



LESSON THREE

God Reveals Himself to Us

Opening Prayer

*Heavenly Father,
You are not a distant God.
You are a Father who comes close.
You reveal yourself not just in words
but in love, in history, and in our hearts.*

*Even so, we sometimes struggle to trust you.
So today we bring you this humble question
from the deepest part of our hearts:
Can we really trust you?*

*Open our hearts today to the ways you have revealed yourself:
in Scripture, in Tradition, in the life of the Church,
and in our quiet moments of prayer.
We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Living Word.*

Amen.

Lesson Objectives:

- ❖ Understand what Divine Revelation is and how God makes himself known to us through it.
- ❖ Explain the roles of Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition as the two streams of Divine Revelation.
- ❖ Recognize the Magisterium as the Church's teaching authority, which faithfully interprets Scripture and Tradition.
- ❖ Begin praying with Scripture.

BURNING QUESTIONS

- ❖ Not everything about God can be known by looking at creation—so how can I trust that what the Church teaches is true?

Why should we trust the Church's interpretation of God's revelation?

- ❖ How do we know that the Bible is true?

What leads Catholics to believe the Bible contains God's revelation?

St. Jerome

Feast Day: September 30

AD 347–420 · Stridon, Western Balkan Peninsula · Patron of Biblical scholars, Translators, Librarians

Jerome was a brilliant intellectual who initially pursued worldly success, only to find himself deeply unsatisfied. This restlessness led him to Scripture and a profound conversion. He studied Hebrew with Jewish scholars in the desert and later, charged by Pope Damasus, labored for over twenty years to translate the Bible into Latin. His translation, called the Vulgate, remains the Church's official Bible. Sharp-tongued and difficult, he was nonetheless driven by a burning love for Christ and a desire that every person encounter God in his Word.



“Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.”

St. Jerome

The God Who Draws Near

Divine Revelation: God's Initiative

We can come to know God through reason, but only to a point. To truly know him, we need God to disclose himself, just as in any friendship. Divine Revelation is God's act of making himself known to us. It is his initiative, not ours climbing to reach him. He speaks to the heart, calling us into friendship and communion.

God's Revelation Is Gradual

God does not reveal himself all at once; such an act would overwhelm us. Like a wise and patient teacher, he knows what we can receive and when. He speaks progressively and in stages, unfolding the mystery of who he is over time. This divine approach is often called the pedagogy of God.

“You will seek me and find me; when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you, says the Lord.”

Jeremiah 29:13–14

Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition

Scripture: The Word of God in Writing

Sacred Scripture is the Word of God, entrusted to human authors who wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and it's codified in the Old and New Testaments. "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

Tradition: What the Apostles Handed On

Sacred Tradition is everything the apostles received from Christ and handed on, not just in writing but through their preaching, example, and the institutions they established. Scripture and Tradition are not competing sources; together they form one deposit of Divine Revelation.

"Stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter."

2 Thessalonians 2:15

The Magisterium

The Church's Teaching Authority

The Magisterium — the teaching office of the Church, made up of the pope and bishops in union with him — faithfully interprets Scripture and Tradition under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Without the Church, there would be no Christian canon of Scripture.

Why Does This Matter?

God is not silent; he wants his message known. He is the one who guarantees that his message will reach us, through Sacred Scripture, Tradition, the Magisterium of the Church, and the quiet promptings of our hearts. Together they ensure that God's revelation reaches us accurately, generation after generation. The question is not whether God is speaking, but whether we are listening.

“And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, to know him who is true.”

1 John 5:20



Discussion Questions

- ❖ What concerns do you have about the biblical basis for what we believe? Does the concept of a “chain of custody” for God’s Word help?
- ❖ Catholics understand Scripture and Tradition as complementary rather than competing sources. How does this challenge or confirm your previous understanding?
- ❖ How do you wrestle with questions of religious authority? What attracts you to or concerns you about the Church having a teaching office?

Faith and Fun

How many books are there in the whole Bible? How many are in the Old Testament, and how many in the New?

a. 66 books total

b. 73 books total

c. 80 books total

d. 70 books total

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The Catholic Bible has 73 books (46 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New). Protestant Bibles have 66, having removed 7 Old Testament books during the Reformation. The Catholic Church compiled the biblical canon; without her, there would be no agreed list of inspired books.

THE BIBLE

Not an Ordinary Book

The Bible conveys the Word of God, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The books of the Old Testament. Throughout the books are connections, foreshadowing and fulfillment, that could only be conveyed by so many human writers because God was guiding the story. Together, the books tell a unified story of God’s love, promises, and saving plan for humanity.

Finding a Passage in the Bible

Every book of the Bible is divided into chapters and verses to make it easier to find specific passages. A Scripture reference usually looks like this: John 3:16, where “John” is the name of the book. The number before the colon (3) is the chapter number, and the number after the colon (16) is the verse number.

Living It Out:

Begin reading the Bible daily by looking at the daily readings of the Mass, either on in the USCCB website or the Ascension app.

Joel Joel.....	1145	Song of
John Jn.....	1314	1 Thess:
1 John 1 Jn.....	1486	2 Thess:
2 John 2 Jn.....	1490	1 Timot
3 John 3 Jn.....	1491	2 Timot
Jonah Ion.....	1161	Titus

Nicodemus Visits Jesus

3 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ²This man came to Jesus^d by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a

man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believe him may have eternal life.”^h

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Closing Prayer

“And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, to know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”

1 John 5:20

Announcements / Reminders — add notes here