



Scripture Chapters

Grade One

Old Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE	BIBLE BACKGROUND	UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD
Chapter 18	EXODUS 15:22, 24; 16:2-4, 13-16 MOSES LEADS GOD'S PEOPLE	God chooses people to lead his people. Long ago, God chose Moses to be a leader of God's people. Moses listened to God and took care of God's people.	The story of Moses in the Bible shows that God always takes care of his people. We are God's people. God takes care of us because he loves us.

New Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE	BIBLE BACKGROUND	UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD
CHAPTER 4	LUKE 1:28, 31, 35, 38 MARY IS THE MOTHER OF GOD	The Bible is God's very own word to us. The Bible is the Word of God.	In the story of the Annunciation, Mary listened and trusted God. God asks us to trust and believe in him.
CHAPTER 6	LUKE 10:30, 33-35 THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN	The Bible has two main parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The New Testament has many stories that tell us about Jesus teaching us how to live as his followers.	God tells us that we are to love and care for everybody. The Parable of the Good Samaritan teaches us to be good neighbors to one another.
CHAPTER 9	ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 2:42, 45-47 THE FIRST CHRISTIANS FOLLOW JESUS	Our Church family shares stories. Many stories about the first Christians are written down in the New Testament. These stories help us to learn what the first Christians did and how we are to live as followers of Jesus today.	The first Christians showed their love for God: they prayed together, they celebrated the Eucharist, and they gave thanks to God. The first Christians showed their love for one another: they shared what they had with one another and they helped people in need.
CHAPTER 12	MATTHEW 28:19-20 COME, FOLLOW JESUS	Jesus told everyone the good news of God's love. The followers of Jesus shared the good news about Jesus with others. The word <i>gospel</i> means "good news."	After Jesus' return to his Father, the disciples told everyone about Jesus. People who believed in Jesus were baptized. Those who were baptized came to be known as Christians because they were followers of Jesus Christ.
CHAPTER 14	MATTHEW 14:15-16, 19-20 JESUS FEEDS A CROWD	Bread and fish were important foods for the people who lived in Jesus' times. Some of Jesus' followers lived near the Sea of Galilee and were fisherman.	The story of Jesus sharing the bread and the fish tells about a miracle. A miracle is a sign of God's love. This story shows how Jesus shared God's love with people. Jesus took care of people and asks us to take care of one another.

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
CHAPTER 22	MARK 10:13–14, 16 JESUS AND THE CHILDREN

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Jesus taught that God loves everyone. Jesus treated everyone as a child of God.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Jesus taught that all children are special to God. We treat all people as God's children. We trust and love God with our whole heart.

CHAPTER 24	MATTHEW 6:7 JESUS TAUGHT HIS FOLLOWERS TO PRAY
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BIBLE BACKGROUND

Jesus prayed for himself and for other people. Jesus prayed with his disciples and neighbors.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

When we pray, we show God that we trust him. We trust that God listens to us and answers our prayers. God answers our prayers in a way that is best for us and for others.

CHAPTER 26	MATTHEW 6:9–13 JESUS TEACHES US THE OUR FATHER
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BIBLE BACKGROUND

Jesus prayed often. He talked to God about everything. He listened to God. The followers of Jesus wanted to learn to pray as Jesus prayed.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

When we pray the Our Father, we show God our trust in him and we honor him. We ask God to help us live as his children. We ask for forgiveness. We tell God we forgive those who have hurt us. We ask to live with him forever in heaven.

Grade Two

Old Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
Chapter 4	PSALM 148:2–3, 9–13 PRAISING GOD

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Book of Psalms is found in the Old Testament. There are 150 psalms in this book of the Bible. Psalms are songs of prayer. Some of the psalms are prayers of praise. They honor God for his great love and kindness.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

There are many kinds of psalms. Some psalms, such as Psalm 148, help people to praise God for everything he does for them.

Chapter 21	PROVERBS 3:5–6, 13:1 PROVERBS
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BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible has many sayings that help us make wise choices to live as children of God. In the Old Testament many of these sayings are collected in the Books of Proverbs. A proverb is a short saying about life that helps us make good choices.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Proverbs guide us in living the Great Commandment. They help us make good choices to love God, and to love other people and ourselves.

New Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
CHAPTER 6	MATTHEW 3:2–3, 5–6 AND JOHN 1:29, 34 JOHN THE BAPTIST

BIBLE BACKGROUND

There are stories in the Bible about people who helped others get ready for Jesus. John the Baptist was one of those people. John was the son of Elizabeth and Zechariah.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The people listened to John the Baptist and began to prepare to welcome Jesus. We prepare for Jesus by listening to God's Word and by praying. We prepare for Jesus by trying to live as God's children.

