corinthians 5.18-20*)

Also known as confession and is the recounting of sins to a priest for healing and absolution. Catholics go to confession/reconciliation before they are allowed to take communion for the first time.

Sacrament of the Sick (*Mark 6.13; James 5.14-15*)

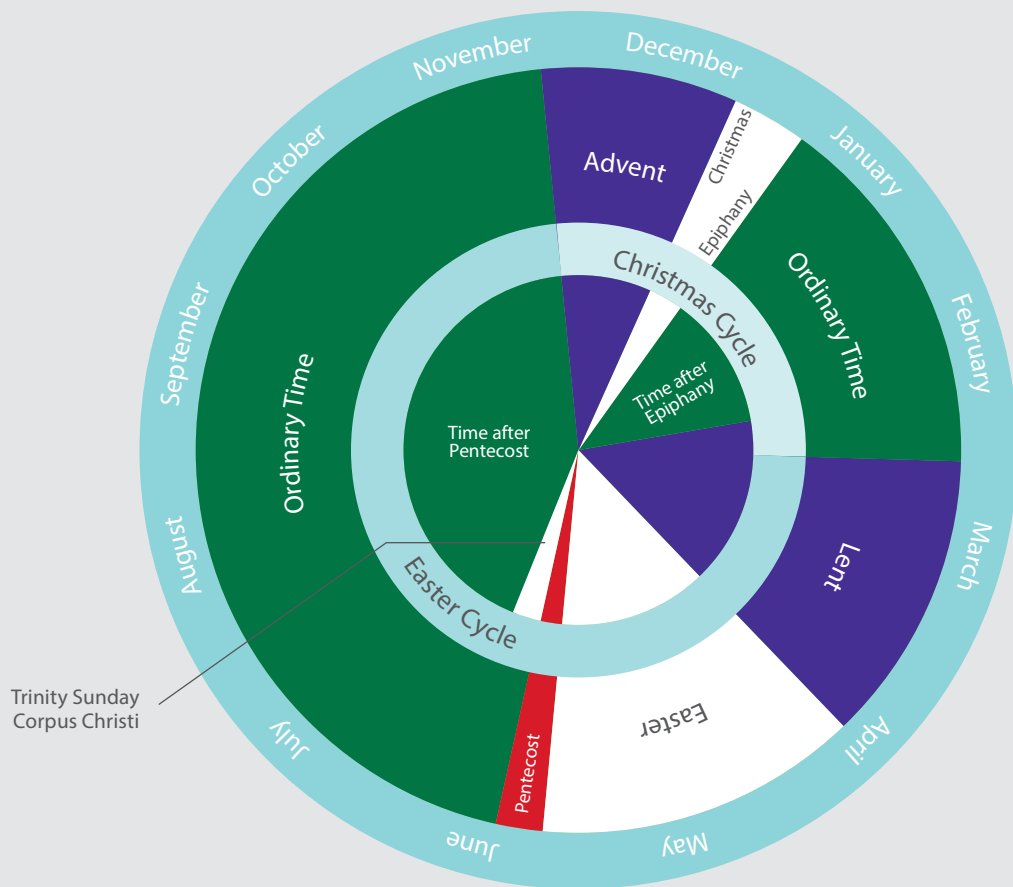
Also known as the anointing of the sick and last rites and which are prayers for the very ill or the dying person as they go to meet God.

Seasons and Feasts

Catholics like most other Christians maintain a Calendar of the Christian Season. Catholics structure it around the life of Christ and the Trinity. They also celebrate saints and feast days that are honoured publicly and privately.

The Catholic Church believes that the use of different colours in the liturgical and priestly vestments, church decorations and other symbols can help appreciate the mood and sense of a season or feast. Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) introduced the following colour sequence which is still used in all churches.

Combination Liturgical Calendar



The Christian year begins in December on the first Sunday of Advent and continues to the Feast of Christ the King at the end of November of the following year.

The key seasons are: Advent to Christmas and Epiphany, Lent to Easter and Ascension to Pentecost.

Throughout the year, while Catholics pray to God directly, they also remember and celebrate Mary's life and the lives of

various saints, asking for their intercession (Revelation 5.8 and 8.4; Tobit 12.12; 2 Maccabees 15.14). Catholics don't worship Mary or saints - they honour them as examples of faith. These holy people are role models who inspire ordinary Catholics with their life stories.

To help their prayer life, Catholics use the rosary (prayer beads), religious icons, statues and images; and make pilgrimages to shrines of Mary and key saints.

Liturgical Colours and Seasons

Here are some typical colours of vestments that clergy wear throughout the main seasons.



Signs and Symbols

Here are the key signs and symbols, and their meanings used by clergy in administering the sacraments.



Laying on of hands

From ancient times, the laying on of hands was the sign of calling down the Holy Spirit.



Oil

For the Jewish people, our ancestors in faith, anointing with oil meant setting the person apart for a particular mission.



Fire/Light

In the Bible, fire and light are symbols of God's purifying presence.



Bread

Bread is life, wheat is grown and ground, transformed by human work to make bread.



Wine

Wine is joy. Grapes are grown and crushed, transformed by human hands to make wine.



Water

The early Christians were baptised in rivers or large fonts of water. This symbolised a kind of drowning to one's old life.



White Garment

White is the colour of Christian baptism. It symbolises the cleansing of the person from all sin.

Structure of the Catholic Church

The teaching authority of the Catholic Church is called the **Magisterium**. It governs the Catholic Church worldwide and is organised and administrated through a structure and a hierarchy.

The Sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Catholic Church are so connected that one of them cannot stand without the others. From this hierarchy all teachings and doctrines about the faith are developed and communicated to the rest of the Catholic Church. All clergy are trained and ordained in order to fulfil their sacramental and pastoral duties to the Catholic communities in which they will serve.

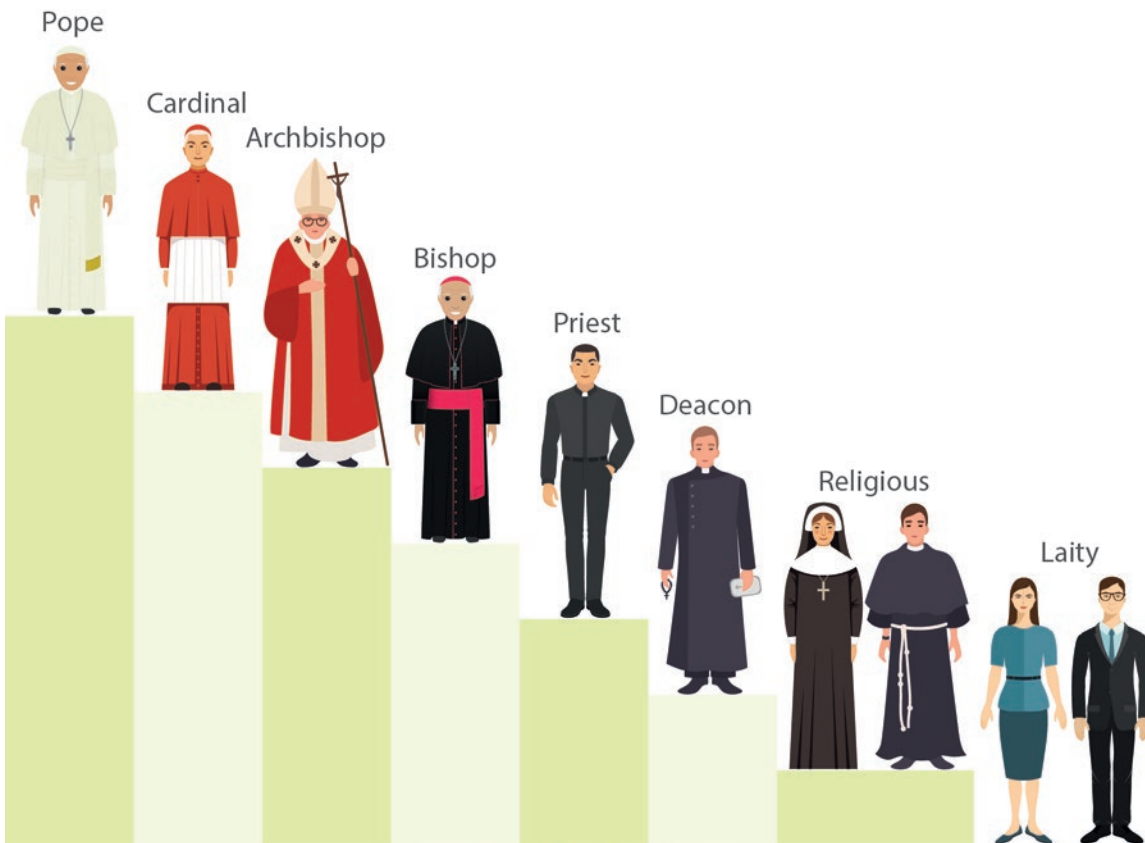
The hierarchy is comprised of the following:

- The Pope as the head of the Catholic Church worldwide and resides in the Vatican (Catholic headquarters) in Rome – the smallest city-state in the world with the shortest commercial railway.
- Cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests and deacons - all of whom can only be male.
- The Catholic Church is arranged and managed in regions known as archdioceses, dioceses, deaneries and parishes.
- There are many religious orders and alternative communities that operate within these areas and which are open to both men and women.
- There are three types of Catholics: ordained (clergy and deacons), religious (nuns, monks, sisters and brothers) and lay/laity (ordinary Catholics free to marry).

