

10 Ways to Make the Bible a Part of Your Everyday Life

by Joe Paprocki, DMin

St. Jerome famously said that “ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ.” As disciples of Christ, we are called to do everything in our power to know the mind of Christ and to follow him more closely and faithfully. Reading and praying with the Bible is one of the most powerful ways we can come to know Jesus—God’s Living Word. Here are some tips for making the Bible a part of your everyday life.

1. **Have two Bibles on hand.** It’s helpful to have one Bible (such as a leather-bound *New American Bible*) that is displayed in your home as a symbol of faith and another Bible on your nightstand that is your own personal Bible for prayer and study (such as *The Catholic Study Bible*).
2. **Enthroned the Bible.** Catholics rely on signs and symbols to express our faith and remind us of God’s presence. Place a leather-bound Bible on a stand in a place of prominence in your home, such as your family room, living room, or dining room. This place of honor is like a throne for God’s Word.
3. **Highlight your study Bible.** It is perfectly acceptable and even recommended that you use a highlighter to mark passages that speak to you in a powerful way. It is also O.K. to write notes in the margins of your Bible; this is not disrespectful.
4. **Read with the Church.** The Bible is not one book but rather is a collection of books—a library. As such, it need not be read beginning with page one. A good way to read the Bible is with the Church, meaning that you read the Scripture readings assigned for the liturgy of each day. To find the daily readings, go to www.usccb.org.
5. **Don’t bite off more than you can chew.** One mistake many people make when reading the Bible is trying to read too much. The idea is not to finish the Bible but to become friends with it. You can do this by reading a brief passage each day and then reflecting on a word, line, or lines that speak to you in a special way.
6. **Get some help.** The Bible was written centuries ago, in a faraway land, in a different language. It would be presumptuous to think that we don’t need help understanding what we are reading. Consult footnotes and Bible commentaries for assistance.
7. **Know what to look for.** The Bible is God’s revealing of himself to us through his words and actions over thousands of years. Every time you read, ask yourself what the passage reveals about God and how this knowledge can deepen your relationship with him.
8. **Search for truth.** Catholics believe that everything in the Bible teaches truth about God. But we do not read the Bible like a history or science book, insisting that every bit of information must be taken literally. Some passages of the Bible use figurative language that conveys truth while not necessarily conveying scientific or historical fact.
9. **Pray the Bible.** The Bible is intended not so much to be read as it is to be prayed. Before opening the Bible, pause and ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and inspiration. Read a passage slowly and prayerfully. Pause to let the passage penetrate your heart and mind. Read it again prayerfully and then speak to God, responding in gratitude for what God has revealed of himself to his people.
10. **Learn how the Bible is arranged.** Knowing how the Bible is arranged can help you locate books, stories, passages, and people of the Bible. Use the [Bible bookmarks provided](#) to divide your Bible into eight smaller sections that you can get to know little by little.

For more help on how to read, pray, study, and understand the Bible, check out Joe Paprocki’s [The Bible Blueprint: A Catholic’s Guide to Understanding and Embracing God’s Word](#) (www.loyolapress.com).