

HOPE

FOR OUR COMMUNITIES



Bible Sunday 2017

27th AUGUST



**Catholic Bible Foundation
of South Africa**



Dear Families, listen to the Word of God, meditate on it together, pray with it, let the Lord fill your lives with mercy... Everyone should carry a small Bible or pocket edition of the Gospels and should find at least a few minutes every day to read the Word of God.

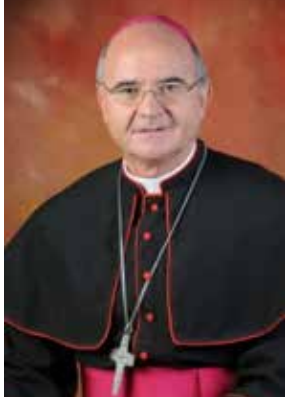
His Holiness Pope Francis

WHERE THERE IS HOPE,
THERE IS *faith*
WHERE THERE IS FAITH,
miracles
HAPPEN.



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“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim 3: 16-17 NIV)

The Holy Bible is the world’s best seller and most powerful book. It is God’s message to humankind. It is God’s manual for living a life that is pleasing to him. It is God’s guidelines and principles to help us find hope, meaning and wisdom for our lives. It is where we find comfort and solace in times of need and pain. It is where we come to better know the God who is our Creator, our Saviour and our Redeemer. Through the Holy Spirit, God, in his Word, speaks to each one of us in different ways and at different times. St John Paul II said, in 1996, ‘The Word of God is the first source of all Christian Spirituality.’

The Bible is a gift from God, to be loved and treasured. Spend time reading and studying the Bible and listen to God’s heart speaking, guiding and instructing you. When you have a Bible you are never alone. ‘Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.’ (Ps 119:105 NIV)

As the Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference endorses the celebration of Bible Sunday, we pray that the Holy Bible may help our communities and country to find the trust and hope needed to embrace every day life and face its challenges.

Sincerely in Christ

+Stephen Brislin
President
Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference





www.biblesociety.co.za
bible society of south africa

The theme for this year's Bible Sunday coincides beautifully with the theme of the United Bible Societies World Assembly that took place in Philadelphia in May 2016 – God's Word: Living Hope for All, a theme that will guide the work of Bible Societies throughout the world over the next six years.

Closer to home our Bible Society of South Africa theme for the year is accordingly taken from Psalm 130: "I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope" (verse 5). This inspires and undergirds our ongoing mission to provide the good news of the Bible to everyone in their own language and in suitable formats so that all may receive the life-giving message of the Word.

We are reminded daily that communities throughout South Africa are crying out for hope. With all our being, like the Psalmist, we wait for the Lord. Wherein lies our hope? The Psalmist again reminds us: "our help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:2). Our hope comes from the One from whom our help comes. God is love, and love births hope.

Through the Bible, God helps us and God speaks hope into our hearts through Jesus Christ our Lord. We glimpse the possibility of a better world and we are helped to work together to bring it into being – in the words of His Holiness Pope Francis: "Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care ... makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world."

Fellow brothers and sisters, we join with the Bishops in encouraging you to support Bible Sunday so that as Church and Bible Society we can continue to work together to share the hope of God's Word with the communities of our land. May God bless you!

In the service of the Word

Rev Dirk Gevers
Chief Executive Officer



Our Parish and the Word of God

For the past eighty years we have been encouraged by the Church to place the Word of God at the centre of our spirituality as individual families and as a faith sharing community.

The Word of God is the first source of all Christian spirituality. (St John Paul II).

Our spiritual life is “based on the Word of God.” Prayerful and frequent reading of the Bible will, with time, deepen our personal relationship with Christ. (VD 72)

There is no greater priority than this: to enable the people of our time once more to encounter God, the God who speaks to us and shares his love so that we might have life in abundance. (VD 2) We are called to contemplate Christ with a gaze fixed on the face of the Lord. Where does one concretely see the face of Christ? Recognising him requires a gaze of faith which is acquired through the habitual reading of the Word of God. (St John Paul 2002)

The Synod on The Word of the Lord recommended a greater “biblical apostolate”, not alongside other forms of pastoral work, but as a means of letting the Bible inspire all pastoral work. This means examining the activities of Christian communities, in parishes, associations and movements, to see if they are truly concerned with fostering a personal encounter with Christ, who gives himself to us in his Word. (VD 73)

Think on these things!

