



Teaching Activities Manual for
The Catholic Youth Bible
Second Edition

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and contributing authors

Saint Mary's Press™

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Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him. (Deut 30.19–20, NRSV)

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Introduction

Welcome to a new adventure in teaching the Bible to teenagers. We have designed this manual with the adventuresome teacher in mind—someone who has perhaps taught Scripture courses to high school students before. We assume that that someone is you.

You may have used conventional materials to teach the Scriptures, such as textbooks on the Bible, the Old Testament, or the New Testament. Maybe those were fine for a while, but now you are looking for something more—an approach that will take the Bible to a more personal level with students. You want your students to be more actively engaged in seeing how the Bible relates to their lives. You want them to be as excited as you are about discovering what God is saying to you and them through the Scriptures. And most of all, you want them to *read* the Bible, not just read *about* the Bible.

Okay. We have figured out that you are adventuresome, you love the Bible, and you love the kids you teach. What a great combination! Now we add to that mix *The Catholic Youth Bible*, the complete Bible for teenagers that intersperses the biblical text with over 650 lively, youth-friendly articles, pieces that draw teens into the biblical text itself to see how it speaks to them. Chances are you are already familiar with that resource, or you would not have picked up this manual. But in case you have not seen it, we will fill you in on some of the other features of *The Catholic Youth Bible*, or the *CYB*, as it is called in shorthand.

The articles in the *CYB* are tagged, for example, “Live It!” “Pray It!” “Did You Know?” “Introducing . . .” (focusing on important biblical people), and “Catholic Connections” (tracing the biblical roots of many Catholic beliefs and practices). Also featured are articles written from the perspectives of different cultures, called “Cultural Connections.”

The *CYB* also contains engaging section and book introductions, and includes nine full-color maps, eight reading plans, four special indexes, one full-color timeline of biblical events, a concise Bible concordance and four pages of full-color photographs.

This manual serves the teacher who wants to use *The Catholic Youth Bible* as the primary text for a Scripture course. It contains the following items:

- learning activities for every book of the Bible, some applying to several books and many incorporating and extending the articles in the *CYB*
- eighteen student handouts
- lists of resources for teacher background and for ministry with teens (appendix A)
- a list of recommended audiovisuals (appendix B)
- ten prayer services (appendix C)
- two retreat outlines (appendix D)
- an index of activities listed by biblical book (appendix E)
- an index of activities listed by topic (appendix F)
- reading plans (appendix G)

For those who want to “move outside the box”—go beyond the conventional textbook approach to teaching the Scriptures—the *CYB*, together with this manual, can provide just what is needed.

What Does This Manual Offer?

This manual is a resource for you to use in teaching a course on the Bible. It is more like a cookbook of learning activities than a plan for structuring a course from A to Z. In other words, you can rely on your own creativity in laying out a course that addresses the needs and preferences of you and your students.

The learning activities in this manual are organized, as is the *CYB*, according to the sequence of the books of the Bible. But that organization need not be the structure of your course. You may not want to start at the beginning of this manual and do activities from every section, following the Bible book by book. You may prefer to select activities from this manual, including ones that extend the *CYB* articles, according to another course organization. Here are some possibilities:

- Concentrate first on one biblical book or section of a book, not necessarily from the beginning of the Bible—for instance, one of the Gospels (Mark is the shortest) or Exodus, chapters 1–15 (the familiar story of Moses and the Israelites up through the escape from Egypt). This has the advantage of starting off the students with somewhat known material, and it also enables them to see one book or part of a book in total. Generally, Catholic students have been exposed to biblical passages in a mostly piecemeal fashion, as they are presented by the *Lectionary* at Mass. Reading a whole book, or a significant portion of one, can shed new light on the old familiar passages. Then you might proceed to other selected books of the Bible as your semester’s or year’s schedule permits.
- Follow the sequence used in the Saint Mary’s Press textbook *Written on Our Hearts: The Old Testament Story of God’s Love*, by Mary Reed Newland (see appendix A), which follows the order of salvation history, beginning with the “prehistory” in the first eleven chapters of Genesis.
- Use appendix E, “Index of Activities by Biblical Book,” to choose activities from each book that meet the specific learning styles of the teens with whom you are working. Each activity is listed, and next to many of them is a label such as “current events,” “art,” or “reflection,” to help you plan a curriculum that varies the type of learning that is happening in the classroom.
- Use appendix F, “Index of Activities by Topic,” to shape a course that fits the knowledge of the Scriptures that your students already possess and that answers the types of questions they are posing about life and about the Bible.
 - Specific topics covered by reading plans in appendix G
 - People of the Bible
 - Teen Life Issues
 - Important Themes and Topics in the Scriptures
 - Exegesis
- Use the prayer services and retreats in appendices C and D of this manual at appropriate points in your course, and draw from the lists of print and audiovisual resources in appendices A and B to structure a course that fits the needs of your students.

Regardless of what approach you take to structuring your course, we believe this strongly: **It is crucial for students at the outset to get a broad picture of the whole Story of salvation history**, or at least a rough chronology of events. Later in this introduction, in the section “The First Step: A Sprint Through Salvation History,” we offer a way to give them that overview.

What Do You Need in Addition to This Manual?

Background

As a cookbook, this manual offers you a smorgasbord of creative, engaging activities. It does not provide the in-depth background on the Bible that anyone teaching the Scriptures should have. You may already be a storehouse of such background knowledge from years of experience studying and teaching the Scriptures. If not, other excellent materials give that essential background, and full bibliographic information on a selection of those materials is included in appendix A.

We highly recommend having at hand an all-purpose study guide to the Bible. A scholarly work such as *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, edited by Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy, would be helpful. But a less technical, more user-friendly guide will be a better aid for translating scholarly insights into lay, and especially teenage, terms.