The Pope and his Cardinals and Bishops of England and Wales



Catholic Hierarchy



Hierarchy	Roles and responsibilities
Pope	Leader of the Catholic Church worldwide. Commonly referred to as the Holy Father. On very rare occasions can make statements about the faith and doctrine that are infallible (without error).
Cardinal <i>224 cardinals worldwide</i>	A bishop who advises the Pope and of whom up to 120 can appoint a new Pope.
Archbishop	A bishop who is in charge of an archdiocese. Responsible for a Province which is a collection of dioceses.
Bishop	Leader of a diocese and teacher of church doctrine. A priest of sacred worship and minister of the church government. There are also auxiliary bishops similar in function to suffragen bishops in the Church of England.
Priest	Leader of a parish/parishes, an ordained minister who administers most of the sacraments and may be part of a religious order.
Deacon	A seminarian studying to become a priest. Or can be a permanent deacon who is also married and who assists the priest with the sacraments and in service to the local parish.
Religious	A Catholic (male or female) who takes vows to belong to a Religious Order and live in community. They work within their monastery or convent and/or in a number of professions e.g. schools, universities, hospitals, parishes et al. The current Pope is a member of a religious order.
Laity <i>Ordinary Catholics</i>	Followers of Christ who belong to the Catholic Church and live out its teachings and practices. Catholics who are male and female and who don't hold an official position in the church.

Catholic Impact Today

Catholics are the biggest single Christian group in the world.

There are 1.36 billion Catholics in the world. Catholics comprise about half (50%) of Christians worldwide and 17% of the total global population.⁴

Europe

There are
4.5 million
Catholics in Britain.⁵

20%
of churchgoing
Christians in England
and Wales are
Catholic.⁶

According to estimates, Catholics in Europe comprise⁹:



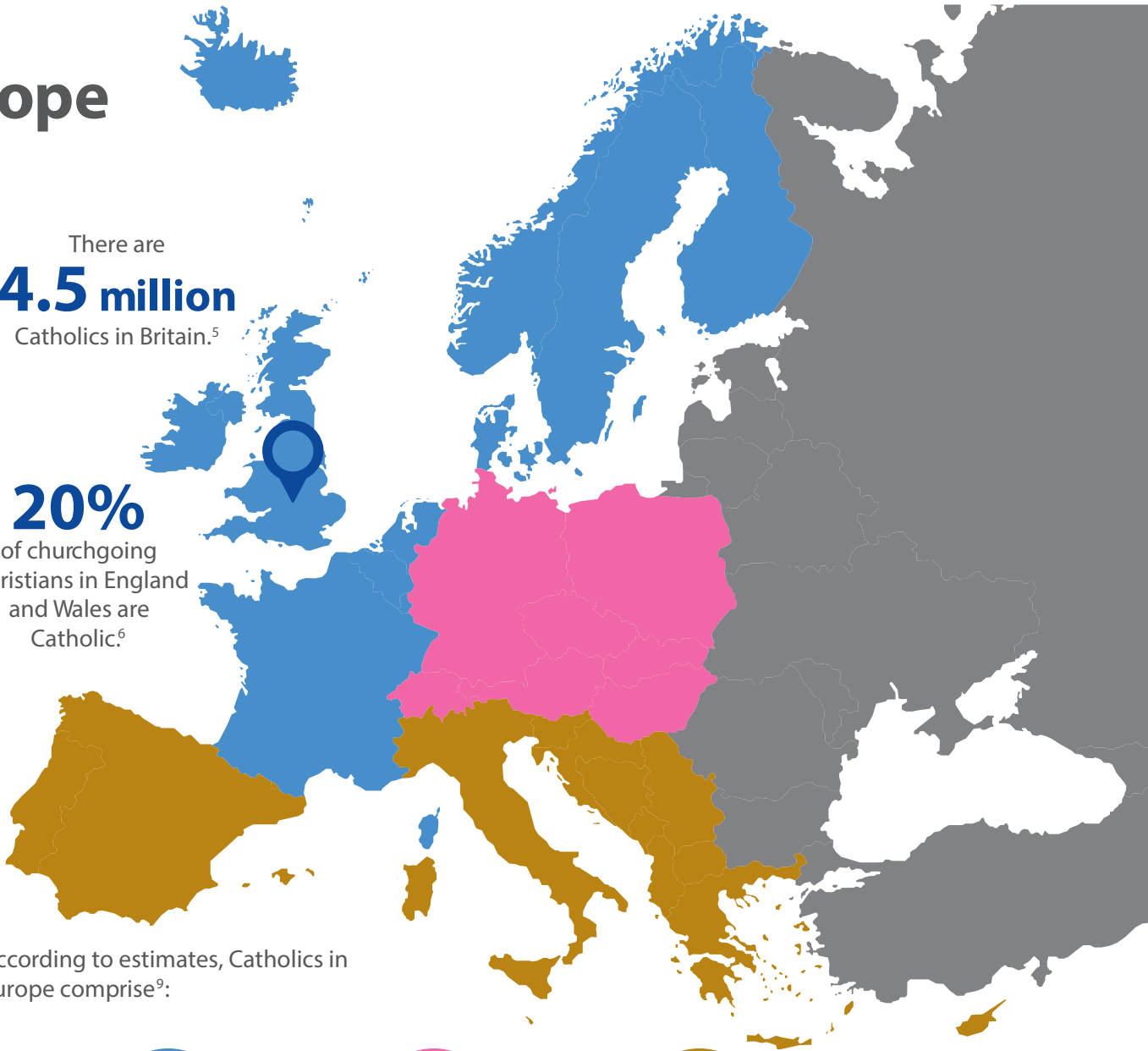
**Western
Europe**



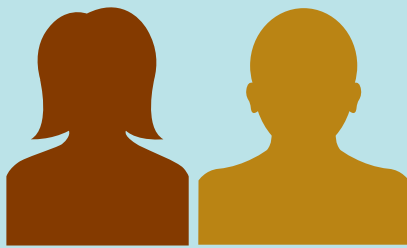
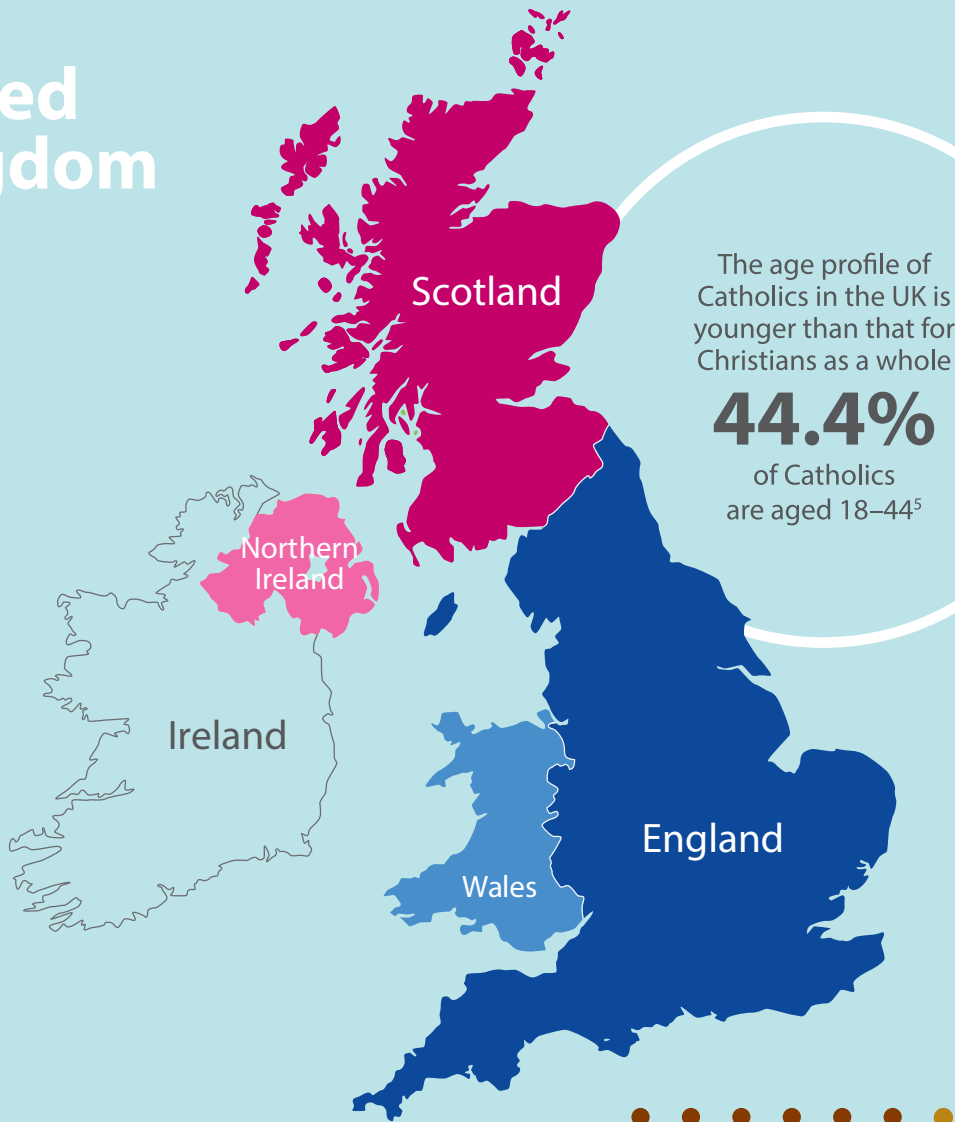
**Central
Europe**



**Southern
Europe**



United Kingdom



41%

of Catholics in the UK attend church at least monthly⁵

There is no difference in rates of attending Mass weekly amongst women and men (31%)



56%
of Catholics in the UK are female⁵

44%
of Catholics in the UK are male⁵

33%

of Catholics from birth in the UK still identify as Catholics in adulthood⁵

⁴ www.fides.org/en/stats

⁵ *From Contemporary Catholicism in England and Wales: A statistical report based on recent British Social Attitudes survey data. 2016. Stephen Bullivant.*

⁶ Bible Society/YouGov polling, 2022. 3,485 adults in England and Wales.