Have a happy and grace filled Bible Sunday Celebration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'mchalmers', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Br Mike Chalmers cfc
National Director
Catholic Bible Foundation

Suggestions for Celebrating Bible Sunday 2017

1. Seven tips for reading the Bible

The Bible can seem overwhelmingly boring and difficult; try the following basic tips to help you understand it more.

- a. Understand the historical context in which the Bible is written. It will take you on a journey into the world of the biblical writers and open your eyes to new and fascinating insights.
- b. Don't read passages entirely on their own, look at what comes before and after them. It's easy to take verses, or sometimes whole stories, out of context, by reading them by themselves. Try to work out where they fit into the bigger story. You'll get a much better sense of what's going on and what it is saying to you.
- c. Read what's actually there, not what you think might be there particularly for famous verses; we can think we know what it says and not actually read it. So slow down and chew it over. You'll often find you understand it in a new way.
- d. Read the Bible with other people in a small faith sharing group like Renew. You'll gain others' perspective on what they think the Bible says and their experiences of the transforming power of the Word.
- e. Don't read the Bible from start to finish like a novel because it isn't one. Following the Liturgical guide is a good start.
- f. Use different translations and one that's easy-to-read like the New International Version. The differences between them will get you thinking.
- g. And finally, even if you're struggling, keep going. The Bible can be a difficult book to read when you begin, but the more you read it, the more you'll get to grips with it. If you keep going you'll learn to love it and understand it better, and soon you won't be able to remember how you got by without it.

2. Liturgical Readings for the week preceding Bible Sunday

Pope Francis stresses the importance of regular Bible engagement in the life of Christian believers; "The Bible is not meant to be placed on a shelf, but to be in your hands, to be read often: both on your own and together with others every day, husband and wife, parents and children, maybe in the evening, especially on Sundays. This way the family grows, walks with the light and power of the Word of God..... for the sacred text is the nourishment of the soul and the pure and perennial source of the spiritual life of all of us."

20th	Sunday	Revelations 11: 1 12: 1 – 6, 10	Ps 45: 10 – 12, 16	I Cor 15: 20 – 27 Lk 1: 39 – 56
21st	Monday	Judges 2: 11 – 19	Ps 106: 34 – 37, 39 – 40, 43 – 44	Mt 19: 16 – 22
22nd	Tuesday	Judges 6: 11 – 24	Ps 85: 11 – 14	Mt 19: 23 – 40
23rd	Wednesday	Judges 9: 6 – 15	Ps 21: 2 – 7	Mt 20: 1 – 16
24th	Thursday	Revelations 21: 9 -14	Ps 145: 1 - 13, 17 – 18	Jn 1: 45 – 51
25th	Friday	Ruth 1: 1, 3 – 6, 14 – 16, 22	Ps 146: 5 – 10	Mt 22: 34 – 40
26th	Saturday	Ruth 2: 1 -3, 8 – 11, 4: 13 – 17	Ps 128: 1 – 5	Mt 23: 1 – 12
27th	Sunday	Isaiah 22: 19 – 23	Ps 138: 1 – 3, 6, 8	Rom 11: 33 – 36 Mt 16: 13 – 20

3. Enthroned the Bible in your home or before you start your parish meetings, catechism or fellowship. This shows that God is present and active in our lives through his Word.

How?

- You will need a prominent place or table, table cloth, Bible stand, Bible, candle, lighter, a crucifix, decorate with flowers or whatever makes sense to you.
- Place sacred Scriptures on the stand/table opened where your favourite verse is.

4. Decide on a ritual:

- a. Start your engagement with a song: to recollect.
- b. This should be followed by opening prayer requesting spiritual guidance and transformation.
- c. Read a suitable pre-selected text from Scripture.
- d. Make the reading relevant.
- e. Your engagement should end in prayer:
 - responding to what God has said to you
 - where preferred, present petitions, thanksgiving etc
 - close with song and dance, if preferred.
- f. Make it alive by the way you live your lives, giving hope to others.

There is no set rule: decide what works for you.

