

**Catholic Discipleship**  
Unit 5: Revelation

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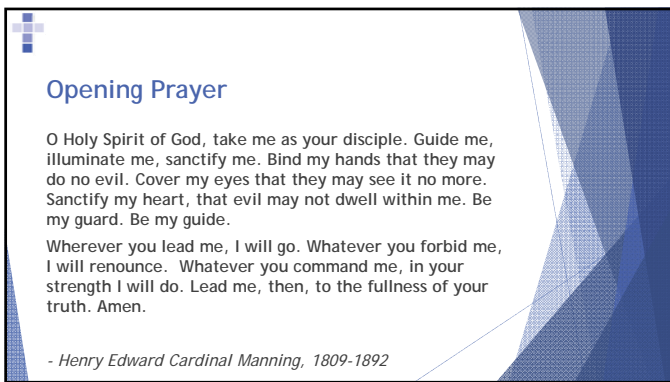
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**Opening Prayer**

O Holy Spirit of God, take me as your disciple. Guide me, illuminate me, sanctify me. Bind my hands that they may do no evil. Cover my eyes that they may see it no more. Sanctify my heart, that evil may not dwell within me. Be my guard. Be my guide.

Wherever you lead me, I will go. Whatever you forbid me, I will renounce. Whatever you command me, in your strength I will do. Lead me, then, to the fullness of your truth. Amen.

- Henry Edward Cardinal Manning, 1809-1892

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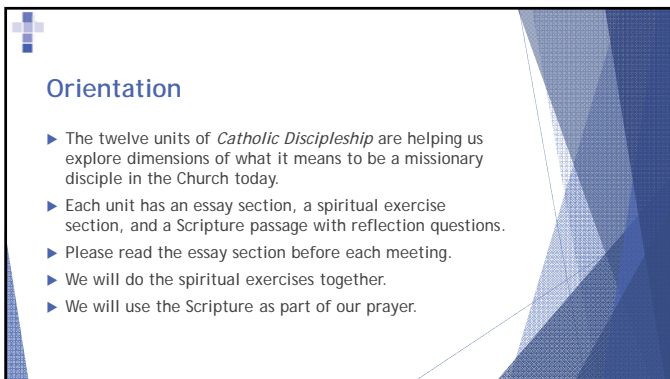
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**Orientation**

- ▶ The twelve units of *Catholic Discipleship* are helping us explore dimensions of what it means to be a missionary disciple in the Church today.
- ▶ Each unit has an essay section, a spiritual exercise section, and a Scripture passage with reflection questions.
- ▶ Please read the essay section before each meeting.
- ▶ We will do the spiritual exercises together.
- ▶ We will use the Scripture as part of our prayer.

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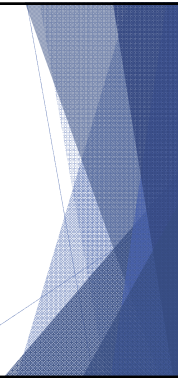
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### Objectives

- ▶ To review basic Catholic approaches to Revelation
- ▶ To examine various ways the Bible is misread
- ▶ To review the various kinds of literature employed in the Bible
- ▶ To become more acquainted with the outline of the Bible through looking at history
- ▶ To see the various ways the Bible has been used by the Church and how these ways can be useful for us today

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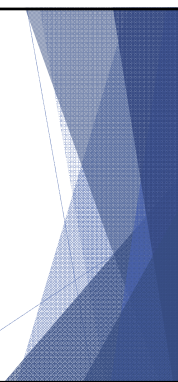
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### Quick Poll

How many of you have? *(Please raise your hands.)*

- Read from the Bible apart from what we heard in church last Sunday in the past two weeks
- Reflect on the Bible selections before Mass on Sunday
- Feel comfortable talking about the Bible with others
- Feel you can look up a passage in the Bible when given the reference
- Have been part of a Bible study group

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### Revelation

- ▶ Revelation, the process by which God communicates with humankind, is one unified whole.
- ▶ It begins with creation itself, for nature speaks of God's love and life.
- ▶ It expands with the emergence of religion, and takes on particular force with the revelation made through the Jewish people which began 3,500 years ago. (p. 30)

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**Revelation (continued)**

- ▶ This Jewish revelation was brought to completion with the revelation that was Jesus Christ, God's definitive Word spoken to humankind.
- ▶ The Jewish Scriptures contain a record of God's revelation through Jewish history; the Christian Scriptures contain a record of Jesus' revelation to his first followers, through the Holy Spirit. Together, these compose the Christian and Catholic Bible. (p. 30)

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**Fear**

**Are Catholics afraid of the Bible?**

Two perspectives:

- ❖ Catholics have never gotten used to the Bible and are very uncomfortable talking about it.
- ❖ Catholics, in fact, have become very comfortable with Bible passages and, if they go to Mass regularly, are mostly familiar with important passages.

