

What the Bible contains and How it's interpreted What books are in the Bible – Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT) • The Bible is split into the OT (Jewish Scriptures before Jesus)& NT (Jesus' life & Apostles' Teachings). • OT: HeLP: contains History of Jews (e.g. Kings); Laws (e.g. 10 commandments in Exodus) & Prophets (e.g. Isaiah). • NT: GEL: Gospels ('Good news' of Jesus' life, death and resurrection), Writings about the End times (Revelation) and Letters (e.g. from Paul to early Christian communities). Origin and Structure of Bible • Early Christians accepted Jewish Scriptures as part of their Bible because early Christians were Jewish. They wanted New Testament in Bible, recorded by Jesus' friends. By 3rd Century, Church agreed which books were genuine, they are canonical. • Catholic Bible has 73 books including the 7 deuterocanonical (meaning second list of approved books) Divergent views on how many books should be in Bible • All Christians agree with NT as Gospels are about Jesus' life; Revelation about end of world. • Catholics have 46 books in the OT, but Orthodox have extra ones they think are inspired by God. Protestants have 7 less as they reject the deuterocanonical books. They don't think Jews originally accepted them, so not sure they're inspired by God. Interpreting Bible • Evangelical Protestants take the Bible literally as the Word of God. It is all true and contains no errors as God told writers exactly what to write. Therefore reject scientific explanations for origin of world and humans. • Catholics see Bible as the inspired word of God i.e. God inspired Biblical writers, but humans interpreted God's message, wrote in own words and were influenced by the time & culture they lived in. They don't take it all as fact as it's not science/ history book. It tells us truth about God and humanity's relationship. Some bits literally true (resurrection) others spiritual truth (Genesis). CCC: 'God inspired the human authors of the sacred books'. 2Timothy 3: 16: 'all Scripture is inspired by God'. • Liberal Protestants see it as having spiritual truth as it was written by humans inspired like any other writers. Don't take it literally, think Bible full of symbolism e.g. miracles of Jesus are symbolic language to show spiritual truth not fact. How the belief in the Bible as the inspired word of God affects Catholics today • Means they can accept Genesis which said 'let us make man in our own image' at same time as Big Bang & evolutionary theory. When Scripture read in mass they say 'the Word of the Lord' to remember Holy Spirit inspired it. Because they take time, culture, type of literature (laws, prophets, Gospels) into account when reading, they don't interpret all of it literally. So St Paul's advice 'if you're a slave stay a slave' reflective of his culture and time, not a rule to be obeyed today. Bible as Source of Guidance and Teaching: • In Mass, Catholics listen to Bible teachings from Lectionary and think about how to apply it to their lives. Catholics attend Bible study groups: listen to passage, discuss meaning and pray about how they can live it out. Known as 'personal devotion'. In times of distress or confusion they read passages like Psalms 23: 'The Lord is my Shepherd'	The Magisterium: Magisterium = authority Pope and Bishops have to interpret Bible and tradition for Roman Catholics today. It's a living teaching office. Priests and laity don't have it, as CCC says, 'task of interpreting word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to Pope and Bishops'. Is Supreme Authority. 2 types: • Ordinary Magisterium: every day teaching of Church, found in sayings & writings of bishops & popes. E.g. Pope Francis' Laudato Si encourages Catholics to look after environment and poor. • Extraordinary Magisterium: infallible (cannot be wrong) Church teaching. Only relates to special teachings that come about in two ways: 1) Conciliar – when ecumenical council is called (like Vatican II). Only ever been 21 of these, all bishops of Church meet to discuss important matter. 2) Pontifical – declarations made by Pope, also known as 'ex Cathedra' declarations ('from Bishop's seat'). E.g. Pope Pius XII declared Mary assumed into heaven. Called 'dogma' because it's an infallible Church doctrine. Why Magisterium Important Today: 'JUG' • J = Jesus. Addresses issues not around in the time of Jesus like contraception, IVF, nuclear weapons. U = up to date. Bishops can keep teachings up to date but still in line with Apostolic Tradition. G = Guidance. Gives clear guidelines on how to live as a Catholic in 21st Century.	Second Vatican Council: • Gathering of Bishops from all around the world between 1965-8 to reform Church practice; Church belief; How to use the Bible; How to live as a modern Catholic. Reforms that took place & how affected Catholics • Church Practice: Document called 'Sacred Council' (Sacrosanctum Concilium) reformed mass so priest now faced congregation, no longer spoke in Latin; lectionary expanded to include more Bible readings. Effect: people felt more involved in & could understand more of mass; learned more about life of Jesus. • Church beliefs: Document called 'Light of Humanity' (Lumen Gentium) said Church should now teach other religions can get to heaven AND that all Catholics are important to life of Church (not just priests). Effect: It reduced negative attitudes towards other religions. Second change meant Catholics felt more valued members, so wanted to be more involved in Church life. • How to use the Bible: Document called 'Word of God' (Dei Verbum) said to be guided by Apostolic Tradition, not only the Bible (as Protestants said). Church said read Bible as inspired word of God, not literal. Effect: Catholics in Bible study reminded to be guided by Apostolic Tradition too. Bible not taken literally so Evolution alongside Genesis accepted by Catholics. • How to live a good Catholic life in the modern world: The document 'Joy and Hope' (Gaudium et Spes) said that as technology improves, Catholics must work for justice & mustn't forget dignity of human person. Secondly, Catholics encouraged to talk with atheists, other faiths & Christians about what they believe & why. Effect: It helps Catholics stay faithful to Church in modern era; greater understanding of others' beliefs. Three different views on how much Vatican II affected lives • 'It changed life dramatically' – some welcomed no Latin & unity with other faiths because it made Church seem more welcoming to people. • 'It went too far' Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre led a break-away group of priests who rejected the reforms of Vatican II. They formed the Society of St Pius X which still celebrates a Latin Mass and uses the old liturgy. • 'It didn't go far enough!' Others wanted Church reforms like: married or women priests, reform on contraception, unity with other Christians.	