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE	BIBLE BACKGROUND	UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD
CHAPTER 8	LUKE 24:15–16, 28–31 THE TRAVELER ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS	The Church shares the faith stories that the Apostles and the first Christians told about Jesus. These stories are found in the four Gospels, the first four books of the New Testament. The word <i>gospel</i> means “good news.” The most important New Testament stories are the Gospel stories of the suffering, death and Resurrection of Jesus.	The two disciples recognized the Risen Lord when he broke bread and shared it with them. The early Christians used the words “the breaking of the bread” for the Eucharist. Jesus is with us in a most special way when we celebrate the Eucharist. The bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus. We receive Jesus in Holy Communion. Bible stories about breaking and sharing bread remind us that God is always with his people.
CHAPTER 13	LUKE 15:12–13, 16–18, 20–24 THE FORGIVING FATHER	BIBLE BACKGROUND Jesus’ disciples called him “Teacher.” Jesus sometimes taught his disciples by using parables. A parable compares one thing a teacher’s listeners know well to help them understand the main point of the story. The parables help us to know and love God better.	UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD In the parable of the Forgiving Father, Jesus taught about God’s mercy and love. God is a loving and forgiving Father. Sometimes we choose to make wrong choices. When we realize what we have done is wrong and are sorry, we can ask God for forgiveness.
CHAPTER 16	LUKE 22:17–20 THE LAST SUPPER	BIBLE BACKGROUND Passover is a holy time of year for the Jewish people. During Passover, the Jewish people gather for a special meal. They thank God for everything God has done for them. Jesus ate this special meal with his disciples. Christians call the last time Jesus celebrated the Passover meal the Last Supper.	UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD Jesus gathered around a table with his disciples to celebrate the Last Supper. We gather around the altar to celebrate the Eucharist. At the Eucharist, through the words of the priest and the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. We receive the body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion.
CHAPTER 19	MATTHEW 22:37–40 THE GREAT COMMANDMENT	BIBLE BACKGROUND In Jesus’ time, people came to the Temple in Jerusalem to worship God. They met in the Temple courtyard to listen and to learn about God’s Law.	UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD There are two parts to the Great Commandment. First, we are to love God above all else. Second, we are to treat others as we like to be treated. We are to respect and honor all people.
CHAPTER 25	MATTHEW 6:9–13 JESUS TEACHES US TO PRAY	BIBLE BACKGROUND Jesus lived in Galilee and prayed in many places there. When he prayed, Jesus asked his Father what He wanted Jesus to do. He told his Father that he would do whatever the Father asked him. Jesus knew and trusted that his Father was always listening to his prayers.	UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD Jesus taught his disciples the Our Father. He taught his disciples that his Father was their Father, too. We also call the Our Father the Lord’s Prayer. The Lord’s Prayer is the prayer of the whole Church.

Grade Three

Old Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS

Chapter 4

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

ESTHER C:14, 25
WOMEN OF FAITH

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Old Testament tells us about women who believed in God's love for them. They had great faith and trust in God. Some of these women are Sarah, Hannah, Ruth, and Naomi. These women were models of faith for Mary and the Jewish people. They are models of faith for us, too.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Mary listened to the stories of her people. Listening to the stories of the faith-filled women helped Mary become a woman of faith. Christians today prayerfully listen to the stories of the Old Testament and the New Testament. Listening to the stories of the faith-filled women helps us to grow in faith and trust in God.

CHAPTER 21

PSALM 104:1,
10–12, 24, 31, 33
THE PSALMS AND
STEWARDSHIP

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Jewish people wrote sacred songs called psalms. The Jewish people prayed these songs. Jesus learned the Psalms and prayed them all his life. Today Christians still pray the Psalms every day. Lament psalms praise God and tell him about our needs. Wisdom psalms give practical advice about how we can live as God's children. We also pray the Psalms to thank God for the gifts of creation.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Psalms 104 reminds us that God cares for all creation. We give glory to God both when we pray and when we take care of creation. When we care for God's creation and use it well, we are good stewards. Good stewards live the Seventh Commandment. They do not waste or misuse the gifts of creation. They share the beauty and goodness of creation with everyone.

New Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 7

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES
2:1–4, 12, 41
THE HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Jesus made a special promise to his disciples at the Last Supper that God would send the Spirit to help them remember all that Jesus had taught them. After Jesus returned to his Father in heaven, the disciples waited for the coming of the Spirit promised by Jesus.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Fifty days after Jesus was raised from the dead, while the disciples were in Jerusalem on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to them as Jesus promised. The Holy Spirit helps us know, love, and serve God and our neighbor. The Holy Spirit is the Advocate, Helper, and Guide who is always with us.

**SCRIPTURE
CHAPTERS**

**SCRIPTURE
PASSAGE**

BIBLE BACKGROUND

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

CHAPTER 9 ACTS OF THE APOSTLES
9:3-6, 8, 17-18
PAUL THE APOSTLE

Saul was a Pharisee who loved and followed the law of Moses. Saul believed that the followers of Jesus were speaking against the Law of Moses. Paul went to Damascus, where Jesus' followers were preaching, to arrest them and bring them back to Jerusalem.