5. In his parish, the priest can suggest and encourage the parish pastoral council to come up with ideas on how to celebrate this year's Bible week which builds up to Bible Sunday.
6. The event can be advertised at least three weeks in advance on the parish's key platforms: website, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, parish bulletin whilst the Bible Sunday poster can be displayed at the entrance to the church/notice board, catechism class rooms, halls etc.
7. The Parish Priest can re-commission all proclaimers: Catechists, Readers & Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist on Bible Sunday.
8. On the 19th Sunday and 20th Sunday, reminders can be made to all parishioners to bring their Bibles on Bible Sunday to be blessed in all Masses.
9. During Bible week, a table for Bible sales (for the young and old) can be arranged after each Mass for those who;
 - a. do not have Bibles,
 - b. require a new copy,
 - c. would like a present for their loved ones,
 - d. would like to donate a pre-owned or new Bible for the less fortunate or those in prisons.
10. Children's Liturgy can also emphasise the importance of reading the Bible: catch them young.
 - a. use understandable versions,
 - b. use symbols for the enthronement,
 - c. use visuals that they can remember,
 - d. arrange a puzzle with prizes of Bibles and book marks for best entries.
11. The youth can lead at least one Mass including those to be confirmed or were confirmed in recent years.
12. Promote Bible Study groups in the parish: Renew, both adult and youth Alpha or specific faith sharing groups. A member of any of the groups or the Parish Pastoral Council may speak at all Masses and invite others to join Bible Sharing Groups.
13. Host a weekend Bible camp for the youth. Some students/youth may be out of school and this gives them an opportunity to learn about the Bible while fellowshiping with their peers.
14. Support the Catholic Bible Foundation by making a dedicated offering on this day. The amount donated is used to bring Scripture to Catholics.

15. Use the summary below to give you an overview of the Bible

The Bible is about God's love for the world He created. Although we turn away from Him from time to time, His "love endures forever" and draws us back to Him and mends the broken relationship. His love peaks in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus which offers us a chance through faith to find peace with God as we experience the power of the Risen Christ in our lives:

The Old Testament

- God created the world and saw it was good: Genesis 1 - 2
- But it went wrong: Genesis 3
- So God decided to start again: Genesis 6: 5 – 22; 8: 1 – 9:7
- God chose a family; the family of Abraham to be his people: Genesis 12:1 – 8
- God promised that Abraham's family would become a great nation: Genesis 17:15 – 18:15
- But his family became slaves in Egypt: Exodus 1
- So God called Moses to free his people from slavery: Exodus 3: 1 – 4:13
- And Moses led them out of Egypt: Exodus 14 – 15
- In the wilderness, God gave Moses the Ten Commandments: Deuteronomy 5.1 – 22
- After 40 years, a new leader brought God's people to the Promised Land: Joshua 3:1 – 4:7
- In the Promised Land, they faced many enemies: Judges 6 – 7
- And so the people asked for a king to lead them in battle: 1 Samuel 8:1 – 10:1
- God then chose David to be king: 1 Samuel 16
- David made Jerusalem the capital city: 2 Samuel 5:6 – 6:12
- God's people kept on turning away from God: Hosea 10:12 – 11:4
- So God became even more angry with them: Micah 6:1 – 15
- When they still would not listen, God sent the people away into exile: 2 Kings 24 – 25
- But after punishment there was hope: Isaiah 40
- Eventually they returned from exile and came back home: Ezra 1
- But still they hoped that God would come and save them: Malachi 3

The New Testament

- In the end, God sent his Son, born as a baby: Matthew 1:18 – 25
- His birth was announced by angels and he was visited by shepherds: Luke 2:1 – 20
- Then he was visited by wise men from the east: Matthew 2:1 – 18
- Once Jesus was grown up, John the Baptist announced who he really was: Mark 1:1 – 11
- And Jesus began to call people to follow him: Mark 1:14 – 18 and 2:14 – 17
- Jesus healed people who were sick: Mark 5

