

## *The Bible*



### **What is the Bible?**

The Bible is the Word of God. The Bible is also called Sacred Scripture. God is the author of sacred scripture. It was written by many different people over many many years. They were all inspired by God the Holy Spirit. They wrote what God wants you to hear.

The Bible tells about God's love from the beginning of time. It tells how faithful God has always been. It is the

story of God looking for people and people looking for God.



### **How is the Bible put together?**

The Bible is divided into two parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament. Each of these is made up of "books" which have numbered chapters. The chapters have numbers on each "verse". This way someone can tell you exactly where to find something in the Bible. For example Luke 16:19-31 means to look in the book of Luke, in chapter 16 for verses 19 to 31; or Daniel 6:11-24. There are 46 books in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament, adding up to 73 in all.

### **What's in the New Testament?**

The New Testament starts just before the birth of Jesus and tells us about Him and His message. It continues

with how the Apostles spread the good news of Jesus. The New Testament has three parts: The Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles.

Gospel means "Good News". There are four Gospels named The Gospel of Matthew, The Gospel of Mark, The Gospel of Luke and the Gospel of John. Every day a different part of one of the Gospels is read in Mass. If you listen carefully and go to Mass every day, in three years you will hear just about all of these four books.

The Acts of the Apostles tells what the apostles did after Jesus rose to heaven. It tells of the work they did and how they were persecuted and how they started the Church.

The Epistles are letters that were written by the apostles to the early churches. They were often written to help the people understand things that they were confused about. The second reading at Mass is usually from one of these letters.

### **What's in the Old Testament?**

The Old Testament contains stories about the creation of the world and the history of the people of Israel, who are God's chosen people and from whom Jesus would be born, and wisdom and songs of praise to God. There are some really dramatic and exciting stories in the Old Testament.

### **How Do I Read the Bible?**

The Bible may seem like a big huge book but it has so much in it that many of the stories are actually very short. Most Bibles have headings that help you to find where stories begin. Since these books were written by people who lived in another time and culture, it often helps to find out more about them so you know why they said things the way they did. After the priest reads the Gospel at Mass he usually explains it to us because there are many things that might not be clear. When you are reading the Bible on your own, ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand it – after all, He is the author! But even if something doesn't make sense, keep on reading. The Bible is full of good things!



### **What Will God Say to Me in the Bible?**

Wouldn't it be great if God would sit right in front of you and talk to you about your life-your hopes, your dreams, your fears? Well, guess what? God is present in a special way when you open the Bible. Reading the Bible is a way to listen to God. You'll be amazed at how many times your reading will help you with something going on in your life.

The mind and heart and secrets of God – the words of Jesus Christ- are right here in the Bible. And in some ways you're even luckier than those who saw Jesus in person, because they only got to hear part of his teaching before he moved on to another town. Through

the Bible you get the best of his teachings, thanks to the early Christians who recorded it and compiled it.

God's Word is right in your hands, waiting to find a home in your life, to nourish you with spiritual food that leads to everlasting life.

**Read the Bible!** It is the most important book in the world and the greatest story ever told. Read it and find out why.