Saul became a believer in Jesus and became known as Paul. This is called the conversion of Saul. In Jerusalem Saul did not believe in Jesus. On the road to Damascus, Jesus invited Paul to come out of the darkness and see with the eyes of faith.

CHAPTER 14 LUKE 18:10-11, 13
THE PHARISEE AND
THE TAX COLLECTOR

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Jesus told stories called parables to teach people. In these stories, Jesus included people and places his listeners knew. Pharisees were some of the people who listened to Jesus. Pharisees were Jewish religious leaders. Some Pharisees believed they were better than other people. Tax collectors also listened to Jesus. Many Jewish people thought the tax collectors were sinners and they stayed away from them.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector teaches us that God wants people to be humble. The tax collector is humble, admits that he needs God's forgiveness, and begs for God's forgiveness. Jesus taught this parable to help us understand that every person needs God's forgiveness and mercy. All of us depend on God. God is the Creator. So we humbly thank God for his great goodness and mercy to us.

CHAPTER 16 JOHN 2:1-11
THE WEDDING FEAST
IN CANA

BIBLE BACKGROUND

In Jesus' time, a Jewish wedding took place in the evening, usually in the groom's home. The next day, the wedding party took place. For seven days the bridegroom and his family provided food and wine for all the guests. The bridegroom kept the wine used at the wedding in large stone, or pottery, jars.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Jesus performed a miracle when he changed the water into wine. A miracle is a sign of God's presence and power at work in our world. Through miracles, God invites us to believe and trust in him. Seeing the miracle of water changed into wine, Jesus' followers began to believe that he was sent by God. People came to have faith and trust in God because of the many miracles Jesus performed.

CHAPTER 18 MATTHEW 22:35-40
JESUS TEACHES
US HOW TO LOVE

BIBLE BACKGROUND

In the Bible we read that our first parents made a promise to God. They promised to obey God. Our first parents did not keep their promise. They sinned. This broken promise is called original sin. After their sin, God promised to send someone to make people and God friends again. This promise is called the Covenant. God kept his promise. He sent his Son, Jesus. Jesus made us friends with God again.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

We keep our promises to God when we live the Great Commandment. The Great Commandment has two parts. The first part is that we are to love God. The second part is that we are to love others as we love ourselves. We need to live both parts of the Great Commandment. We cannot only show our love for God through prayer and worship. We also need to show our love for God by the way we treat ourselves and other people. Jesus taught us that loving others includes loving our enemies.

**SCRIPTURE
CHAPTERS**
CHAPTER 26

**SCRIPTURE
PASSAGE**
LUKE 1:30,
41–42, 56
THE HAIL MARY

BIBLE BACKGROUND

God promised to send a savior to his people. This savior came to be called the Messiah. The Jewish people prayed for the coming of the Messiah. Like her people, Mary also waited and prayed. One day when she was praying, an angel told Mary that God had chosen her to be the mother of the Savior. We call this the Annunciation. Mary is the mother of Jesus. Jesus is the Savior and Messiah God promised to send.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

When we pray the Hail Mary, we honor Mary for her great faith. In the first part of the Hail Mary, we greet and honor Mary as Gabriel and Elizabeth did. The Church has added the second part of the prayer. In this part of Hail Mary, we ask Mary to help us live as followers of Jesus. We pray that Mary will greet us and welcome us to heaven.

Grade Four

Old Testament

**SCRIPTURE
CHAPTERS**

Chapter 3

**SCRIPTURE
PASSAGE**
1 SAMUEL 3:8–10
LISTENING TO GOD

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The two Old Testament Books of Samuel share memories about the role of Samuel in God's plan for his people. Samuel was one of the judges of Israel. When he was a young boy, Samuel's mother brought him to the shrine at Shiloh to serve God.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

God called Samuel by name, and Samuel listened. Later, God asked Samuel to lead his people as a judge of Israel. Samuel helped people to listen to God's Word and faithfully live the Covenant.

Chapter 5

ISAIAH 9:1, 5
THE PROMISE OF ISAIAH

BIBLE BACKGROUND

God's love for us is so great that he refused to let evil and suffering destroy his plan. God's plan was to send a savior who would free people from sin and suffering.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah described by the prophet Isaiah. The titles Isaiah gave to the Messiah helped Christians understand the identity of Jesus Christ and his work.

Chapter 20

EXODUS 19:9,
14–16, 20; 20:1
**LIVING GOD'S
COVENANT**

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Moses was a great leader of God's people. He led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt on a journey called the Exodus. During the Exodus, God made a covenant with the Israelites. God promised to be faithful and loyal to them forever. The Israelites promised to do everything God said.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The Ten Commandments are the basic laws that teach us how to love God, other people, and ourselves. The choices we make to live the Ten Commandments are signs of our faith and hope in God and our love for God.

