

A

Access

Use the Bible Regularly

Many young people don't know how to use their Bible. They may have heard Bible stories, and maybe they were given a Bible as a gift. But they might not know how to discover the depth and richness it contains.

The most critical step for achieving the access goal is simply having young people use the Bible.

So, the first tip is to have age-appropriate, complete Bibles in every classroom and to have the young people use them regularly! "Easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful" (*Dei Verbum*, no. 22)

Access isn't just having Bibles in your classroom, it is also which Bibles you have. Our testing confirms that a visually rich Bible, designed for a young person's reading level, draws them in the best.

B

Big Picture

Introduce Key People and Events

There's a reason the *Catechism* essentially begins with an overview of salvation history (nos. 290–682). Much of Catholic theology is rooted in this overarching story of God's saving work. **Understanding how each biblical story fits into this bigger history is the mark of true biblical literacy.**

You can help young people develop this knowledge by regularly exposing them to people and events in Scripture.

So, our second tip is to have an intentional plan for reading about these key people and events, starting in elementary school and all the way through the middle and high school years. Young people's understanding of salvation history will deepen as they discover these people and grow to love their stories.

C

Context

Help Them Interpret the Bible

While it is not always appropriate to introduce young people to the nuances of biblical interpretation, we can help them explore the principles.

The most basic of those principles comes from the Vatican II document *Dei Verbum (The Word of God)*. It says, "the interpreter of Sacred Scripture, ... should carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended, and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words" (no. 12).

So, our third tip is to raise two simple questions to get at this process of interpretation:

1. Who and what is this Bible story about?
2. What is God teaching us through this story?

Asking these questions plants the seed that a human author wrote the Bible's stories and that God is speaking to us through their words.



(The quotation by Pope Paul VI is from *Dei Verbum* [November 18, 1965], number 22, at www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html. Copyright © LEV.)

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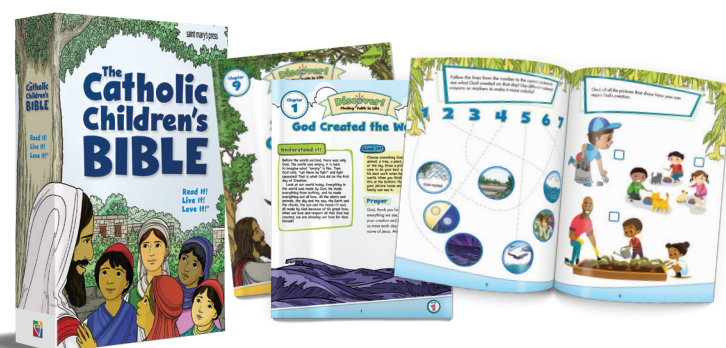
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The ABCs of Biblical Literacy



Access

Help young people feel confident in knowing how to use the Bible



Big Picture

Introduce key people and events, and help young people understand how each story fits into salvation history



Context

Help young people explore Scripture by asking: Who and what is the story about? What is God teaching us through it?

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