

# Knowing God: Reason and Revelation

## Core Activity

### Scripture and Tradition

1. Invite your class to read the section “Scripture and Tradition,” on pages 26–27 of *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, Third Edition (CFH)*. Then open the class for discussion or questions. You may use questions such as these to start a discussion:

- What do you see as the connection between Scripture and Tradition?
- What Church teachings can you easily see are rooted in Scripture?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in the revelation of Scripture and Tradition?



2. Explain to the students that in this activity they are going to look at the interwoven nature of Scripture and Tradition in the Church. Divide the students into six small groups of equal size, and give each group a copy of the handout “Scripture and Tradition” (Document #: TX003172)

3. Assign each small group one of the Church traditions listed on the handout. Issue the following instructions in your own words:

- Each group is to look up the Scripture verses listed under its assigned tradition, and determine if there is a connection revealing the roots of that tradition. You will be asked to explain how a verse is connected if you believe it is. Once you have looked up all the verses listed for your assigned tradition, search for additional scriptural connections using a Bible concordance, such as the *Saint Mary’s Press® Essential Bible Concordance: New Revised Standard Version*, edited by Brian Singer-Towns (Winona, MN: Saint Mary’s Press, 2004).

4. Give the groups enough time to complete their tasks. Then bring the class back together and invite the small groups to share two or three of the scriptural connections they found.

5. Conclude by explaining and elaborating on the following point from the *CFH*:

- “We speak of Scripture and Tradition as two modes of Revelation, but they are closely connected and together form a single sacred Deposit of Faith given to the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They can never be in conflict, and each one helps us to understand the other” (p. 26).

---

## Core Activity Extension

### Vatican Council II Connection

Assign one of the following selections from the documents of Vatican Council II:

- *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium, 1964)*, section 8.
- *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum, 1965)*, section 2.

Ask the students to read and reflect on their assigned selections. As part of the reflection, have them look up the scriptural footnotes for their sections.

---

## Additional Activities

### God Revealed in the Parables

1. Divide your students into groups of three. Provide each group with a sheet of poster board, markers, and a Bible.

2. Assign each group a parable from the Gospel of Mark. Ask the groups to read their assigned parables, decide together what Jesus is trying to teach in it, and create a poster illustrating the point of the parable. Allow about 10 minutes for this task.

3. When the groups have all completed their posters, invite them to come forward, one group at a time, and share their parables and explain their creations. Hang the posters for all to see.

4. After all the groups have presented their posters, ask the class questions like the ones that follow, for discussion:

- How do these parables reveal an understanding of God?
- Why is it sometimes hard to understand the parables?
- How might these parables be applied to our culture? How do they reveal God for us today?

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

### Bibles, Bibles, Everywhere

A wide variety of translations of the Bible exist. Ask your students to research what translations are used by the Catholic Church and why. Also have your students look up and read portions of the deuterocanonical books of the Old Testament (Tobit, Judith, First and Second Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, and Baruch). (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

## A Favorite Scripture Passage

Ask your students each to identify and look up their favorite Scripture passage. You may need to help them find the specific verse in the Bible. This is a good opportunity to introduce them to a concordance. Once they have each found their favorite verse, ask them to reflect on what that verse reveals to them about God, how they are created, salvation, or other revelations it presents. Ask them to write a brief paper explaining the revelation. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

## The PRIMA Process

Have your students each use the PRIMA process, described in the Live It! article on page 25 of the *CFH*, with their favorite Scripture verse from the previous activity. Assign this as homework and have the students report on the experience, or lead the class through the process and follow up the last step with a class discussion or journal activity on the experience.

## Successors of the Apostles

The *CFH*, on page 26, references the unique nature of bishops as the successors of the Apostles. Obtain a copy of *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, volume 2, prepared by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), and have your students read the parts of the rite for the ordination of bishops. In particular have them read the first two paragraphs of the suggested homily. Discuss with your students where in the rite it is clear that bishops are the successors to the Apostles. Ask your students to find the scriptural roots of this tradition.

(The material labeled *CFH* is from *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, Third Edition*, by Brian Singer-Towns with Janet Claussen, Clare vanBrandwijk, and other contributors [Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2013]. Copyright © 2013 by Saint Mary's Press. All rights reserved.)

The material labeled *TC: Creed* is adapted from *Total Catechesis: Catechetical Sessions on the Creed*, by Maura Thompson Hagarty, Michael J. Hagarty, Marilyn Kielbasa, and Barbara Murray, in the Total Catechesis series [Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2004]. Copyright © 2004 by Saint Mary's Press. All rights reserved.)