

GOD is the author of Sacred Scripture, being written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It is not merely a collection of books to study, but a collection of God's letters that tells us who we are, and ultimately, who He is. It is not merely a book of stories, but a book of God's love for us. It is not a book about God, but God speaking to us about Himself.

The Bible is a love letter from God, but who is the recipient? The Bible speaks to you in a very personal way--with each letter directed to you--for God is a personal God. Yet at the same time it also speaks to His people, His Church. It is also mankind's love story, of how God gathered His people and brought them to his embrace.

The message contained in Scripture speaks about events in the past, but also directs us towards the future and teaches us how to live in the present to arrive at our journey's destination. It is not bound by time--its message is permanent and timeless. It is simply for all eternity, for God is an eternal God.

God is the primary author, but he used men--such as Moses, David, Matthew, Paul or John--as instruments. Thus, the Bible is a collection of 73 books written by various human hands inspired by God.

Each book of The Bible is a part of a whole formed through God's guidance--the Old Testament is believed to have been compiled as early as 100 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, and the New Testament was compiled by the Church that Jesus established--the Catholic Church.

St. Jerome once said, ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of God. But making the decision to study Scripture posts a lot of questions even an eager student has no idea of answering. As the angel of God asked Philip in Acts 8:30, "Do you understand what you are reading?" Phillip replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?"

Fortunately, as Catholics, we have the Church to guide us *inerrantly* in our quest to be informed and transformed by God's Word.

Studying Scripture is not an academic exercise, but an encounter with its Author that could leave us full of awe and praise--of faith, hope and love. Keeping this in mind will help you study God's Word more effectively.

Now, shake the dust off your Bible and let's start an amazing adventure!