⁷ catholicsinbritain.le.ac.uk/findings/catholics-in-britain-and-weekly-mass-attendance/#.ZAuBAHbP02w

⁸ Pew Research Center | www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/12/14/about-three-in-ten-u-s-adults-are-now-religiously-unaffiliated/

⁹ Pew Research Center | www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/12/19/5-facts-about-catholics-in-europe/

www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/250362/number-of-catholics-in-asia-and-africa-continues-to-rise

www.dornsife.usc.edu/iacs/global-christianity/

www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/number-of-catholics-increasing-worldwide-falling-in-europe-1.4710161

The World

1.36 billion
Catholics in the world.⁴



Catholicism is the single largest Christian community in the United States, accounting for more than **21%** of the population.⁸



There are **256 million** Catholics in Africa, which is 19% of the population.⁴



In Asia it has made the fewest inroads with 151 million people which is 3% of the population. Only the Philippines and East Timor are predominantly Catholic.

The Catholic Church dominates the religious landscape of the Americas which are home to 654 million Catholics - that's 64% of the world's total Catholic population. Pope Francis is the first Latin American pope in the Catholic Church's history.⁴

The Catholic Church is a significant minority in Canada, Australia and New Zealand.



50%
of Christians worldwide are Catholics.



17%
of the total global population is Catholic.⁴

There has been Catholic growth in Africa, the Americas and Asia, but not in Europe and Oceania.

Catholics and the Bible

ECCLESIASTES

1 ¹ **F**ate words of the Teacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.
² **V**anity of vanities, says the Teacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.
³ **W**hat do people gain from all the toil at which they toil under the sun?
⁴ **A** generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains for ever.
⁵ **T**he sun rises and the sun goes down, and hurries to the place where it rises.
⁶ **T**he wind blows to the south, and goes round to the north, round and round goes the wind, and on its circuits the wind returns.
⁷ **A**ll streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full.
⁸ **T**hey continue to flow to the place where the streams flow, but there they continue to flow.
⁹ **A**ll things are wearisome, more than one can express, the eye is not satisfied with seeing, or the ear filled with hearing.
¹⁰ **W**hat has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done.
¹¹ **T**here is nothing new under the sun, and is there a thing of which it is said, See, this is new?
¹² **S**ee, this is new? It has already been, in the ages before us.
¹³ **T**he people of long ago are not remembered, nor will there be any remembrance of people yet to come, by those who come after them.
¹⁴ **T**he Teacher, when king over Israel in Jerusalem, applied his mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business that God has given to human beings to be busy with. I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun, and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

2 ¹ **I** said to myself, Come now, I will make a test of pleasure, enjoy yourself, that again, this also was vanity.
² **I** said of laughter, It is mad, and of pleasure, What use is it? I searched with my mind how to cheer my body with wine — my mind still guiding me with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, until I understood during the few days of these pleasures that it was all vanity.
³ **I** made great works, I built houses and planted vineyards for myself, I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees, I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees.
⁴ **I** bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house; I also had great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem.
⁵ **I** also gathered for myself silver and gold, and the treasure of kings and of the provinces, I got singers, both men and women, and delights of the flesh, and many concubines.
⁶ **S**o I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem, also my riches increased.
⁷ **I** saw all the deeds that are done under the sun, and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

The Vanity of Self-Indulgence

1 **W**hatever wisdom I attained with me, whatever my eyes saw, I did not keep from them, for I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart desired pleasure in all my toil, and my eyes were not withheld from all my toil.
2 **T**hus I reckoned up all that my hands had done, and what I had spent in doing it, and I saw that all was vanity and a chasing after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.
3 **I** turned to consider wisdom and folly, and what can the one do without the other? Only what has been done, has been done.
4 **T**here I saw that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness.
5 **T**he wise have eyes in their head, but the fool walks in darkness.
6 **I** perceived that the same fate befalls all of them. Then I said to myself, What happens to the fool will happen to me also, for what have I been so very wise? And I said to myself that this also is vanity.
7 **F**or I would be as the fool, seeing that in the days of my youth I had been long forgotten, and my name will have been long forgotten, and I will have been like the fool.
8 **S**o I reckoned up the wise die just like the fool, because what is done under the sun is as forgotten as a chasing after wind.
9 **I** hated all my toil in which I had laboured under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me.
10 **W**ho knows whether they will be wise or foolish? Yet they will be master of all for which I laboured and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity.
11 **S**o I turned away from the great work of my labour under the sun, for I became sometimes one who has triumphed with wisdom and knowledge and might, and might leave all to be enjoyed by another who did not toil for it. This also is vanity, and a great evil.
12 **W**hat do mortals gain from all the toil and strain with which they toil under the sun? For all their labour is full of pain, and their work as a shadow, even at night their minds do not rest. This also is vanity.
13 **T**here is nothing better for mortals, rest, or not and drink, and find enjoyment in their toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of the Lord.

ECCLESIASTES 7:35

3 **F**or everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven, a time to be born, and a time to die, a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted, a time to kill, and a time to heal, a time to break down, and a time to build up, a time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together, a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to seek, and a time to lose, a time to keep, and a time to throw away, a time to bear, and a time to sew, a time to keep silence, and a time to speak, a time to love, and a time to hate, a time for war, and a time for peace.
4 **W**hat gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with, and He has made everything suitable for its time, moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy, and enjoy themselves as long as all should eat and drink, and take pleasure in all their toil. I know that whatever God does endures for ever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him. That which is already done is done before him.

¹ Cf. *Reading on word*, *See Prov 1:2-7* / *627*
² *Heb apart from me*

How the Bible Speaks to Catholics

In the New Testament, the Old is generally spoken of as 'the Scriptures' or 'the sacred writings' (Matthew 21.42). Gradually the word 'Scripture' has been used in the singular and has become a synonym for the Bible. Catholics cite Acts 8.32 to support this definition.

Catholics believe that there are different senses to our understanding of the Bible:

THE LITERAL SENSE

The meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis, following the rules of sound interpretation. All other senses of Sacred Scripture are based on the literal.

THE SPIRITUAL SENSE

In light of the unity of God's plan, not just the text of Scripture but also the realities and events about which it speaks can be signs.

THE MORAL SENSE

The events we read in Scripture should lead us to act justly and fairly.

THE ALLEGORICAL SENSE

We can find a more profound understanding of events by seeing their significance in Christ; so the crossing of the Red Sea is both a sign of Christ's victory and of Christian baptism.

THE ANAGOGICAL SENSE

(Greek: anagoge, 'leading')

We can see the realities and events in the Bible in terms of their eternal significance, leading us home to God. So the Church on earth is a sign of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Catholics often call the Bible the Scriptures or Sacred Scripture.

Catholic principles for reading the Bible are:

1. God is the principal author of Sacred Scripture.
2. God used specific people who wrote in human language at a particular time and place in history. These writers reflected their own personalities and educations. The truth that they conveyed is differently presented and expressed in the various types of historical writing, in prophetic and poetical texts, and in other forms of literary expression.
3. Catholics seek to understand what a sacred author is saying to be true, distinguishing that from something he is using as an image to help them understand the truth more clearly.
4. God chose to reveal certain truths for the sake of salvation. This message of salvation is the set of revealed truths which Catholics call the “deposit of faith,” or Divine Revelation. The Bible is primarily concerned with telling these truths, which are without error.

To help Catholics grow in faith as they read Scripture, the Church gives three important points for interpreting and understanding the Bible:

1. ‘Be especially attentive “to the content and unity of the whole Scripture”’. (Catechism, 112). It all fits together, so we shouldn’t just look at selected parts in isolation.
2. Read the Bible within ‘the living Tradition of the whole Church’ (Catechism, 113), since the Holy Spirit guides the Church in interpreting Scripture. Especially helpful is seeing how the saints, popes, early church fathers and mothers and Church councils have commented on Scripture throughout history.
3. Pay attention to ‘the coherence of the truths of faith among themselves and within the whole plan of Revelation’ (Catechism, 114). The entire deposit of faith forms a wonderful unity - doctrine sheds light on Scripture, and Scripture on doctrine.

The Christian faith is not a ‘religion of the book’. Christianity is the religion of the ‘Word of God’, a word which is ‘not a written and mute word, but the Word is incarnate and living’.

Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ...

St Jerome



The whole point of reading and understanding the Bible is to encounter God, understand the revelation he has given us, and grow in faith.

But we do not read alone.

We read the Bible within the tradition of the Church to benefit from the holiness and wisdom of all the faithful who have gone before us.

The Bible or the Sacred Scriptures isn't a book. It's a library and contains:

46 books in the Old Testament

27 books in the New Testament

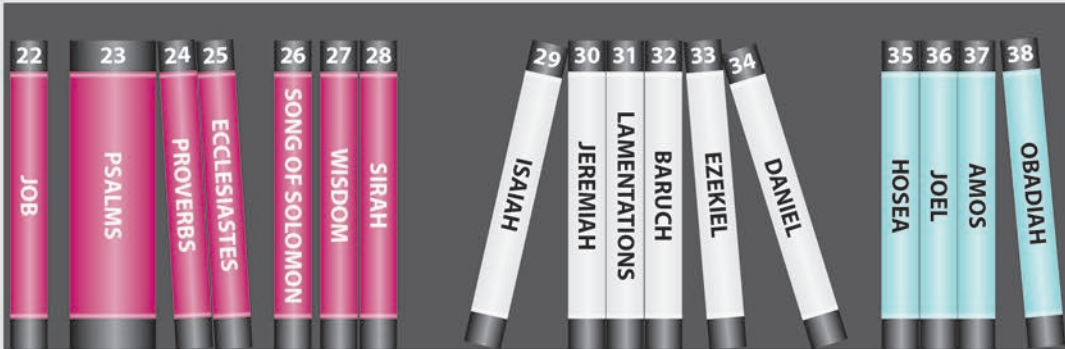
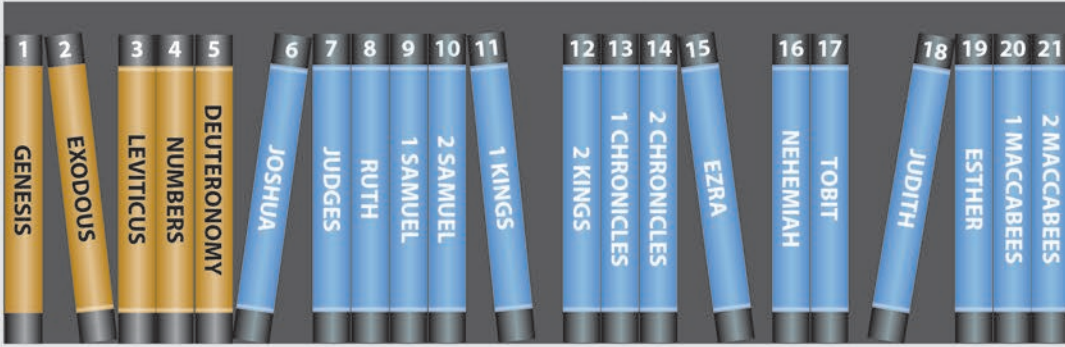
The Old Testament includes the following seven books that are not in Protestant Bibles: Tobit, Judith, Baruch, Sirach or Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, 1 and 2 Maccabees, and certain additions to Esther and Daniel. These are known as Deutero-canonical in some traditions.⁸

The New Testament books are the same in all Bibles.

