



20 Ways to listen & love God's Word

at home and in the parish church

Churchgoers are losing touch with the Bible and Catholics are doing worse than most, statistics show. Figures from the 2006 National Church Life Survey show that of those Australians who go to church, 21 percent read their Bible daily, 14 percent open it a few times a week and 6 percent once a week, The Sydney Morning Herald reports.

The most diligent Bible readers are Pentecostals, with 72 % saying they read the holy book daily or a few times a week, followed by Baptists (62 %), Anglicans (46 %), Lutherans (41 %) and Uniting (43 %). Dragging down the other denominations are Catholics, of whom 59 % confess they rarely consult their Bibles.

(Source: www.cathnews.com, Sept 10, 2008)

Bible formation opportunities in our parish:

Check parish bulletin regularly for details of:

- * Bible Study (Weekly on Wednesdays, 7.30pm)
- * Lectio Divina sessions (Monthly, Tues & Thurs)
- * Lenten Groups (during Lent)
- * Scripture courses run by local institutes

Literature:

- * Select a book on scripture from the Parish Library
- * Browse the literature in main foyer of the church: E.g.:
 - Monthly "Word of Life" Reflection sheet;
 - INFORM articles;
 - "Apostleship of Prayer" leaflet lists the daily readings for each month;
 - Lectio divina* pamphlets

1. Create a sacred space in your home that highlights the family bible.
2. Read children's bible stories to your kids. Bring alive all those colourful biblical characters!
3. Give someone a bible as a gift.
4. As a household reflect on the Gospel each week.
5. If you lead a parish ministry, include scripture reflection as part of your gatherings.
6. Learn more about that part of the Mass called "the Liturgy of the Word".
7. Take up a bible formation opportunity in the parish (see below left).
8. Make a point of preparing for, and listening deeply to the Word of God proclaimed at Mass each Sunday.
9. Hum scripture-based hymns during the day.
10. Join in the responsorial psalm at Mass with prayerful passion.
11. Take a bible quote each morning and 'chew on it' throughout the day.
12. Support a Catholic outreach that provides bibles to Christians in oppressed societies.
13. Donate an excellent book on the scriptures to the parish library.
14. If you are a reader at Mass, prepare prayerfully and well for the sacred task of proclaiming the scriptures for the community.
15. Discussion point: what does it mean to be a 'People of the Book'?
14. Hold a bible to your heart, and think of all the faithful lives - Jewish and Christian - that brought the Scriptures into being and handed them on through the ages.
15. Continue to explore Bishop David Walker's invitation to take up the practice of lectio divina.
16. Visit a Catholic Bookshop (e.g. Pauline Book & Media) and browse their range of bible resources.
17. Take an interest in the forthcoming Bishops Synod: "The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church" (5-12 Oct, Rome)
18. Read scripture aloud to an elderly or ill person who has difficulty reading due to health issues.
19. Musicians and choir leaders: teach people to appreciate the scriptural basis of many parish hymns.
20. A theme for your next party: come as your favourite biblical character!

Continue this brainstorm...