- He taught people about the Kingdom of God and what it meant to follow him: Matthew 5
- He told stories to help them understand how to live: Luke 10: 25 – 37
- But he upset the leaders of his day and they put him to death: Mark 15:1 – 37
- After three days, however, Jesus rose from the dead: John 20
- And he sent his disciples out to tell everyone about him: Matthew 28:16 – 20
- Jesus went back to heaven: Acts 1:1 – 12
- Then the Holy Spirit came and gave them what they needed, to do what Jesus had asked of them: Acts 2
- Many people heard their message and followed Jesus; one of these was a Jew named Saul: Acts 9
- Paul believed that everyone could follow Jesus, not just Jews: Acts 15
- And he began to spread the message far and wide: Acts 16
- He talked about Jesus: who he was and what he did: Philippians 2
- He explained the difference that belief in Jesus makes to the way people live: Ephesians 3:14 – 4: 6
- And he talked about how the world is a different place because of Jesus' death and resurrection: 2 Corinthians 5: 11 – 21
- Right at the end of the New Testament, the book of Revelation looks forward to the time when the world will, at last, be as God always wanted it to be: Revelation 21: 1 – 7
- In Revelation, John presents a vision of a world at peace with God, with no more grief, crying or pain.



Homilies



Archbishop William Slattery OFM

“The Church is a community that hears and proclaims the word of God. The Church draws life not from herself but from the Gospel, and from the Gospel she discovers ever anew the direction for her journey. This is an approach that every Christian must understand and apply to himself or herself; only those who first place themselves in an attitude of listening to the word can go on to become its heralds.” (Verbum Domini 51).

Each year the Church in South Africa sets aside a special Sunday to remind us that all of us are heralds of the Word of God. God’s word which is for us spirit and life is a word we are called to share. As St Paul says; ‘Woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel’ (1 Cor 9;16). We cannot keep to ourselves the words of eternal life given to us in our encounter with Jesus Christ; they are meant for everyone, for every man and woman, everyone today needs that message.

Jesus himself constantly referred to the word of God. He lived by and constantly fulfilled that word. In Nazareth at the beginning of his public life he picked up the prophet Isaiah to explain that in Him this word was to be fulfilled. He died with a psalm on his lips. Risen from the dead on the road to Emmaus he took his two friends back to Moses and the prophets to explain to them all that had happened to him at Calvary.

Through history the Church has continually draws life from the word of God. Vatican Two teaches what the Bible means for us Catholics; “ In the sacred books the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet His children, and talks with them”. The Council calls the Word of God the support and vigour of the Church, the food for the soul, a pure and lasting fount of spiritual life. “The Word of God is living and active” Heb 4; 12

The lives of the great saints in history show us the power of God’s word. St John Chrysostom speaks of the creating power of God’s word; “ Are not the athletes inspired by the APPLAUSE of the crowd; the soldiers by the WORDS of the Prince; the horse is urged on in the thick of battle by the SOUND of the trumpet, the SONG of labourer makes the oxen’s load light. How much more powerful is the divine word of God?”

St Francis of Assisi on hearing the Scripture read in Church exclaimed; “this is what I want, this is what I ask for, this I long to do with all my heart”

St Teresa of Avila; “All the evil in the world is derived from not knowing clearly the truths of sacred Scripture”.

The Word, the second person of the Holy Trinity became small, small enough to fit into a manger. He became a child, so that the word could be grasped by us. When we listen to God’s holy word, when we bring others to God’s word we come before, we encounter the very person of Jesus.

As Pope Benedict says of meeting the word of God: “ We can then see why being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a definitive direction”.

Our celebration of Bible Sunday, our promotion of the Bible apostolate, our contribution to the study and knowledge of this life- giving word is the offer of hope and joy to a world greatly in need of light. Today let us listen again to the Risen Jesus who says to us; “Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation” Mk 16;15.



Bishop Edward Risi OMI

Readings: Isaiah 22: 19 - 23
Psalms 138: 1 - 3, 6, 8

Romans 11: 33 - 36
Matthew 16: 13 - 20

We are asked this question each year when we read in the Gospels how Jesus asked his apostles, “Who do you say I am?” and each time we try to answer the question honestly because I know and you know that at the heart of the Christian’s life is a relationship with Jesus.

The first reading from the Prophet Isaiah brings us face to face with God’s own truth and honesty: God does not tolerate dishonesty and lies in those to whom he has entrusted the care of others and the care of the earth, as in the case of Shebna.

This insight into God's just demands and expectations is balanced with the invitation to open ourselves to the mercy of God: "O God your merciful love is eternal, discard not the work of your hands", as we proclaimed in the responsorial psalm of the day. You and I are the work of his hands.