⁸ If you would like to know more about these books please visit biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/bible-book-club/

The Catholic Bible

Old Testament



New Testament

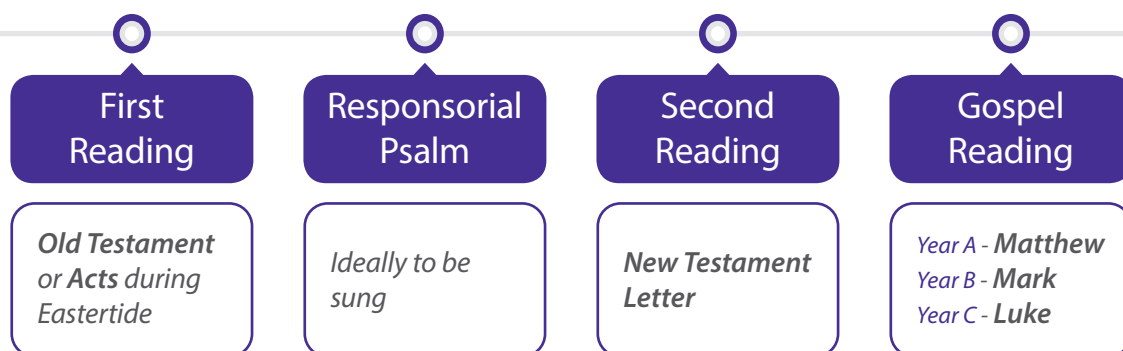


Books of the Catholic Bible

The Catholic Lectionary

The Roman Catholic Mass Lectionary organises the readings for worship services on Sundays in a three-year cycle.

- First reading from the Old Testament or, in Eastertide from the Acts of the Apostles of the New Testament
- Responsorial psalm (ideally, to be sung)
- Second reading from one of the New Testament letters
- A Gospel reading



The years are designated A, B, or C.

Each yearly cycle begins on the first Sunday of Advent (the last Sunday of November or first Sunday of December). Year B follows year A, year C follows year B, then back again to A.

Year A – uses Matthew’s Gospel readings

Year B – uses Mark’s Gospel readings

Year C – uses Luke’s Gospel readings

So the current and forthcoming cycles are:

2023 - 2024 is Year B

2024 - 2025 is Year C

2025 – 2026 is Year A

The readings selected from the Old Testament, the Psalms and the epistles always relate to the Gospels so that there is a coherent revelation being told. In this way, God’s plans for humanity are seen as being fulfilled in Christ – thus the Gospels are the light through which we read and understand the Old Testament.

The Gospel of John is read in all three years particularly at Christmas and in the Easter season. For weekday Masses a different set of readings is used but following a similar cycle.

The Roman Catholic Mass Lectionary is the basis of the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) which is used by many other churches.

Other Ways Catholics Experience the Bible



The Divine Office

This is the official set of prayers marking the hours of each day in prayer.

Typically, these are morning and evening prayers e.g. Lauds and Vespers although the religious (nuns and monks) say more prayers at more times of the day and night. They also use the rosary in their prayer and worship.

All of these prayers consist primarily of psalms, hymns, short Bible readings and other prayers and antiphons.

Together with the Mass, it constitutes the official public prayer life of the Church. The Liturgy of the Hours forms the basis of prayer within all Christian monasticism.

Catholics experience the Bible through the sacraments which are the Bible in action. They also experience the Bible through catechesis – this is the collection of Church teachings about the Catholic faith founded chiefly from the Scriptures.

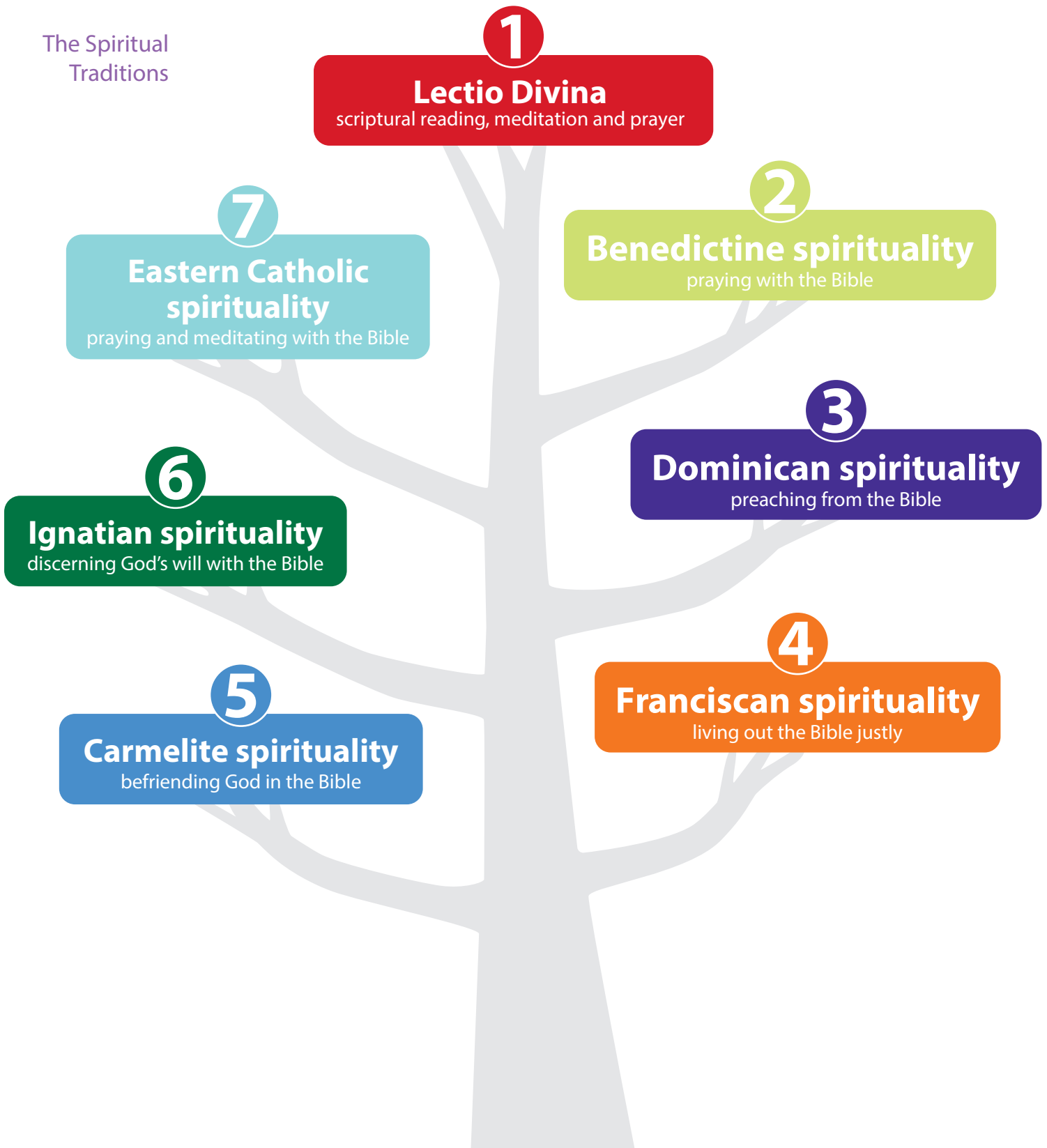
The lives of the saints inspire many Catholics as part of their regular prayer and devotion. Many saints have specific attributes and for which Catholics can pray for intercession – help and guidance e.g. St Joseph is the patron saint of work and St Francis is the patron saint of animals.



Catholic Approaches to Scripture and the Spiritual Traditions

Here are the main spiritual traditions of the Catholic Church and their ethos. Each of these traditions has a particular approach to the Scriptures that underpins their ethos.

The Spiritual Traditions





Lectio Divina

A way of praying with Scripture that developed in the monastic tradition often translated as 'sacred reading'. The method is ancient but remains relevant for all of us today. It promotes communion with God and increased knowledge of God's word.

Lectio divina is broken down into the following steps named in Latin as:

- Lectio (reading the scriptural text(s))
- Meditatio (meditation on the scriptural text/s)
- Oratio (prayer with the scriptural text/s)
- Contemplatio (contemplation on the scriptural text/s)

Then as a result of the encounter with God in Scripture, we are also called to:

- Actio (action arising from the scriptural text/s).

Benedictine

St Benedict (sixth century) is a leading figure in the history of monasticism and the founder of the Benedictine family of religious communities. The charism of Benedictine monastic life is ora et labora, 'pray and work'.

The Benedictines take a vow of stability that means they stay in one monastic community for the whole of their life rather than moving around between monasteries.