New Testament

**SCRIPTURE
CHAPTERS**

CHAPTER 9

**SCRIPTURE
PASSAGE**
JOHN 10:11, 14–15
THE GOOD SHEPHERD

BIBLE BACKGROUND

One of the ways that God tells us about himself in the Bible is through stories about shepherds and their sheep. Some of the stories describe God as the Shepherd of his people.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Jesus Christ, our Savior, died for us. He is the Good Shepherd who sacrificed his life for us on the cross. We show we belong to Jesus the Good Shepherd when we listen to him and live the Corporal Works of Mercy.

CHAPTER 13

LUKE 9:11–13,
16–17
**JESUS FEEDS
THE PEOPLE**

BIBLE BACKGROUND

One very important bread story in the Old Testament is part of the Exodus story when God sent "bread from heaven" called manna to feed the Israelites. The manna was a sign of God's love for his people.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

In this Gospel story, Jesus, the Son of God, fed the people with bread. This story reminds us of the food that Jesus, the Bread of Life, gave the Church at the Last Supper. The Bible bread stories tell us that we can trust that God always cares for us. We call God's caring love for his people and all creation divine Providence.

Scripture Chapters

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS**SCRIPTURE PASSAGE****BIBLE BACKGROUND****UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD**

CHAPTER 15

LUKE 8:40–42,
49–50, 53–55
JESUS HEALS A
YOUNG GIRL

God created us to be happy with him and one another here on earth and forever in heaven. God's plan of creation did not include sickness and suffering. People who trust in God's great love for them reach out to him in prayer during times of suffering.

We too trust and believe in Jesus as Jairus did. The Holy Spirit invites us to reach out to Jesus when we are sick or suffering. We pray for ourselves and for others who are sick or suffering. We trust that we are never alone in our suffering.

CHAPTER 26

LUKE 11:2–4
LORD, TEACH US
TO PRAY**BIBLE BACKGROUND**

Jesus' disciples honored him with the title of Rabbi, or Teacher. They listened to and trusted him. They came to believe that Jesus was the One sent by God to be the Messiah. He was the One who fulfilled the Law and everything God had promised to his people.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

When we pray the Our Father, we are praying as Jesus taught us. We tell God he is the center of our lives. The Our Father is the prayer of all Christians. Its words teach us both how to pray and how to live as a disciple of Jesus.

Grade Five

New Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS**SCRIPTURE PASSAGE****BIBLE BACKGROUND****UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD**

Chapter 4

MARK 4:37–41
THE CALMING
OF THE SEA

The Sea of Galilee is really an enormous lake. Without warning, storms often rise up and rage over the Galilee. Many of the disciples of Jesus were fisherman who lived in Galilee. Jesus used examples from the daily lives of his disciples to help them grow in faith and trust in God.

The storm in this story symbolizes all the frightening storms in our lives. The Gospel story tells us we are not alone during those moments. God, who loves and cares for us, is always with us.

Chapter 8

JOHN 16:5–7
THE PROMISE
OF A HELPER**BIBLE BACKGROUND**

John's Gospel is the fourth Gospel in the New Testament. It was written toward the end of the first century when Christians were being persecuted and martyred, or put to death, because of their faith in Jesus Christ.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The Holy Spirit is the Advocate whom Jesus promised would come. An advocate is someone who speaks up for someone. The Holy Spirit is always with us and at work in the Church.

Chapter 13

ACTS OF
THE APOSTLES
2:36–38, 41
PENTECOST**BIBLE BACKGROUND**

One of the most important celebrations for Jewish people was the Festival of Weeks. During the preparation for this celebration, the disciples gathered with Mary, the Mother of Jesus in an upper room of a home in Jerusalem. On Pentecost, the fiftieth day after Passover, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples as Jesus had promised.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

This story describes Saint Peter the Apostle beginning the work of making disciples of all nations and baptizing them as Jesus commanded the disciples to do. The Church today continues the same work Saint Peter began on that Pentecost. The Holy Spirit invites people to change their hearts, to believe in what God has done for us, to be baptized, and to become disciples of Jesus.

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE	BIBLE BACKGROUND	UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD
Chapter 15	1 CORINTHIANS 11:18, 20–21 1 CORINTHIANS 11:27–28 THE CORINTHIANS	Many non-Jews, or Gentiles, who were living in towns and cities all around the Mediterranean Sea, became followers of Jesus. Corinth was one of those cities. Saint Paul preached the Gospel to the people of Corinth and many of the Corinthians came to believe in Jesus and were baptized. Later, Paul wrote letters, or epistles, to the Christians in Corinth.	Saint Paul reminded the Corinthians that when they celebrated the Eucharist, they were sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ. He told them that their words and actions needed to show that they understood what they were doing. When we celebrate the Eucharist, we too need to remember Paul's letter. Our words and actions need to express our faith that Jesus is with us.
CHAPTER 19	MATTHEW 5:3–12 THE BEATITUDES	The Sermon on the Mount begins with the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes are the sayings or teachings of Jesus that describe both the qualities and the actions of people blessed by God. The words <i>blessed</i> and <i>kingdom</i> are the key to understanding Jesus' teachings in the Beatitudes.	The Beatitudes are guides for living as Jesus taught us to live. All our actions show that we live for the kingdom Jesus announced was "at hand." The rewards promised to the blessed will be received in the kingdom of God.
CHAPTER 21	1 JOHN 4:7–8, 16, 20–21 GOD IS LOVE	There are seven catholic letters in the New Testament. Each of the catholic letters has the name of an Apostle in its title. This tells us that the Church believes that these letters pass on the authentic teachings of the Apostles. The First Letter of John helps us to understand the depth of God's love for us.	This reading helps us to understand what Christian love is. It goes back to where all love begins—in God. Once we realize how much God loves us, we can begin to love others as God loves them.
CHAPTER 26	MATTHEW 6:9–13 LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY	In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus teaches his disciples the Our Father. This emphasizes how important praying the Our Father is for Christians.	The Our Father, or Lord's Prayer, has been called the summary of the Gospel. Praying the Our Father teaches us to pray and to live as disciples of Jesus.