We are drawn into the dialogue between God and his people: the dialogue between the Father who has created each of us with a purpose and we, the creatures that experience failure in meeting the expectations of our Creator and failure in responding to his invitations.

Husbands and wives know how important it is to affirm each other and speak honestly and openly with each other of their love and commitment to one another. Friends know what it means to honestly speak of what makes them friends.

Saint Paul reflects at length in his different letters on his relationship with God. In his zeal for the God of righteousness he was prepared to imprison and kill others but after he had encountered the God of mercy, he was prepared to die for the God who in his mercy died for us and for our salvation. It is in this context that he exclaims with wonderment, the words of today's second reading: "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God."

Jesus, the Word of God made flesh, invites us into an ongoing encounter and dialogue with our God whose judgements are unsearchable and whose ways are inscrutable. "Who has given a gift to God that he might be repaid?"

Through our relationship with Jesus, the Word of God, we come to understand that we are recipients of all that we have and there is no one among us who has any right to claim that God owes him or her something in return.

Jesus asks you: "Who do you say that I am?" Many have admitted that they have given in to the temptation to look away from him, avoiding his gaze, unable to answer with meaningful and honest words. To answer truthfully calls for the recognition on my part of my unfaithfulness, acknowledgement that I have misused the gifts and blessings of the Lord ... we could draw up a never-ending list but ultimately, we come to the realisation that to trust his merciful love and forgiveness is the only way this relationship and this dialogue with him can go forward.

Jesus who asks you and me who do we say that he is, answers us through the scriptures we have heard today: he is the just one, the truthful one, the merciful one and we are the work of his merciful hands.

With St. Peter you can also say, “You are the Christ. The Son of the living God;” the one anointed to be our priest who intercedes for us, the saviour who delivers us and leads us in the way of living as God’s sons and daughters.

Bible Sunday reminds us again that God dialogues with each of us in an ongoing way through the scriptures, especially when they are proclaimed in the liturgy, when we pray them and when we reflect on how to live his word.

We are invited to continue our dialogue with him, together with our Mother, Mary, to answer with her: “I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word.” We are invited to that important moment of communion when we answer: “Speak but the word, and my soul shall be healed.”

Jesus who has asked you and me, “Who do you say I am?” has also answered us: “If you remain in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” (John 8:31, 32)



Prayers of the Faithful

On this Bible Sunday, we give thanks for our sacred Scriptures through which God speaks to his people.

We pray that by hearing God's Word, we can be inwardly transformed. We pray to the Lord, Lord hear us...

To the families and friends who seek comfort and consolation, heal their pain and dispel the darkness and doubt that come from grief. We pray to the Lord; Lord hear us...

That bishops and priests of the Church, and all who preach the Gospel, may be given strength to express in action the Word they proclaim. We pray to the Lord; Lord hear us...

That those in public office may promote justice and peace. We pray to the Lord, Lord hear us...

That those who bear the cross of pain in mind and body may never feel forsaken by God. We pray to the Lord; Lord hear us...

We pray for all who mourn, that they may be assured of Christ's closeness to them in their sorrow and find strength and comfort through their faith in Jesus our risen Saviour. We pray to the Lord; Lord hear us...

For the deceased members of our families, that the light of Christ shine on them. We pray to the Lord; Lord hear us...

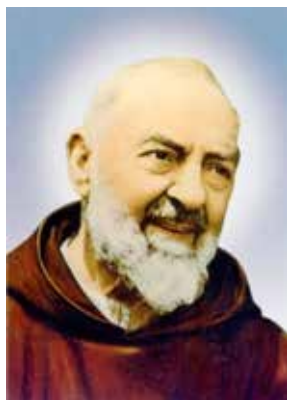
For those who Care for the sick that you may give them your compassionate and caring heart. We pray to the Lord; Lord hear us...

That we may accept the things we cannot change; courage to change the things we can and wisdom to know the difference. We pray to the Lord; Lord hear us...

For the young that they may keep the faith, never lose hope and grow in love. For the young who do not know God, that the Lord the giver of all spiritual gifts may touch their lives. We pray to the Lord; Lord hear us...

For all who are oppressed or abused, especially children, that they be strengthened by God's grace and saved from their distress. We pray to the Lord; Lord hear us...