Dominican

St Dominic (13th century) devoted his life to preaching the gospel. Dominican spirituality has four pillars: prayer, common life, study and preaching.

Dominicans value learning as a way of educating themselves and all those to whom they bring the gospel. Tradition has it that the rosary was first given to St Dominic.



Franciscan

St Francis (13th century) devoted his life to action-based gospel-living. Franciscan spirituality is based on action and contemplation. It is a gospel of compassion and care for all of creation while living in solidarity with the poor.

Carmelite

St John of the Cross and St Teresa of Avila (both from Spain, 16th century) reformed the Carmelite order. Carmelite spirituality is characterised by an intense thirst for an immediate and direct experience of God as well as a focus on prayer and contemplation.

Ignatian

St Ignatius Loyola (16th century), founder of the Jesuits, learned how to discern God's presence in his life. He became uniquely gifted in being able to help others hear God's call in their lives using the Scriptures and imagination to discern the way forward. Ignatian retreats are popular in the Church today worldwide.

Eastern Catholic Spirituality

A prayer commonly practised in the Christian East is known as the Jesus Prayer. 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me, a sinner'.

The prayer is valued highly because it uses the holy name of Jesus (e.g. Galatians 1.3) and the words of Scripture (Luke 18.13, 18.38); because it contains the heart of the gospel message of God's great mercy; and because it fulfils the biblical invitation to 'pray without ceasing' (Luke 18.1, 1 Thessalonians 5.17, Romans 12.12).

Other approaches include receiving the sacraments and ongoing faith formation and catechesis for all ages.

Catholic Culture, Prayer and Devotion

The true and the beautiful belong together, for God is the source of beauty and also the source of truth. Art, which is dedicated to the beautiful, is therefore a special path to the whole and to God.

The Catechism, 2500-2503; 2513

Catholic art and culture embrace the music and visual works produced in an attempt to illustrate, encounter and experience in tangible form the teachings of the Bible and the Catholic Church. This includes liturgy, theatre, sculpture, painting, mosaics, metalwork, embroidery and architecture.

The Catholic Church has been the dominant influence in the history and development of Western art, literature and music since at least the fourth century. It has inspired numerous artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Rembrandt, Caravaggio, Bernini, Mozart, Dante, TS Eliot, Waugh and Greene and more recently J.R.R. Tolkien, Anthony Burgess, Hilary Mantel, Jimmy McGovern, James McMillan, Ariana Grande and Bruce Spingsteen.

While most people think of being a Catholic as a set of specific beliefs and practices, Catholicism has a look, a culture and an ethos that go towards presenting and depicting its Catholicity and sacred meaning.



This Catholic culture is different in different parts of the world but there are some common themes in architecture, the arts, devotions and rituals around the following:

- 1 The use and promotion of the crucifix (small and large sculptures of Jesus on the cross) is a central feature of all Catholic churches. Many Catholics wear small crucifixes around their neck. (John 3.14-15; 1 Corinthians 1.23).
- 2 Fonts for baptising babies.
Infant baptism is central to Catholic teaching unless you become a Catholic as an adult. If so, you undergo a period of weekly instruction (from September to the following Easter) about all aspects of the faith and practice. This instruction is called RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults).
- 3 Emphasis on Mary, her life, her miraculous appearances throughout history, the use of the rosary in prayer, and many worldwide saints as depicted in countless statues, icons and paintings of them in churches, shrines, public places and domestic homes.
- 4 Use of stained glass windows in churches to recount key Bible stories, saints and holy people's lives.
- 5 Symbols of the four gospel writers – (Ezekiel 1.10, Revelation 4.7)
Matthew – a man
Mark – a lion
Luke – an ox
John – an eagle
- 6 Candles and incense for praying, interceding and personal and collective worship and reflection. The Paschal candle is lit only at the Easter Vigil (Easter Saturday) to welcome in the light of Christ at his resurrection (Exodus 30.1-9; Leviticus 16.12-13; Numbers 7.26; Luke 1.9; Revelation 8.3-5).
- 7 Use of ashes (burnt palm branches from Palm Sunday) placed as a cross on the forehead on Ash Wednesday (the beginning of Lent) as a reminder of our mortality. (Genesis 3.19).
- 8 Use of holy water stoups as you enter or leave a Catholic Church to make the sign of the cross (Numbers 5.17). And genuflection (kneeling while making the sign of the cross) before the Blessed Sacrament (Holy Communion kept in a small tabernacle) near or behind the altar (Exodus 26).
- 9 Different coloured altar cloths and priestly vestments for keys seasons, feast days of saints or martyrs, depending on which biblical events or feasts we are celebrating.
- 10 The Stations of the Cross (14 stopping points for prayer and meditation). Stone statues, carved reliefs or paintings of the journey of Jesus' Passion and death.
- 11 The Pope as the head of the Catholic Church worldwide is a very important role model for Catholics. Prayer cards, statues and images of the Pope are found in many Catholic churches, schools and homes.

Celebrations of Mary and the feasts of the saints show that faith transcends the most radical of barriers, death. Popular devotion is as important as national and global Catholic identity.

Catholics and Bible Society

3



Bible Society and the Catholic Church

In our Royal Charter, Bible Society is tasked with encouraging the ‘wider circulation or use (or both) of the Holy Bible’ without note or comment.

In other words, we resolutely avoid aligning ourselves to any single denomination or theological tradition. Bible Society works in an open, positive and non-judgemental way, with people across all denominations and networks, and also with those who have no Christian faith. We are very clear that it’s not our job to tell people the ‘correct’ interpretation of the Bible or which denomination or tradition is ‘best’.

We are committed to helping people engage with the Bible well, but we offer the Bible to the world without denominational note or comment and with the confidence that the Bible, the Church and the Holy Spirit will help people do the rest. In short, we offer the Bible without strings attached. Generous orthodoxy⁹ is at the centre of who we are.



Dei Verbum (Word of God) and Verbum Domini (Word of the Lord)

Dei Verbum is one of the four Dogmatic Constitutions (authoritative documents) produced at the Catholic Church's Second Vatican Council in 1965, focusing on divine revelation. The document mainly discusses the meaning and importance of tradition and the Magisterium and their relationships with Scripture, as well as the origins and understanding of the Old and New Testaments.

Dei Verbum touches directly upon the issues that led to the Reformation. The Magisterium is the servant of Scripture but empowered by it, and that Scripture, Tradition and Magisterium all receive their authority from the same Spirit. Scholars accept parallels between Dei Verbum, which sought to bring twentieth century theological perspectives into the Church, with similar Protestant writings and beliefs.

Dei Verbum paved the way for greater ecumenical collaboration over biblical scholarship and translation work. This led in part to the 1987 joint Vatican-Bible Society agreement regarding 'Inter-confessional Co-operation in the Translation of the Holy Scriptures'.¹⁰

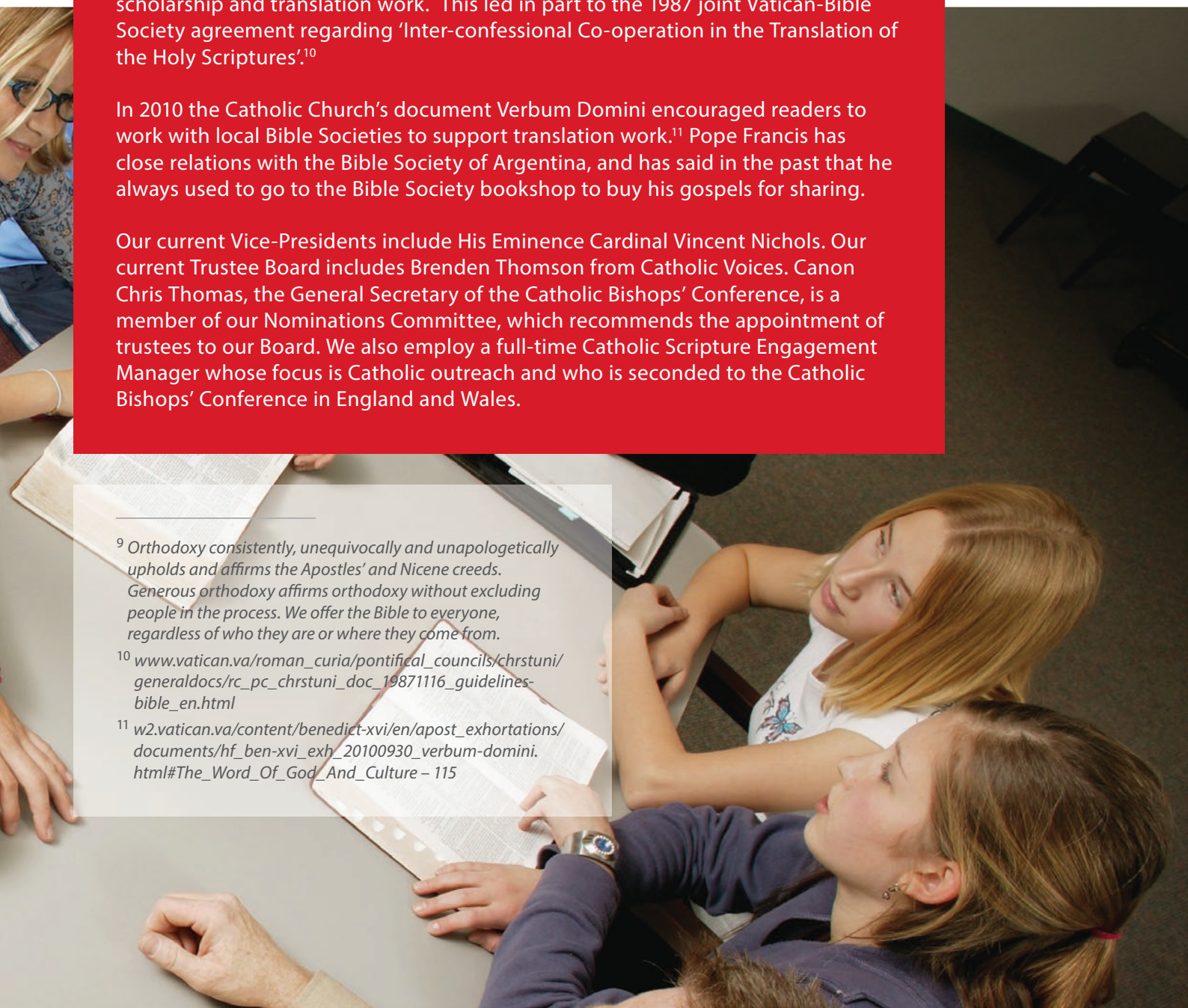
In 2010 the Catholic Church's document Verbum Domini encouraged readers to work with local Bible Societies to support translation work.¹¹ Pope Francis has close relations with the Bible Society of Argentina, and has said in the past that he always used to go to the Bible Society bookshop to buy his gospels for sharing.

