

Vocabulary for Unit 1: Defined

Bible: Refers to the collection of Jewish and Christian writings that are considered inspired and normative for belief. The writings record the events of salvation history and tell the story of the loving relationship between God and humankind.

biblical interpretation: This kind of Scripture study looks at not only what the human authors intended to say but also what God reveals to humans through their words.

canon of Scripture: Official list of the books of the Bible regarded as sacred because they are inspired. The Catholic Bible contains forty-six books in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament. Other Bibles contain a different selection of books in the Old and New Testaments.

genre: A category of literature, art, or music. Genres in the Scriptures include prose, poetry, myth, law codes, historical narratives, teaching narratives, parables, and miracle stories.

historical context: Conditions of the time and culture in which the Scriptures were written.

inspiration: The guidance of the Holy Spirit in the development of the Scriptures, whereby the Spirit guided the human authors and editors to teach without error those truths of God that are necessary for salvation. The Spirit also inspired the early Church in selecting which books would be included in the Bible.

Pentateuch: This word is a name given to the Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

revelation: This is God's self-communication and disclosure of the divine plan to humankind through creation, events, persons, and, most fully, in Jesus Christ.

salvation history: The pattern of events in human history that exemplify God's presence and saving actions. In Catholic thought, all of history is salvation history, even though God's presence may not be recognized.

Scriptures: In general this is the term for any sacred writing. For Christians it refers to the Old and New Testaments that make up the Bible and are recognized as the word of God.

testament: Another word for *covenant*, a solemn vow and contract in which God is witness. A binding oath that usually calls for a commitment to a new way of life. The two divisions of the Bible are also referred to as testaments. The Old Testament focuses on the original covenant relationship between the people of Israel and God. The New Testament focuses on the New Covenant that God made with the whole human race through Jesus Christ.

Torah: See *Pentateuch*.