That in time of distress, we may not be anxious, wondering what to eat or drink or wear but acknowledge that He knows our every need. We pray to the Lord; Lord hear us...



St Padre Pio

Prayer After Communion

Stay with me, Lord, for it is necessary to have You present so that I do not forget You. You know how easily I abandon You.

Stay with me Lord, because I am weak, and I need Your strength, so that I may not fall so often.

Stay with me Lord, for You are my life, and without You, I am without fervour.

Stay with me Lord, for You are my light, and without you, I am in darkness.

Stay with me Lord, to show me Your will.

Stay with me Lord, so that I hear Your voice and follow You.

Stay with me Lord, for I desire to love you very much, and always be in Your Company.

Stay with me Lord, if You wish me to be faithful to You.

Stay with me Lord, for as poor as my soul is, I want it to be a place of consolation for You, a nest of Love.

Stay with me, Jesus, for it is getting late, and the day is coming to a close, and life passes, death, judgment, eternity approach. It is necessary to renew my strength, so that I will not stop along the way and for that, I need You. It is getting late and death approaches. I fear the darkness, the temptations, the dryness, the cross, and the sorrows. O how I need You, my Jesus, in this night of exile.

Stay with me tonight, Jesus, in life with all its dangers, I need You.

Let me recognize You as Your disciples did at the breaking of bread, so that the Eucharistic Communion be the light which disperses the darkness, the force which sustains me, the unique joy of my heart.

Stay with me Lord, because at the hour of my death, I want to remain united with you.

Stay with me Jesus, I do not ask for divine consolation because I do not merit it, but the gift of Your presence, oh yes, I ask this of You.

Stay with me Lord, for it is You alone I look for, Your Love, Your Grace, Your Will, Your Heart, Your Spirit, because I love You and ask no other reward but to love You more and more.

With a firm love, I will love you with all my heart while on earth and continue to love You perfectly during all eternity. Amen.

Catholic Bible Foundation

Our programmes are based on Scripture: God's Words in words of men. From an understanding of the structure of the Bible, new insights, showing how one can mine the riches of the Word to how we can celebrate the Word by our lives: loving self, loving others and loving God.

Bible Spirituality Seminar

This is an introductory programme to the Bible through Scripture and prayer.

Gospel of the Year

This programme aims to promote Bible Study, encourages us to seek God's Word in our daily lives. The knowledge of the Word will deepen our relationship with God. We offer the Gospel for the Liturgical year: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Mercy Workshop

The workshop brings to every Christian a deep understanding of the love and mercy of God and how it changes us for the better enabling us to make a difference in our communities.

Window's On God's Word

This workshop offers tools that help us understand God's Word better and enabling us to discover the riches of the Scriptures. God's Word opens our eyes and illuminates our life.

Exploring Scripture Together

This offers a new and exciting method of sharing the Scripture. Clear commentaries on each book of the Bible will give you a more meaningful understanding of the Bible.

Lectio Divina

An enriching method of praying Scripture that allows the healing power of the Word to become active and present in our lives.

Proclaimers Workshop

This programme is designed for readers in the Church. It offers skills on how to proclaim the Word.

Retreats

- Lenten
- First Holy Communion
- Confirmation
- Silent
- School:
 - Grades 1 – 12
 - Teachers
- Sodalties
- Women and Women's Day Celebration

Special programmes

- Father's Day (new)
- Leadership Workshop (new)
- Any other needs based workshops

What they say about our programmes



“Christian Brother’s College in Boksburg has for the past three years used the Catholic Bible Foundation to facilitate our retreats (each year offering a fresh new and relevant programme). The facilitators are exceptionally well trained and handle young people from primary to high school with sensitivity and care. Our students always return from retreats revitalised, with a new sense of spirituality. We are always grateful to the facilitators for their honest, open and constructive feedback. Their feedback is invaluable to our Religious Education and Life Orientation programmes as well as our ethos and pastoral growth within the entire College community. The impact that each retreat has is indeed eternal in the Kingdom of God.”