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**Misreading the Bible**

- ▶ The Bible is not primarily a history book, although it has historical matter. History doesn't come in scientific form in the Bible.
- ▶ The Bible is not a science book describing chemistry or physics.
- ▶ The Bible is not a sociology or psychology book, although it has observations about human interactions and human motives.
- ▶ The truth of the Bible is how it reveals God's relationship with us, our relationship with God, and our relationship with each other because of God.

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**Tools for Revelation**

God inspires the Jewish people to use the words and categories of their culture and experience to reveal the truth about God's relationship to humankind.

- ▶ Poetry
- ▶ Legend
- ▶ Song
- ▶ Ritual
- ▶ Wisdom Sayings
- ▶ Traditions

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**Two Steps**

- ▶ The Hebrew Scriptures cover almost two thousand years of experience. Written material would not have started until there was a stable kingship, about 1,000 BC. Final editing would not have taken place for parts of the Hebrew Scriptures until a few hundred years before Christ.
- ▶ The Christian Scriptures cover only 100 years of experience, capturing the first reception of Jesus' message and the first two generations of Christians. Writing would have started soon after Jesus' Resurrection (around 34 AD) and continued for 90-100 years.

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**Two Realizations**

- ▶ The Bible is composed by many "pens"—many humans inspired over centuries, using a variety of types of literature to communicate God's revelation. This is also true of the New Testament, which contains songs, parables, poetic imagery, and carefully crafted narratives.
- ▶ The Bible has, in fact, had many uses in Christian history, and these different uses can help us approach the Bible from several different angles for our own spiritual growth. *(See next slide.)*

**We cannot read the Bible the way we read any other book!**

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### Uses of Scripture

USE	Meaning	Application
Calling	The Scriptures have played a decisive role in calling people to conversion.	How do I let the Scriptures call me to change?
Initiation	The Scriptures develop our deeper connection with God.	How do I let the Scriptures transform me over time?
Study	The Scriptures help us integrate our human knowledge with faith.	How do I commit myself to studying the Bible?
Liturgy	The Scriptures provide the primary language for our worship.	How do I pray with and through the Bible?
Theology	The Scriptures lead us to questions and deeper intellectual understanding.	How do I use the Scriptures to help me come to a deeper intellectual understanding of my life and world?

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### Spiritual Exercise (p. 34) Scripture—John 1:1-3

In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.  
He was in the beginning with God.  
All things came to be through him,  
and without him nothing came to be.  
What came to be through him was life,  
and this life was the light of the human race;  
the light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness has not overcome it.

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### Conclusion

- ▶ Thank you for coming and participating.
- ▶ Please think of bringing a friend along next week.
- ▶ Remember to bring your Bible the next two weeks. If you need help getting a Bible, see me after our session.
- ▶ We invite you to spend some time in hospitality after our session.
- ▶ Please stand and recite together the Catholic Discipleship prayer and the Lord's Prayer.

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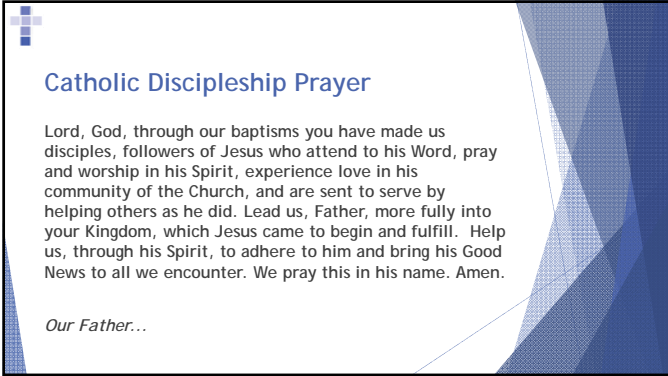
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### Catholic Discipleship Prayer

Lord, God, through our baptisms you have made us disciples, followers of Jesus who attend to his Word, pray and worship in his Spirit, experience love in his community of the Church, and are sent to serve by helping others as he did. Lead us, Father, more fully into your Kingdom, which Jesus came to begin and fulfill. Help us, through his Spirit, to adhere to him and bring his Good News to all we encounter. We pray this in his name. Amen.

*Our Father...*

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