Our current Vice-Presidents include His Eminence Cardinal Vincent Nichols. Our current Trustee Board includes Brenden Thomson from Catholic Voices. Canon Chris Thomas, the General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, is a member of our Nominations Committee, which recommends the appointment of trustees to our Board. We also employ a full-time Catholic Scripture Engagement Manager whose focus is Catholic outreach and who is seconded to the Catholic Bishops' Conference in England and Wales.

⁹ *Orthodoxy consistently, unequivocally and unapologetically upholds and affirms the Apostles' and Nicene creeds. Generous orthodoxy affirms orthodoxy without excluding people in the process. We offer the Bible to everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from.*

¹⁰ www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/generaldocs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19871116_guidelines-bible_en.html

¹¹ w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20100930_verbum-domini.html#The_Word_Of_God_And_Culture - 115



Vatican, Catholic Biblical Federation and UBS Agreement

Through the General Secretariat of the Catholic Biblical Federation, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity maintains and develops relations with the United Bible Societies. It has a joint set of guidelines for inter-confessional co-operation in translating the Bible.¹²

These guidelines are particularly helpful for Bible Society in the following areas:

- the production of a Bible for use by several churches and ecclesial communities in a specific cultural area
- the production of a Bible for use in study
- the production of a Bible for use in the liturgical life
- the value of a wider dissemination of the Bible and wider mutual understanding of different approaches and exegesis.

To read the full document on common Bible work please visit:

vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_25031993_principles-and-norms-on-ecumenism_en.html

The Catholic Biblical Federation¹³ and the United Bible Societies¹⁴ are two organisations both committed to providing easy access to Sacred Scripture for all Christians as well as followers of other beliefs in the pursuit of opening the Bible to everyone.

The Joint Agreement states the following key objectives:

- Translation, publication and distribution of the Bible.
- Partnership and co-operation with Churches and Christian organisations.
- Publication of the Bible in the order of the Catholic biblical canon.
- Developing biblical tools of interpretation and in helping the faithful to enter into a life-relevant dialogue with the word of God.
- Seeking new and creative ways in which to promote the Bible using all the latest media and technology.

¹² www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/generaldocs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19871116_guidelines-bible_en.html

¹³ www.c-b-f.org/

¹⁴ www.unitedbiblesocieties.org/



Bible Societies and Catholics Around the World

Bible Society works to strengthen the Catholic community in the following strategic priority countries:

The Middle East and North Africa

Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Syria, the Bible Lands, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan.

Africa

Mali, the Gambia, Niger, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Central African Republic, Eritrea, Nigeria, Eswatini, Mozambique, Togo, Ghana, Senegal.

Pakistan and the Gulf

China

Notable Catholic-focused projects are also run by partner Bible Societies in the following countries:

The Balkans

Serbia.

Europe

Albania, Austria, Croatia, Republic of Ireland, Poland, Slovenia.

Asia

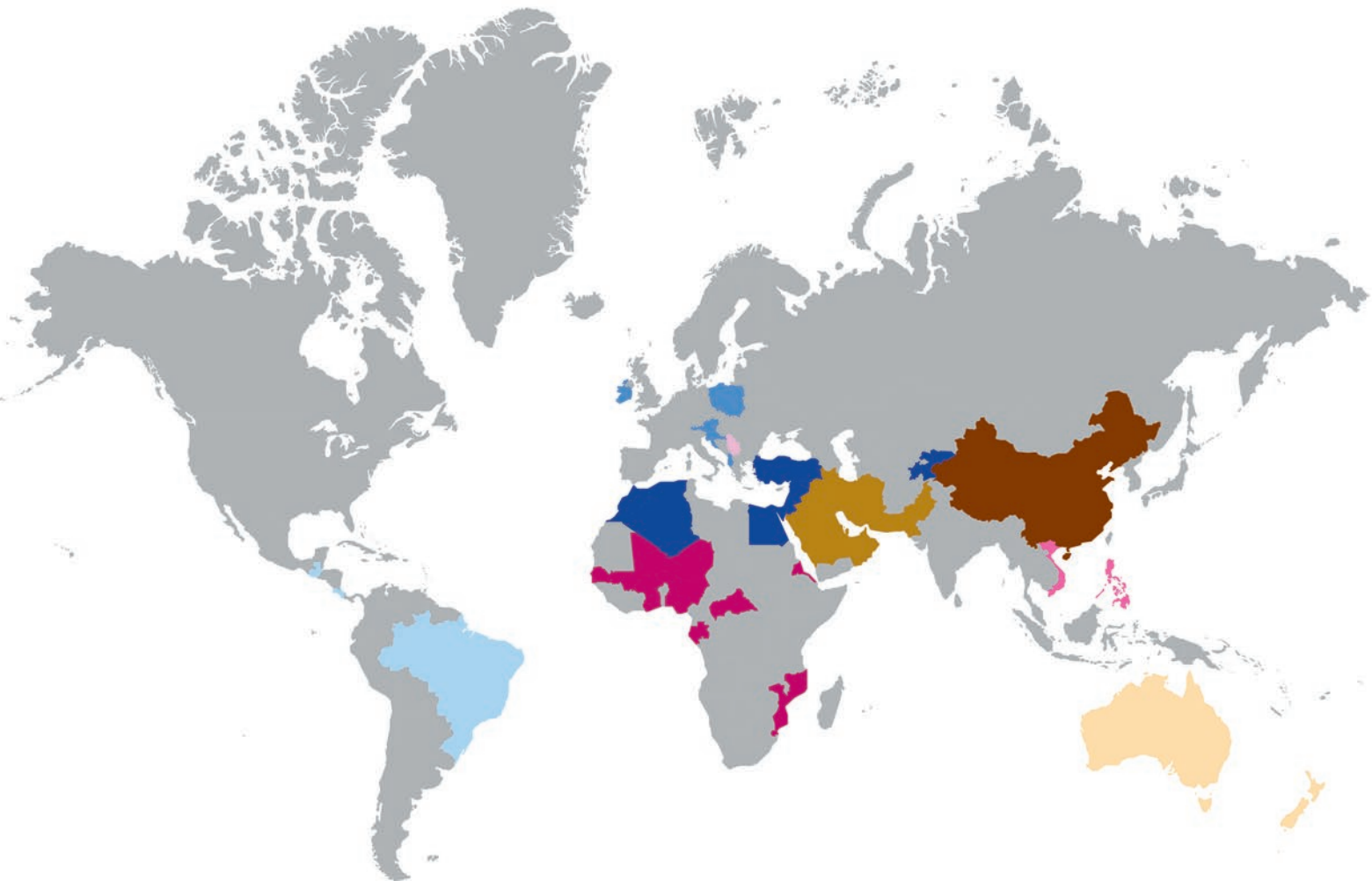
The Philippines, Vietnam.

Oceania

Australia, New Zealand.

Central & South America

Costa Rica, Guatemala, Brazil.



Working with Catholics

4



Catholic Dioceses of England and Wales

The Catholic Church in England and Wales is made up of 22 dioceses and 3,000 parishes. A diocese refers to a community of the Christian faithful in communion of faith and sacraments with their bishop ordained in apostolic succession.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales is the permanent assembly of Catholic Bishops and Personal Ordinaries in the two member countries.

The membership of the Conference comprises: Archbishops, bishops and auxiliary bishops of the 22 Catholic dioceses of England and Wales.

The other members are the Bishop of the Forces (Military Ordinariate), the Apostolic Eparchy of the Ukrainian Church in Great Britain, the Apostolic Eparchy for Syro-Malabar

Catholics in Great Britain, the Ordinary of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham and the Apostolic Prefect of the Falkland Islands.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has six departments: Catholic Education and Formation, Christian Life and Worship, Dialogue and Unity, Evangelisation and Discipleship, International Affairs and Social Justice.

The Office for Migration Policy (OMP) works within the Department of International Affairs.

