

# BIBLE BASICS



phillipmartin.info

**How Catholics  
Understand the  
Bible**

**Some parts of the Bible are hard to understand. For example, the Bible tells us that:**



- **God created the world in 7 days**
- **Adam lived to be 930 years old**
- **Noah built an ark to care for 2 of EVERY animal during the Flood**
- **Jonah was swallowed by a whale**
- **Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights**
- **Only 144,000 people will be saved at the end of the world**

# Are these things TRUE?

Actually, Catholics believe that  
**EVERYTHING IN THE BIBLE IS TRUE, BUT**  
**NOT NECESSARILY FACT!**



**Something can be true  
without being a fact. For  
example:**



**If it's raining hard and I say, "It's raining  
cats and dogs!" that's TRUE but not a  
FACT.**

That's an example of *figurative language*.

Other examples:

- “I’m dying from this cold.”
- “That umpire is blind!”
- “I’ve been waiting forever for you.”
- “My mom’s gonna kill me!”



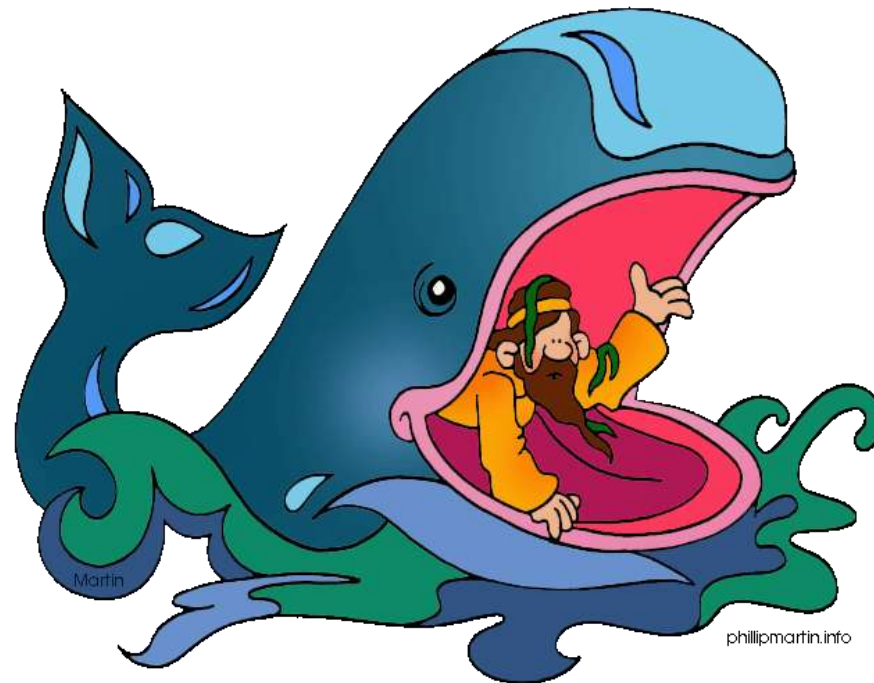
**Figurative language was used *occasionally* in the Bible, especially in the earliest parts of the Old Testament.**

**So, we believe that  
everything in the Bible is  
TRUE because it reveals the  
truth about God's  
love for us.....**





**...but not everything in the Bible is a historical or scientific FACT.**



**So you can learn about creation in science class and religion class.**

**Both teach truth.**

**Your science teacher will teach scientific truth (facts) about how the world came to be.**

**The Bible will teach you religious truth about how God created everything out of love for us.**

**Although the Bible contains many FACTS, the authors were more concerned with teaching us the TRUTH that God has revealed about Himself to us.**



**So, when the Bible says that Adam lived to be 930, Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights, and only 144,000 people will be saved at the end of the world, we recognize that the numbers are symbolic but that the story teaches us an important TRUTH about our faith!**

**Your Catechist will help  
you to know when  
figurative language is being  
used in the Bible.**



**The key is to always ask,  
“what is the TRUTH that God  
is teaching me in this Bible  
story?”**