Grade Six

Old Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE	BIBLE BACKGROUND	UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD
Chapter 3	BARUCH 3:9, 12–13; 4:1–2 LIVING THE COVENANT	The biblical prophets shared a common calling. God chose them and sent them to speak in his name. Their message centered on the two themes of fidelity to the Covenant with God and hope in his promises for the future.	Baruch told the Israelites that they had brought the tragedy of the Exile upon themselves. It was a consequence of their unwise choices. The prophet gave the Israelites hope for the future. He challenged them to learn and act with prudence and wisdom.
Chapter 12	LEVITICUS 23:1, 3, 5–8 PASSOVER AND THE SABBATH	Some of the rituals the Church uses to celebrate both our faith and hope in God and our love for God have developed from the traditions and laws of the Old Testament. The Books of Leviticus taught the Israelites the necessity of holiness in every aspect of their lives. It made them aware that observing the laws of the Lord provided a way of life that leads to holiness.	The time devoted to observing the rituals for Passover and the Sabbath was time devoted to God and celebrating his covenant with them. Like the Israelite people in the Old Testament, Christians remember and celebrate, in faith and gratitude, the mysteries of our faith.

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS
Chapter 14

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
1 SAMUEL 16:1
DAVID, KING OF ISRAEL

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The historical books in the Old Testament cover about a thousand years of history, beginning with Joshua leading the Israelites into the promised land to a time not long before the birth of Jesus.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

In the Old Testament, kings, priests, and prophets were consecrated for special service among God's people in the ritual of anointing. From the time of the Apostles, the Church has continued this Old Testament practice of consecrating people and things by anointing with chrism.

Chapter 23

PROVERBS 9:1–6,
10–12; 15:1
THE WISDOM BOOKS

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The wisdom of the Israelites was passed from one generation to the next in oral tradition. Eventually, many of the pieces of the oral tradition of the Israelites were collected and written down in the seven wisdom books in the Old Testament.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The key to God's wisdom is Jesus Christ himself. When we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, we will live wisely. To grow in wisdom, we need to be open to the Holy Spirit, who helps us understand everything Jesus taught.

New Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS
Chapter 6

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
EPHESIANS 1:1, 3,
7–8, 13–14
GOD'S PLAN OF
SALVATION

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The New Testament letters, sometimes called epistles, are important for deepening our understanding of and living our faith in Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul wrote many of the New Testament letters. He wrote them to encourage, support and instruct the Christian communities he had converted to belief in Jesus Christ through his preaching.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The Letter to the Ephesians helps us to remember that we are chosen by God and are adopted as God's sons and daughters. We are redeemed in Christ and are temples of the Holy Spirit. The story of the Ephesians is our story. In the end, the work of redemption, which God has begun in Christ, and continues through the Holy Spirit, will be completed.

Chapter 16

LUKE 14:16–23
THE PARABLE OF
THE GREAT FEAST

BIBLE BACKGROUND

In the parables, Jesus and other storytellers compare two things. Jesus used his listeners' experiences of meals and banquets to help them understand his message about the kingdom of God.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Christians have come to understand that the Parable of the Great Feast teaches us about the kingdom of God and the Eucharist. Christ has given the Church the banquet of the Eucharist as both a pledge and an anticipation of the heavenly banquet in the kingdom of God. We respond to Jesus' parable by treating all people with respect and compassion.

Junior High

Jesus in the New Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

BIBLE BACKGROUND

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Chapter 1

DEUTERONOMY 5:1–7
ACTS OF
THE APOSTLES
2:22–24, 32–33
INTRODUCTION
TO SACRED
SCRIPTURE

God is the main author of Sacred Scripture. The writings of Sacred Scripture that are approved by the Church as inspired by God are called the canon of Scripture. The Old Testament centers on the Covenant God made with the chosen people. The New Testament centers on the new and everlasting Covenant God made with humankind through Jesus Christ.

