Understanding the Scriptures

Student Workbook

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Chapter 1: What is the Bible?

1. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ is transmitted through ____________ and ____________ as one common source.

WHAT CATHOLICS BELIEVE ABOUT THE BIBLE

2. When we say the Scriptures are inspired by the Holy Spirit, what does this mean? Is this to say that the sacred writers were simply taking dictation from the Holy Spirit? Explain.

3. What does it mean when we say that the Bible is inerrant?

4. How does Tradition maintain the integrity of the Bible?

5. On page 8 of the text, there are a number of citations from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. These citations mention “the Magisterium” many times. What is “the Magisterium”? (If you do not know, check the vocabulary section on p. 20 of the text.)
6. Who makes up the Magisterium?

7. When we say the pope is infallible, does this mean that he never makes a mistake? What does it mean?

8. St. Jerome was a great biblical scholar who lived in the fourth and the beginning of the fifth centuries. One of his sayings is often quoted: “Ignorance of ________ is ignorance of ________.”

HOW THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN

9. The nature of the Bible is like the nature of Jesus in that both are ________ and ________.

10. The people who wrote the Bible did not have the same understanding of geology, paleontology, and astronomy that we have. How can we say, then, that everything in the Bible is true?

THE BIBLE IS SACRED LITERATURE

11. The text states that we must understand the Bible as literature. What does this say, for example, about using the Bible to prove or disprove the existence of the dinosaurs? (Hint: What were the original writers of the Bible thinking when they wrote the ancient texts? Did they know anything about dinosaurs?)
Chapter 1: What is the Bible?

12. When we speak of the Bible as literature, we mean the way it was written. List some of the kinds of literature that we find in the Bible:

THE BIBLE IS RELIGIOUS

13. At times it might appear there are differences between what the Bible says and what modern science proposes. Is there any real conflict here?

14. Why can true religion not be spoken of or described as a purely personal experience?

15. Religion comes from a Latin word which means ________________.

16. Explain the impossibility of writing an objective history.

17. Why is Bible history unbiased even though the facts and dates in the Bible do not always agree with the same data collected by other sources?
WHAT “SALVATION HISTORY” IS

18. How is a covenant different from a contract?

19. What is the purpose of the covenants which God made with man throughout history?

20. On page 15 there is a diagram of the six covenants we find in the Bible as Salvation History unfolds. When will the Seventh Covenant occur, and how long will it last?

THE CHURCH WILL BE OUR GUIDE

21. The name of the translation of the Old Testament (Hebrew and some Greek) and the New Testament (Greek) into Latin that was done by St. Jerome is called ________________.

22. When we speak of the “Canon of Scripture,” we are describing the books that officially make up the Bible. The word “canon” comes from a Greek word that means ________________.
HOW THE CANON CAME TO BE

23. Just like today, the liturgy or worship of the ancient Christians consisted of two parts. What are they?
   a. 
   b. 

24. The word “deuterocanonical” also comes from a Greek word. What does it mean?

25. What role do the deuterocanonical books of the Bible play in Catholic teaching?

26. List two examples of Catholic teachings that come from the deuterocanonical books.
   a. 
   b. 

27. The translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek by a team of seventy-two Jewish scholars from 285 to 246 BC is called the ________________.
VOCABULARY

Match the following words to their definitions. You should be able to do this with your book closed.

- Bible/Scripture
- Church
- Infallible
- Protestant
- Canon
- Covenant
- Inspired
- Salvation History
- Catholic
- Inerrant
- Magisterium
- Tradition

A. Making no mistakes or errors.
B. The list of inspired books.
C. A Christian not in communion with the Catholic Church.
D. Universal; describing either the Church or one of her members.
E. The collection of all the canonical books.
F. The teaching authority of the Church, which aided by the Holy Spirit, interprets Scripture and Tradition.
G. The living transmission of the message of the Gospel in the Church.
H. Guided by God.
I. The faithful.
J. Incapable of error.
K. The story of God’s plan to save us from the consequences of sin.
L. An agreement that establishes a sacred family bond between persons.
Chapter 2: The Old Testament

1. Why must Christians study the Old Testament?

THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

2. What are the four main types of writing we find in the Old Testament?
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 

THE LAW

3. The books of the Law are called ________________ in Hebrew.

4. Traditionally, ________________ is considered to be the author of the five books of the Law, so they are sometimes called the ____________________.

5. The books of the Law are also called the ________________, which comes from a Greek word that means ________________.