Dioceses of England and Wales



Etiquette and Protocol for Catholic Hierarchy

<i>Position</i>	<i>Label/Letter Address</i>	<i>Salutation (written/verbal)</i>	<i>Salutation (when retired)</i>
Cardinals	His Eminence Cardinal J Smith, Archbishop of... or His Eminence The Cardinal Archbishop of...	Dear Cardinal Smith (<i>surname required</i>) or Your Eminence/Cardinal	<i>As for current</i>
Archbishops	Most Revd J Smith, Archbishop of... or His Grace the Archbishop of...	Dear Archbishop Smith (<i>surname required</i>) or Your Grace	Archbishop/Your Grace
Bishops	Rt Revd J Smith, Bishop of... (<i>if area known</i>) or Rt Revd J Smith, Roman Catholic Bishop of... (<i>where there's an Anglican bishop whose diocese has same name</i>) or Rt Revd J Smith (<i>for auxiliary and retired bishops</i>)	Dear Bishop Smith (<i>surname required</i>)	<i>As for current</i>
Monsignori	Revd Mgr J Smith Revd Mgr Canon J Smith	Dear Monsignor Smith/ Monsignor	Monsignor
Abbots	Rt Revd the Abbot of... or Rt Revd J Jones OSB, Abbot of... ¹⁵	Dear Father Abbot (<i>surname not required</i>)	<i>As for current (but see footnote)</i>
Benedictine Order	Rev Dom J Smith OSB or Revd Dom John Smith OSB	Dear Dom John/Father/ Brother Dear Dom John	<i>As for current</i>
Canons	Revd Canon AB Smith	Dear Canon Smith/Canon	<i>As for current</i>
Provosts	Revd Provost AB Smith	Dear Provost Smith/Canon	<i>As for current</i>
Priests	Revd AB Smith (<i>not Fr AB Smith</i>)	Dear Father Smith/Father	<i>As for current</i>
Deacons	Revd Deacon AB Smith	Dear Deacon Smith/ Deacon	<i>As for current</i>
Nuns, Sisters, Religious	Sr J Smith	Dear Sister (<i>where Christian name not known</i>)/Sister Jane	<i>As for current</i>
Monks or male religious (non ordained)	Br S Brown Br Sam Brown	Dear Brother (<i>where Christian name not known</i>) or	<i>As for current</i>
Monks (ordained - refer to title above)	Fr Brown/Revd Brown et al.	Dear Brother Sam (<i>where Christian name known</i>)	

¹⁵ When retired, do not address an Abbot as 'Abbot of...'

Publishing and Catholic Bible Editions

You are holding something divine in your hands: a book that is like fire! A book through which God speaks.

Pope Francis, preface to the Youth Bible of the Catholic Church

Which Bibles do Catholics quote from and use?

Bibles approved by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

Code of Canon Law

828 §1

- Books of sacred scripture should be approved either by the Holy See or the Bishops' Conference prior to publication
- They should have necessary and sufficient explanatory notes

828 §2

- Catholics can work with other Christians on scripture translations with appropriate explanatory notes

Bible versions that are permitted for both general and liturgical use.

The Lectionary uses:

- Jerusalem Bible and The Grail Psalter
- Some parishes use an older version - the Revised Standard Version and The Grail
- England and Wales will shortly be moving to a new edition using the English Standard Version - Catholic Edition (ESV-CE) and the Grail Psalter
- Good News Version may be used for Masses with children

The Divine Office uses:

- The Grail Psalter
- Jerusalem Bible
- Knox Bible
- New English Bible
- Revised Standard Version
- Good News

Other approved Catholic editions of Scripture for private study include:

- New Revised Standard Version
- Revised Standard Version
- Revised New Jerusalem Bible
- Jerusalem Bible
- The Bible - Nick King SJ
- Christian Community Bible
- CEV New Testament

Authority and approval of books - Imprimaturs and Nihil Obstats

The Magisterium, the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, has the duty to *'preserve God's people from deviations and defections, and to guarantee them the objective possibility of professing the true faith without error.'*

Catechism, #890

In order to approve religious books a review process begins by the relevant diocese and if no doctrinal error is found in the work, a nihil obstat is granted. Translated as "nothing stands in the way," the nihil obstat indicates that the book can be forwarded to a bishop for his review and decision. If the work is free from doctrinal error, the bishop grants an imprimatur – from the Latin which translates, 'let it be printed'. This is the bishop's official declaration that the book is free from doctrinal error and is approved for publication by a censor.

Prayer books for public or private use, and catechisms or other catechetical resources require the bishop's permission for publication. Books related to Sacred Scripture, theology, canon law, Church history, or religious or moral disciplines cannot be used as textbooks in Catholic education at any level unless they are published with an imprimatur.



Top Tips for Working with Catholics

Catholic priests and parishes



1

When visiting a Catholic priest or his parish church(es) it is important to remember that they are called **priests** not pastors, vicars or ministers. And they are addressed as **Father (Fr)** unless they are more senior (*see Catholic hierarchy on page 11 and salutations on page 35*).

2

Catholic priests celebrate Mass every day and their week is structured around those Mass times. Bear this in mind when wanting to arrange a meeting. **Each parish website will tell you the times of their daily Masses.**

3

Catholic priests also structure their weeks by the calendar of the **Christian season**, feast days and other special days of remembrance and celebration (*see pages 8 and 26*). They would not usually promote a resource or initiative about Jesus' death and resurrection during December as that's focused on Jesus' birth i.e. Advent and Christmas and vice versa.

4

This also shapes the way Catholic resources are produced – e.g. purple is often used on the cover and on the pages of Lent and Advent resources while white and gold are often used for Easter and Pentecost resources. **There's a basic colour code and set of images and symbols for using in standard Catholic resources.**

5

It is unlikely that Bible Society staff would be allowed to speak at a Mass since only specifically Catholic charities/Catholic agencies are eligible and always at the end of the Mass. However, Catholic parishes do run other events ranging from prayer and faith studies/courses, retreat days, evangelisation and outreach days etc and some of these are open to a much wider set of contributors and speakers.

Ecumenism

Unity among all Christians is a key ecumenical concern for the Catholic Church. The aim is to work towards a greater visible unity across all traditions and denominations without losing what makes each one different. At local, regional and national levels we work with:

- Churches Together in England (CTE) cte.org.uk
- Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) ctbi.org.uk
- Churches Together in Wales (CYTUN) cytun.co.uk

The Catholic Church supports numerous ecumenical and social justice initiatives such as:

- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity cbcew.org.uk
- Homelessness Sunday housingjustice.org.uk/homeless-sunday
- World Day of Prayer wwdp.org.uk
- Thy Kingdom Come thykingdomcome.global
- The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales – Christian Unity – cbcew.org.uk/christian-unity

Catholic Parishes that are ecumenically minded are favourable to outside speakers and initiatives. Some of these include university and college chaplaincies, shared church buildings, schools and rural churches. There are also 26 joint Catholic and Church of England primary and secondary schools in the UK. These are a good example of collaborative working which would be open to Bible Society resources and initiatives.

Inter-religious Dialogue

The Catholic faith instructs and guides us in the unique pathway to God through Jesus Christ, and in the manner in which we are to learn about and co-operate with people of other faiths. We are all called by our Baptism, to engage in dialogue with others, and with people of other religions. This is part of the Church's task of continuing the dialogue that God engages with his creation, and of reading the signs of his will in our times. Our common good depends upon it.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has produced a teaching document, called 'Meeting God in Friend and Stranger' to accompany us as we engage in inter-religious dialogue.

- Meeting God in Friend and Stranger cbcew.org.uk/meeting-god-in-friend-and-stranger

The Catholic Church is prominent in numerous inter-religious groups:

- The Inter Faith Network interfaith.org.uk
- The Inter Faith Council for Wales cytun.co.uk/hafan/en/interfaith-council
- The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales – Interreligious Dialogue – cbcew.org.uk/interreligious-dialogue



Catholic resources

Resources and initiatives that are shared widely across dioceses are always approved by bishops who give them their imprimatur (see page 37).

Getting Catholic bishops on side to endorse and support resources and initiatives is very important. It helps give them validity, authority and publicity.

At a parish level it is vital that the parish priest approves the resource or initiative and this makes a huge difference as to whether a group of parishioners will feel confident in both leading and participating.

Parish websites

Parish websites vary greatly from diocese to diocese (as do diocesan websites).

See directory.cbcew.org.uk

It is not obvious when looking at a Catholic parish website whether it will be interested in Bible Society resources. However, those that have a range of events will alert you to their group interests e.g. social action, mother and toddler, support for mental health issues, women's groups, seasonal courses for Lent and Advent. Some have Bible study or faith discussion groups while others look like they have very little that's regularly provided. This doesn't mean that they won't be interested in Bible Society but it does mean that they may have either a small congregation or are busy with other issues.

Does the resource or initiative look Catholic?

Here's a checklist for you to use:

- What images, symbols and colours are used throughout the content?
- If it is an event, does it offer Mass or devotional times of prayer at any point?
- Is it Catholic in content and tone?
E.g. does it:
 - refer to the Pope at all or have an image of him in any of the publicity or resources?
 - refer to any of the Catholic Church's teachings or Catholic writers relevant to this context?
 - present Scripture as informing Tradition?
 - refer to any relevant Scriptural texts?
 - refer to any of the sacraments where relevant?
 - mention anything about Mary or any of the saints or use images of them?
 - mention any practices such as praying or other Catholic rituals?