In the new and everlasting Covenant offered by God in Christ, we live in communion with God the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit who transforms all life. The first Covenant was lived by law. The second Covenant is lived by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Each day we need to strive to deepen our life of grace. We need to examine whether we live by the letter of the law or by the grace of God.

Chapter 2

MATTHEW 1:1, 16
MARK 1:1, 14–15
LUKE 1:1–4
JOHN 1:1–5;
20:30–31
THE GOSPELS

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The four Gospels are the center and heart of all Sacred Scripture. Jesus Christ is the fullness of divine Revelation. He is the center and heart of God's plan of creation and salvation. The Old Testament is a preparation of humankind for Jesus Christ. The New Testament revolves around the Person of Jesus Christ and his saving significance for the world. Each of the Evangelists writes to invite people to faith in Jesus.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

All four Evangelists pass on the faith of the Apostles and the apostolic Church in Jesus. They do this in similar but different ways. They all present the truth of Jesus Christ so that faith in Jesus Christ and new life in Jesus Christ might blossom and take root in all people.

Chapter 3

MARK 1:29–39
THE GOSPEL
OF MARK

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Mark's Gospel is written in a simple, pictorial style with colorful details. Everything in Mark's Gospel leads up to the cross. Without the cross there is no Resurrection. Every part of the ministry of Jesus up to his entrance into Jerusalem is leading to his death. Jesus will give himself for the life of the world.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Marks' Gospel teaches us that the blessings we have received in Jesus Christ, are meant to be shared. Our task, as followers of Jesus, is to do as he did. We give our life for the sake of the kingdom of God. Mark's Gospel focuses on the significance of the Paschal Mystery—the teaching and healing work of Jesus on the cross, his suffering and dying for our sakes, and his Resurrection.

Chapter 4

MATTHEW 5:17–18,
19–20
THE GOSPEL
OF MATTHEW

BIBLE BACKGROUND

To understand the portrait of Jesus that Matthew presents, we have to refer back to the Torah. The core of Jewish belief and religious practice can be found in the first five books of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch. These five books are also known as the written Torah, which in Hebrew means “the law.”

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Jesus, who came to abolish and fulfill the Law, preached the Beatitudes—a description of the actions and attitudes of those who live the new Law. Jesus' point is that the new Law must be written on his follower's hearts. It must be internalized so that his followers will become a Beatitude people.

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS

Chapter 5

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

LUKE 4:14–15,
16–22, 28–30
THE GOSPEL
OF LUKE
THE ACTS OF
THE APOSTLES

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles are both written by Saint Luke, the Evangelist. Luke's two-volume work details how the saving plan of God finds a struggling humanity that has lost its way. In the fullness of time God sent his son Jesus. After Jesus' death and Resurrection, as he ascended to heaven, he commissioned the Apostles and the Church to continue his mission of salvation to all people.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Luke's Gospel announces that all people of faith are recipients of salvation in Jesus Christ. Jesus frees all people from what oppresses and holds them down, especially the most terrible burden of sin. At Baptism we welcome Jesus into our lives. We first respond in faith to Jesus. We reject sin and are joined to Christ. Through the lifelong process of conversion, we are joined more fully to Christ and turn our lives away from sinful practices back to God.

Chapter 6

JOHN 11:21–27,
41–44
THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

BIBLE BACKGROUND

In the Gospel of John, we hear Jesus beginning several significant teachings with the words "I am." The "I am" sayings contain images that identify Jesus. The entire Gospel of John is an invitation to see Jesus through the eyes of faith.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

In both the Book of Signs and the Book of Glory, the two parts of John's Gospel, John uses symbolic language and images that point to deeper meanings. The use of such symbolic language can help us come to a deeper faith in Jesus Christ, the Word of God who "became flesh/ and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14).

Chapter 7

ROMANS 6:1–2,
3–11, 14, 15–23
THE LETTER
TO THE ROMANS

BIBLE BACKGROUND

There are thirteen letters in the New Testament attributed to Saint Paul the Apostle. These letters are called the Pauline letters. The Letter to the Romans is the longest epistle in the New Testament. It also represents the most complete presentation of Saint Paul's understanding of Jesus Christ. In this letter, Saint Paul introduced himself to the Church in Rome, corrected misunderstandings about his preaching, and celebrated their faith in Christ.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Saint Paul celebrates God's grace given in Baptism. Grace is a total gift that God freely gives out of love, making us holy and helping us to live holy lives. The Church uses the terms *sanctifying grace*, *actual grace*, and *sacramental grace* to describe the ways that God's grace works in our lives. In Baptism we die to sin and rise to new life in Christ. Paul assures us that just as Christ was raised from the dead, we too are raised up by God's grace. We walk in the paths of new life, not under the law but under the power of grace.