The Church as the Body of Christ Church is called the People of God because all Christians, no matter what their background, become part of 'God's chosen people... a holy nation' (1st letter of St Peter) through 1 baptism. • St Paul writing to the Corinthians (early Christian community who were falling out due to arguments about who was best type of Christian) explains they need to work together as Christ's body. What does 'The Body of Christ' mean? • It means the Church is made up of lots of different people with different talents and skills, just as the human body has many parts with different functions (eyes, hands, feet etc.) • The eye cannot say to the foot 'I don't need you', so the members of Christ' body can't say it either: everyone's valued. • Body only functions if all parts work together; Church can only spread Jesus' message 'Love God and Neighbour' if they work together. Why is the Body of Christ important? • It explains how God's people all have different skills/ talents, yet all work together as a body to spread Jesus' message. • If we are Jesus' Body, he still works through the Church. • It shows how we are all united in Christ through one baptism. Divergent views on the body of Christ: • Catholics and Orthodox believe salvation comes from faith as taught by Church and through sacraments. Jesus really present in Eucharist. However, Catholics see Pope as the Head of Church, Orthodox see it as Patriarchs working together. • Protestants don't see Pope as head of Church. Believe salvation comes through faith and Bible. Eucharist just symbol.	Four Marks of the Church In the Nicene Creed we say the Church is one, holy, catholic and apostolic (means worldwide Church, not just Catholic) • One = all Christians believe in one Jesus; one Spirit & St Paul said 'there is one baptism'. • Holy = God made church, Jesus died for it making it holy; Church is source of sacraments; Church has true faith. • catholic = 'universal'. Christians all over world can join, message for everyone. St Paul: 'everyone is one in Christ'. • Apostolic = founded by apostles; bishops are their successors; authority of Peter passed down by apostolic succession to current pope (Jesus: I give you keys to kingdom of heaven). Different views on the four marks • All Christians believe the Church is holy and catholic. But disagree about what one and apostolic mean. • Protestants think to be part of the one church, you must believe in Jesus, but Catholic and Orthodox think it means you have to accept the same creeds. • Protestants think apostolic means their faith's based on Apostles' Scriptures. Catholic and Orthodox agree, but also see it as Tradition and Succession handed onto them.	Mary – model of Church: • Mary is model of Church because her life reflects values, teachings & beliefs of Church. Embodies what it means to be Catholic by loving God ('I am the servant of the Lord') and neighbour (gave up Jesus to die for us). Joined with Jesus in Salvation • Mary only important because she's joined with Christ in saving us from sin. Without Mary, Jesus couldn't be born to die for us. • She is the immaculate conception (<i>she</i> was born without original sin) so she was pure enough to bear God's Son. • Joined with Jesus in assumption (end of her earthly life taken up to heaven by Christ); 1st to experience the resurrection. Mary as model of Discipleship • She's the 1st disciple (she said yes to angel as she believed in him from moment of his conception; stayed with him as He suffered. Mary as a model of Faith and Charity (love) • Showed faith by accepting God's plan and obeying command in Joseph's dream to flee to Egypt. • Showed charity at Wedding at Cana (told Jesus to perform first miracle of water into wine); loved world by giving up Son to die. Implications for Catholic today • Mary shown respect (veneration, not worship) through praying using statues in church; praying Rosary saying Hail Mary; going on pilgrimage to Lourdes; celebrating feast days (Annunciation). Different Christian views of Mary • All Christians see her as Christ's mother. Protestants don't venerate her as they see it as worship/ idolatry and only Jesus is worthy of that as our Saviour; don't believe she stayed a virgin her whole life or that she was assumed into heaven.	Sources of personal and ethical decision making: • Personal and ethical decision making = making choices about what you think is right or wrong. Three sources are: • Jesus' example and teaching: He showed love for others by healing paralysed man & taught: 'love your neighbour'; showed social justice by healing sick & taught us to do same in Parable of Sheep & Goats; showed forgiveness of those who crucified him & taught 'forgive not 7 times but 77 times'; showed he fulfilled Jewish law by fully loving God & neighbour and taught: 'don't murder, but go step further: don't even get angry'. • Natural law: Aquinas said Reason is a gift from God, so use it to work out what's right or wrong. God made all things for a purpose, humans' purpose is to preserve human life, procreate, educate and seek truth. Work towards your purpose, focus on motive not result. • Virtue ethics: developed by Aquinas, says you can use your God given conscience to decide actions. Being made in 'God's image' includes having a conscience. You should use it to uphold Church law and form good habits (virtues) such as good character, being just, acting in moderation. Inform conscience by reading Scripture, Catechism and listening to both sides before deciding. CCC: to be good, when you use your conscience remember to never do evil that good may come; follow Golden Rule, show love to others, respect their right to disagree. Different implications of using these sources • Christians can use all three, but Protestants reject Natural law saying our ability to reason has been damaged by our sin. They use Bible instead. • Catholics use Natural Law and Virtue ethics. Say sin affects our ability to choose right over wrong, not ability to recognise right over wrong. • Some Christians say 'what would Jesus do?' This can lead them to make different decisions on same teaching though – Golden rule could be applied to abortion in two different ways.