THE BIBLE ALIVE IN CHURCH

KEY BIBLE TEXTS:

The Catholic Church

Matt 16:18-19; 1 John 1:1

Welcome and Gather

Ruth 2:4; 2 Cor 13:13

Liturgy of the Word

Old and New Testament books

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Isa 52:13-53; Matt 26:26-28;
Mark 14:24; Luke 22:19-20;
John 4:42; 1 Cor 11:25-26

Sending Out

Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15;
Luke 24:50-51; John 20:21

Sprinkling of Holy Water

Num 8:7a

Sign of the Cross

Ezek 9:4; Eph 1:13

Crossing ourselves before the Gospel

Deut 6:6-9; 11:18-21

Gospel Acclamation

Rev 5:11-14; 19:5-7

Genuflection & Blessing

Isa 45:23; Luke 22:39-46

Penitential Act

Lev 5:5; Neh 9:2; Luke 18:13;
James 5:16

Lord's Prayer

Matt 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4; Titus 2:13;
Rev 1:5-6

Sign of Peace

John 14:27; 20:21; Rom 16:16;
1 Pet 5:14

Baptism

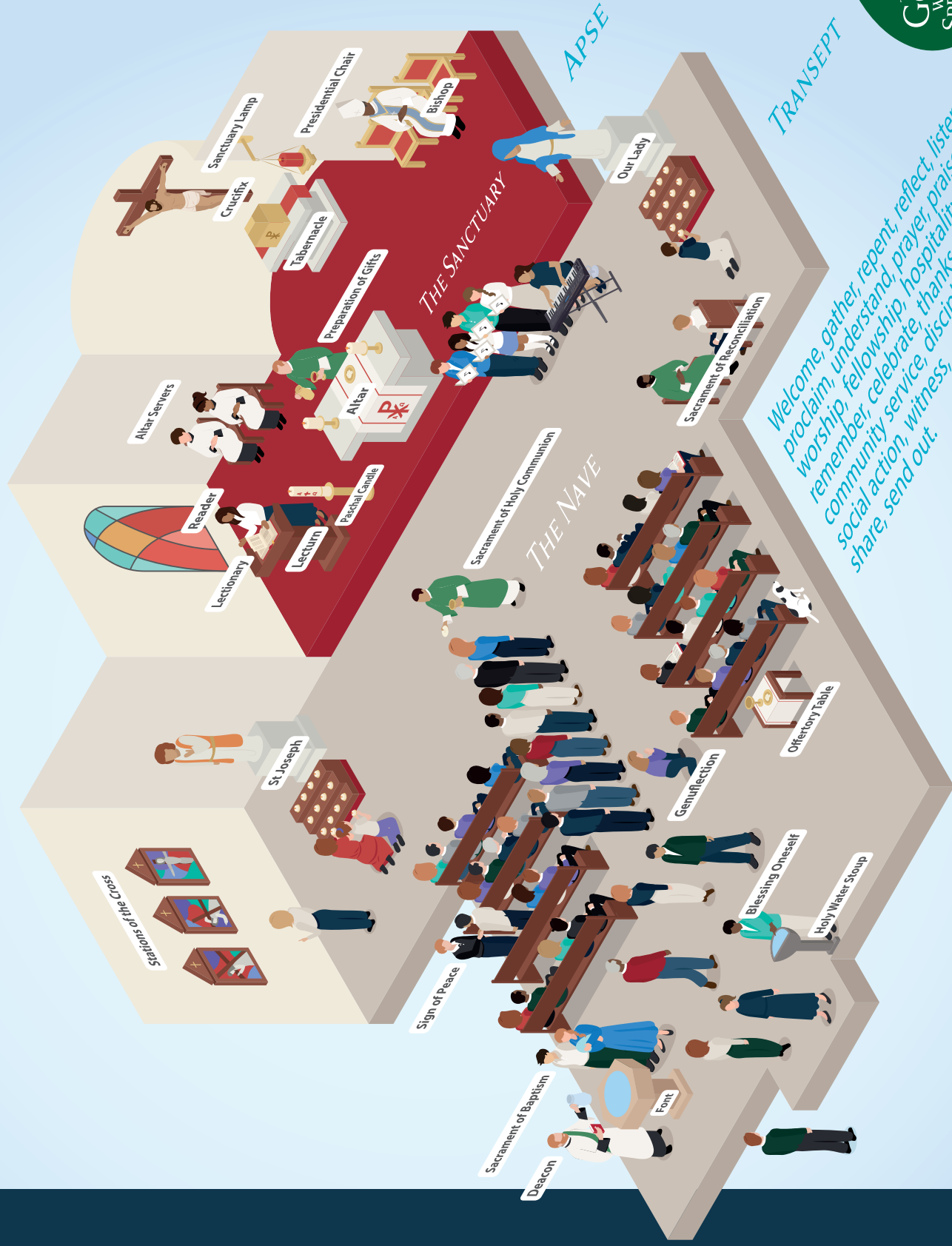
Mark 16:16; Matt 28:18-20;
John 3:5; Rom 6:4; 1 Pet 3:21

Reconciliation

John 20:19-23; 2 Cor 5:18-20

The Altar, Tabernacle, Sanctuary Lamp, Incense Burner & Priestly Vestments

Ex 25-30



Welcome, gather, repent, reflect, listen,
proclaim, understand, prayer, praise,
worship, fellowship, hospitality,
remember, celebrate, thanksgiving,
community service, discipleship,
social action, witness,
share, send out.

THE
GOD
WHO
SPEAKS

Common Terms and Phrases used by Catholics

Brother – term used for a monk or Religious in a community.

The Catechism – the handbook that tells you about the Catholic faith and its key beliefs.

Catholicism – everything that describes the Catholic Church and its beliefs.

Confession – term used for the sacrament of reconciliation.

Crucifix – a cross with Jesus on it hung in front of the altar in every Church.

Father – term used for addressing a priest.

Genuflection – kneeling in front of the tabernacle (which is close to the altar) and making the sign of the cross.

The Hail Mary – prayer with Mary, mother of God for intercession and reflection.

The Laity/Lay – group of ordinary Catholics or individual Catholics.

Lectionary – the readings from the Bible in a 3-year cycle that are read at Church daily.

The Magisterium – the teaching body and central governing authority of the Catholic Church.

Making the sign of the cross – what Catholics do when they enter a church or before and after any prayer in public and private.

Mass or the Eucharist or Holy Communion - for daily and Sunday services.

Parish – the church(es) and its members in a local area.

Papacy – that which relates to the Pope, his office and governance.

The Pope - the head of the Catholic Church worldwide.

Priest – ordained leader of a parish(es).

Purgatory – a place where Catholics (after they have died) go before they reach heaven.

Rosary – beaded chain for praying with which has a set number of prayers.

Sacred Scripture, the Scriptures – the Bible.

Saints – holy people who are prayed with, for intercession for a whole range of things in life.

Sister – term used for a nun or religious in a community.

Tabernacle - a fixed, locked box or place in a church wall in which the Eucharist is 'reserved' or stored. The Eucharist is in the form of a communion host or wafer inside a lidded chalice and surrounded by a curtain.

Transubstantiation – the belief that the Eucharist (bread and wine) become the body and blood of Christ at the moment of consecration – in substance but not in form.

The Vatican – where the Pope lives and works in Rome.

Vestments – clothes that deacons, priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals and the Pope wear in church.

Examples of how to use some of these terms in person and in writing when promoting Bible Society, its resources and in fundraising are:

Bible Society phrase:	<i>Dear Church Leader</i>
Catholic phrase:	<i>Dear Father</i>
Bible Society phrase:	<i>In your church/community/house group/fellowship</i>
Catholic phrase:	<i>In your parish</i>
Bible Society phrase:	<i>Our mission is to make the Bible more available</i>
Catholic phrase:	<i>Our mission is to make the Scriptures more available</i>
Bible Society phrase:	<i>Attending/speaking at a service/prayer meeting/gathering</i>
Catholic phrase:	<i>When attending/speaking at Mass</i>

Useful Resources and Websites

Starting Off



Websites

God who Speaks

godwhospeaks.uk

Word on the Go: the Bible for Busy Catholics

wordonthego.org

Catholic Social Teaching

catholicsocialteaching.org.uk/principles

Directory of all Catholic dioceses, churches and organisations in the UK

directory.cbcew.org.uk

Catholic Bishops' Conference in England & Wales

cbcew.org.uk

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

ctbi.org.uk

Catechism of the Catholic Church

vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM



Resources and books

The Gift of Scripture – on the Beauty of the Bible (2005)

A short resource on the Scriptures by the Bishops of England, Wales and Scotland.

liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Scripture/GoS.pdf

Signs of Life: Forty Catholic Customs and their Biblical Roots by Scott Hahn

Darton, Longmand & Todd

How to Survive being Married to a Catholic: A Frank and Honest Guide to Catholic Attitudes, Beliefs and Practices by Rosemary Gallagher and Michael Henesy

amazon.co.uk/How-Survive-Being-Married-Catholic/dp/0852310897

Verbum Domini – on the Word of God (2010)

This is the most recent papal document on the Bible.

w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20100930_verbum-domini.html

Going Deeper

Websites

Catechism of the Catholic Church

vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM

The Vatican

w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html

The **Second Vatican Council**, known as **Vatican II**, held 1962-65 was the most recent Ecumenical Council of the Catholic Church and addressed relations between the Catholic Church and the modern world.

Vatican II's most significant debate and teachings on the Bible was **Dei Verbum: Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation**

vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html

Christian unity and the norms of ecumenism

www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_25031993_principles-and-norms-on-ecumenism_en.html

Apostolic, Dogmatic or Pastoral Constitutions and Exhortations are authoritative papal documents addressed to the public on matters of the church, such as the promulgation of laws or definitive teachings and the development of teaching concerning the Catholic faith and other issues.

Recent Apostolic Exhortations

Amoris laetitia – on Love in the Family (19 March 2016)

w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia_en.pdf

Evangelii Gaudium – on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World (24 November 2013)

w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html

Encyclicals are letters used for significant issues and second in importance only to the highest-ranking document now issued by a pope called an Apostolic Constitution.

Recent Encyclicals, Apostolic Letters and Addresses

Scripturae Sacrae Affectus (2020)

Apostolic Letter on the 1,600 anniversary of the death of St Jerome.

www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20200930_scripturae-sacrae-affectus.html

Aperuit Illis (2019)

Apostolic Letter (Motu Proprio) instituting the 'Sunday of the Word of God'.

www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20190930_aperuit-illis.html

Laudato si – on Care for our Common Home (24 May 2015)

w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

Lumen Fidei – on the Light of Faith in the Lay Faithful (29 June 2013)

w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20130629_enciclica-lumen-fidei.html

Address to the Church Relations Committee of the United Bible Societies (2017)

w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2017/october/documents/papa-francesco_20171005_unitedbible-societies-relationscommittee.html

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We are servants of the word of salvation. We are servants of the word of eternal life. We are servants of the word of reconciliation. We are servants of the word that 'went out' from God and 'was made flesh'. We are servants of the word of truth. We are servants of the powerful word of God.¹⁶

Pope Francis

¹⁶ *Address to the Delegation of the Church Relations Committee of the United Bible Societies in October 2017.*

Full address: w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2017/october/documents/papa-francesco_20171005_unitedbible-societies-relationscommittee.html





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