Chapter 8

PHILIPPIANS 1:12–17,
27–29; 4:4–7;
3:1; 4:8–9
THE LETTER
TO THE PHILIPPIANS

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Philippi, a city in northeastern Greece, was the first Christian community Saint Paul established. Paul had great love and affection for the Philippians. The Philippians were overwhelmed by sadness and anxiety, and were experiencing difficult times because of their faith. In this letter, Saint Paul both consoled and admonished them.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Saint Paul admonished the Philippians to stay focused on whatever is honorable, pure, lovely, gracious, and excellent. In other words, he urged them to live a life of virtue. We must do the same. We are to live lives built on faith, hope, and love. We are to live a virtuous life, always rejoicing in the Lord.

**SCRIPTURE
CHAPTERS****SCRIPTURE
PASSAGE****BIBLE BACKGROUND****UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD****Chapter 9**

COLOSSIANS 1:15–20;
2:6–7, 12; 3:1–4,
12–16

THE LETTER
TO THE COLOSSIANS

The Letter to the Colossians was written near the end of Saint Paul's missionary work while he was in prison. This letter tries to correct or refute false teachings and admonishes the Colossians to live a virtuous Christian life. Paul tells them that they must reject all practices that are contrary to their faith in Christ.

Paul tells the Colossians that they are to wear their Baptism like a garment. The thread woven through the garment described by Paul is love. We are to live by the new commandment of love that Jesus taught his disciples. Paul urged the Colossians to make the connection between Christian living and the Eucharist. When we share the Eucharist, we too are joined in Christ and one another. We are to put on love and let the peace of Christ control our hearts.

Chapter 10

JAMES 1:22–24,
26–27; 2:14–17,
20–24, 26; 3:13,
17–18

THE LETTER TO JAMES

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Letter to James is one of the seven Catholic letters in the New Testament. These letters give practical advice on putting into practice the faith we profess in words. The main idea in the Letter to James is that we must express our faith in good works. When this letter was written, Christians believed that Jesus would soon be returning in glory to judge the world. This expectation gave an urgency and importance to the central message of the Letter to James: Faith without good works is dead.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The Church gives the name *social justice* to the good works that flow from our faith to respect and protect the dignity of every person and the rights that flow from that dignity. When we express our faith in good works, we are building a society that prepares a way for the establishment of the kingdom Jesus proclaimed.

Chapter 11

HEBREWS 9:1–4, 7,
11–12, 15

THE LETTER
TO THE HEBREWS

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The title of the "Letter to the Hebrews" is based on the tradition that it was addressed to all Christians of Hebrew, or Jewish, descent. The purpose of the letter is to warn Christians about apostasy, or a falling away from the faith. The Letter to the Hebrews encourages believers not to lose heart and not to lose or give up faith in Jesus Christ. It reminds us that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Covenant and that he is the new and everlasting Covenant.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The Letter to the Hebrews encourages all Christians to place their faith in Christ, who redeemed us from the slavery of sin through his sacrificial death on the cross. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass makes present the sacrifice of Christ. It is not a new sacrifice nor a mere recalling of a past historic event. Through Baptism, we are made sharers in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. From Christ's Paschal sacrifice flows all the power of the sacraments that nourishes our life and communion with the Holy Trinity.

Chapter 12

REVELATION 18:1–2,
4–5, 8; 21:1–7;
22:1–4

THE BOOK
OF REVELATION

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The author of Revelation used the unique style of apocalyptic writing to write this final book of the Bible. Apocalyptic writing often addresses times of crises. It frequently is used to present a vision of hope for the future in times of trial. The Book of Revelation uses imagery to help the reader understand the mystery of faith. It aims at strengthening faith where there is a temptation to abandon faith in Christ. It evokes hope where there is a temptation to despair.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The Book of Revelation proclaims that God is working in the world on the behalf of good and every force for evil will not prevail. The Book of Revelation ends by proclaiming the promised victorious return of Christ. At the Second Coming, Christ will bring all creation and human history to fulfillment. As we wait and prepare for the Lord's return, the Holy Spirit sustains our hope and prompts us to pray with confidence that God's kingdom will come and that God will deliver us from evil.

Mystery of God

Old Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS

Chapter 8

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

ISAIAH 52:13–15;
53:1–2, 3, 7–8,
11–12

THE SUFFERING
SERVANT

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The suffering Servant was probably not a specific person but rather the idealization, or ideal or perfect, image of the faithful Jew suffering in exile whose life was offered for the sins of the nations.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Jesus, the sinless, suffering Servant of God, suffered voluntarily to atone for the sins of all people.

New Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS

Chapter 3

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

JOHN 9:2–7,
33–34, 35–38
THE MAN BORN BLIND

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The four accounts of the Gospel emphasize certain details of the life and teachings of Jesus. The Fourth Gospel, the Gospel according to John, was written to the Jews who were being excluded from the worship life of the Jewish community. The Gospel of John is also called the Book of Signs because of the many stories of miracles, or signs, that Jesus performed.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Faith in Jesus is the focus of this story. In the story of the man's journey from physical blindness to spiritual sight, the reader recognizes someone who receives physical sight, sees with the eyes of faith, and comes to new life in Christ. The story helps us recognize that we face the same choices as the man born blind and the Pharisee. God acts in our lives. We too are called to express our faith in Jesus.