Darren Flood

*Principal: High School, Religious Education & Ethos
Christian Brothers College (Boksburg)*

“For the past three years, the Catholic Bible Foundation has facilitated our annual Grade 6 retreats. The girls have reported that they have always thoroughly enjoyed and gained so much insight that they wished they could have retreats more often during the year. In addition, in the past three years I have also been attending the programme on Gospel of the Year they present at the Cathedral here in Johannesburg. I have obtained a deeper understanding of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, which I have passed on to my learners in Religious Education lessons. The presenters are always well prepared and ask thought provoking questions on the material covered. I thank the Catholic Bible Foundation for their excellent work in spreading the Good News of our Lord, Jesus Christ.”



Alexis Bellingan

*Religious Education Teacher
St Teresa’s School (Rosebank)*



“The teachings of the Catholic Bible Foundation have rekindled the spiritual eyes within us and helped us rediscover the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in our midst.”

Fr Clement Senekane CSS

*Parish Priest
St John the Baptist (Pretoria North)*



“Catholic Bible Foundation has run retreats for St Dominic’s for many years. The team has been very professional and thorough in their communication and organization and the facilitators inspiring, well-prepared, making their sessions valuable and meaningful for the children. Our girls enjoy the varied activities as they learn more about Jesus and deepen their relationship and friendship with God.”

Pauline Penny

Head of Department: Religious Education
St Dominic’s Catholic School for Girls (Boksburg)



“I have been part of the courses offered by the Catholic Bible Foundation in the Diocese of Witbank. Throughout, the sessions were very formative, enriching, empowering, nourishing and fulfilling. The interactive approach used by the presenters is very inclusive and accommodative to people of various educational levels. Hence there is good and effective learning.

I would seize every possible opportunity to be part of any other learning opportunity presented by the Catholic Bible Foundation.”

Rev. Deacon Malatsi L Kope

Witbank Diocese

“Catholic Bible Foundation has been facilitating to the Franciscan Sisters in Newcastle since 2016. Fr. Rodgers OFM also joined us for these workshops. As Religious called to bring the Word of God to others, reading, recognising and responding to the Word of God, the facilitations were amazing and Scripture became alive. The workshops gave us new insights: how to read Scripture with understanding, understanding more of who God is; encouraging us to identify the Word of God in our own Constitution and to teach the Word of God by our lives. “Prayerful and frequent reading of the Bible will with time deepen our personal relationship with Christ”. We are truly grateful; God opened our minds to understand Scripture. Today I can say it is true that Scripture changes a person, we gained courage, we are confident to bring hope to God’s people.”

Sr Margaret McDermott FSM

Our Designs, Our Belief

2017 retreat, St Dominic's School Boksburg



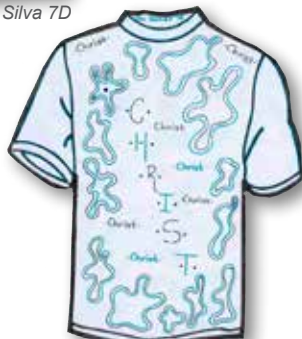
Casy Lewis 7D



Dominique Da Silva 7D



Sydney Munks 7B



Olu Gando 7D



MJS 7B



Claire De Graaf 7D

Gracious God,
in your goodness and wisdom you chose to reveal yourself through Christ,
the Word made flesh.
In Scripture, you reveal yourself through the same Word, written in human words.
In the sacred books, you meet your children with great love and speak with them.
May we be drawn into this divine conversation and respond
wholeheartedly to its promptings.
Send your Holy Spirit into our hearts so we may understand
more deeply the words your Spirit has inspired.
May we encounter Christ in your Word and learn what it means to know and follow him.
May we be amazed by the inexhaustible newness
of your Word and allow it to shape and transform our lives.
Heavenly Father, may you show us how to turn Good News and freedom from your
Word into action in our communities so that we bring your Word to life for the poor, the
oppressed, the disadvantaged, those in despair and all who are in need.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen





Many books can inform but only the Bible can transform



If we could see the world through the eyes of a child, we would give hope and make a difference in our communities...“for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

“Bible Sunday gives us an opportunity to celebrate the gift of God’s Word in the Bible and encourage us all to read, study, grow in knowledge and understanding of Scripture, and grow in order to draw life from it.”

His Holiness Pope Francis



“I have always been fascinated by the wisdom of the Bible and its simple truth,” In my low moments I find solace and comfort, in better moments, I find praise and thanksgiving. With reflection, I find peace.”

Seng Kwang Heng