Chapter 7

MATTHEW 17:2–13
THE TRANSFIGURATION
OF JESUS

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The inclusion of Moses and Elijah in the story of the Transfiguration highlights that Jesus is the final prophet in God's plan for salvation. Jesus is the final word of God.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The Transfiguration clarifies the identity of Jesus and the meaning of his work, or ministry, on earth. Jesus is the Incarnate Son of God, who fulfilled the Law of Moses and the Prophets. After witnessing the Transfiguration, the disciples came to know and believe that suffering and death were the way to Jesus' future glory.

Chapter 11

JOHN 21: 5–14
A RESURRECTION STORY

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Resurrection stories give the testimony of the Church both to the fact of Jesus' Resurrection and her faith in it. Each Resurrection story paints a vivid picture of the personal interaction between the Risen Christ and an individual disciple or a group of disciples.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

John the Evangelist often used signs or symbols in his Gospel to help us see and understand the faith meaning of the stories. In this story, John uses the number seven to represent all Christians. He also uses the symbols of light and darkness to illustrate that as the disciples moved from darkness to dawn and recognized Jesus, their faith in the Lord was strengthened.

Church and Sacraments

New Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS

Chapter 3

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

ACTS OF
THE APOSTLES
27:22–25,
33–37, 41–44
PAUL THE APOSTLE

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A Christian missionary is one who carries out Christ's mission to preach the Gospel to all nations. As a missionary, Saint Paul traveled by land and sea. The story relates Paul's fourth and last journey, which took him to Rome. There he was put to death because of his faith in Jesus Christ. All his journeys had one purpose: to bring disciples to Jesus.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Saint Paul the Apostle's journeys teach us what it means to be a missionary Church. The Church exists to bring the Good News to every part of the world, so that it may enter the hearts of all people and renew the world. We call this work of the Church evangelization. The Church will continue this mission of announcing the Gospel to all people until the end of time when Christ comes again in glory.

Chapter 7

JOHN 3:1–6,
11–13, 16–18, 21
REBORN OF
THE SPIRIT

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Gospel names many of the friends and disciples of Jesus. Among those mentioned by Saint John the Evangelist is Nicodemus. This story recounts a long conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus. Because he was an attentive listener who was led by the Holy Spirit, Nicodemus came to believe in Jesus.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

As Jesus talked to Nicodemus about the new life one receives through water and the Holy Spirit, Nicodemus' life was truly changed. We too receive new life because of our faith in Jesus. We call our rebirth through water and the Holy Spirit, Baptism.

CHAPTER 10

MARK 6:34–44
JESUS FEEDS
FIVE THOUSAND

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The sacred writers of the Old Testament gave the word *bread* symbolic meanings such as friendship, hospitality, and God's loving care. New Testament writers built on these meanings to show even greater significance.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

The Gospel story of the multiplication of the loaves and fish reflects the early Church's faith in the Eucharist. Jesus, the Bread of Life, is always with us and nourishes us in the Eucharist. The story also reminds us of the joy we will share at the heavenly banquet at the end of time.

Morality

New Testament

SCRIPTURE CHAPTERS

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

BIBLE BACKGROUND

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

Chapter 2

MARK 10:18–31
ONE PERSON'S
DECISION

Understanding the writing style and technique of each evangelist can help us understand the message of each Gospel. The Gospel according to Mark tells the story of Jesus in a fast-paced style. There is a definite urgency to Mark's message. Mark wrote his Gospel for the Christians in Rome who were being persecuted because of their faith. Mark's Gospel was a powerful source of comfort and a call to faith to these Christians.

In this story, Jesus asks us to take a second look at our lives. The measure for success here on earth that disciples of Jesus use is not the same measure others use. The wealthy young man was not ready to make a choice to follow Jesus.

Chapter 4

1 CORINTHIANS
13:1–3, 4–7, 8–13
HYMN OF LOVE

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Paul the Apostle stayed at Corinth for approximately a year and a half. While on missionary journeys to other cities, he learned about the divisions and problems in Corinth. In his First Letter to the Corinthians, Paul addressed these issues to put them back on the right track.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

St. Paul's teaching on love as the more excellent way is a practical and potent piece of spiritual advice. Saint Paul emphasized that the lack of love was the reason other virtues were not being lived. He admonished the Corinthians that it was time to change their ways and to follow Jesus' command to love one another.

CHAPTER 8

LUKE 10:38–42
MARTHA AND MARY

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Reading the Gospel passages that focus on Jesus and his many women disciples reveals qualities of a true disciple of Christ: faith and trust, prayerful listening, and confidence in Jesus' love and concern for us.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD OF GOD

As this story suggests, Mary and Martha each had a different approach to being Jesus' disciple. Martha wanted to serve Jesus. Mary was intent on listening to Jesus' every word. True Christian discipleship is a blend of prayer and service.