For that purpose we recommend *The Catholic Bible: Personal Study Edition*, edited by Jean Marie Hiesberger. Besides the full text of the New American Bible, with its usual book introductions and footnotes, this edition has five hundred pages of excellent, easy-to-understand background on all the books of the Bible. Those pages include outlines; insightful articles; charts; a reading guide walk-through for each book; and for each book a feature called “At a Glance,” which sums up briefly and well these crucial points: Who are the main players? What should I look for? When did this take place? Where did these events occur? Why was this book written? What is the story? (Note: Oxford University Press publishes another, more technical study guide, *The Catholic Study Bible*, edited by Donald Senior. This guide contains some material that overlaps that in *The Catholic Bible: Personal Study Edition*. For helping you teach high school students, *The Catholic Bible: Personal Study Edition* is preferred.)

Numerous other good resources on the Bible are available. A concise concordance to the version of the Bible you are using is in the back of *The Catholic Youth Bible*. A few activities require the use of a larger concordance (see appendix A). You will also need a good Bible dictionary: John L. McKenzie’s *Dictionary of the Bible* is a classic that has held up extremely well; another excellent choice is *The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary*, edited by Paul J. Achtemeier.

For other background that can be translated into useful insights for the students, we recommend the highly readable *Responses to 101 Questions on the Bible*, by Raymond E. Brown (we are fortunate that such gifted scriptural scholars are able to write in down-to-earth language for the layperson). Another highly accessible book that can help you translate scholarly information into kid-friendly insights is “*And God Said What?*” *An Introduction to Biblical Literary Forms for Bible Lovers*, by Margaret Nutting Ralph. Anthony E. Gilles has written

two little gems that give perspective on the Bible's development and context—*The People of the Book: The Story Behind the Old Testament* and *The People of the Way: The Story Behind the New Testament*. The four-page monthly *Scripture from Scratch* provides valuable, accessible background too.

Books that offer a kind of spirituality lens on the Bible can help you make your Scripture course much more nourishing for students' lives. Two by Richard Rohr and Joseph Martos offer a particularly accessible orientation to the spirituality of the Bible: *The Great Themes of Scripture: New Testament* and *The Great Themes of Scripture: Old Testament*. Two spiritually enriching books that highlight the justice themes throughout the Bible deserve special note: Joyce Hollyday's *Clothed with the Sun: Biblical Women, Social Justice, and Us* and Robert McAfee Brown's *Unexpected News: Reading the Bible with Third World Eyes*.

You may decide to supplement your course with textbooks like Mary Reed Newland's *Written on Our Hearts* (on the Old Testament) and Thomas Zanzig's *Jesus of History, Christ of Faith* (on the New Testament), even just to see how they present certain passages or deal with certain issues with a teenage audience.

See appendix A for full bibliographical citations for all of these resources and for other resources that can support your ministry with teens.

You may weave into your classes the insights you gain into the history, context, theological intent, and so on, of a given book of the Bible. In the spirit of the learning processes advocated in this manual, those background insights and information should not be delivered as extensive lecture pieces (see the section "The Pedagogical Approach of This Manual" below). You may integrate your insights gained from background knowledge judiciously as they fit, simply in the course of introducing activities or commenting on the insights that students gain as they do the activities.

Art and Music Materials

Many of the activities in this manual tap into the artistic and musical creativity of the students. It will be beneficial to keep an ample supply of the following items in your classroom. The students can help provide these.

- construction paper
- poster board
- scissors
- glue
- markers, crayons, and colored pencils
- magazines and catalogs
- glitter, yarn, buttons, feathers, and other doodads
- small percussion instruments

The Pedagogical Approach of This Manual

The pairing of *The Catholic Youth Bible* with this manual of learning activities supposes that you, the teacher, will shape a unique vision for the course, selecting what books of the Bible to cover, in what sequence, and in what depth. As discussed in the preceding section, you will need to draw on your own background in the Scriptures and supplement that with whatever study guides or references are most useful to you.

To help the students understand the meaning of the Bible passages, encourage them to form the habit of writing down any questions they have or any terms or concepts with which they are unfamiliar, as they are reading.

Discussions around their questions can precede or be integrated into the steps of the activities. In addition, there are certain activities, labeled “Exegetical Tools,” that focus on different types of biblical criticism and introduce the use of various resources for exploring the Bible.

However, the approach of most of the activities in this manual is not primarily academic but invites the students to engage in a personal dialogue with the text of the Bible. Having an academic background will help you guide them in that engagement, but the students’ focus will be less scholarly.

Let’s return to the analogy of a cookbook we have been using for this manual. For the most part, in our cooking, we alternate between old favorites and new recipes to spice up our lives. In the same way, a veteran teacher can incorporate the new activities found in this manual with lesson plans from years past, tailoring the curriculum to meet the specific needs of the current students.

This is not a cookbook for total beginners; it does not take you step-by-step through the activities and tell you how to “cook.” This book presumes that you have the background, the experience, and the knowledge of your students needed to use and adapt the activities as necessary.

The Power of the Scriptures in the Student–Teacher Relationship

This course rests on several important presuppositions about the Scriptures and the relationship between students and teachers. The first is that the Scriptures can speak powerfully to teenagers and their teachers about God and God’s desires for their lives and world. The second is that God’s word can speak to the needs, questions, and issues that are important to the students now. The third is that the teacher can not only discover ways in which God speaks through the Scriptures but also help the students discern, through careful listening, how God is communicating with them.

The Catholic Youth Bible and this manual of learning are based on the belief that God reaches out in love to teens through the Scriptures. During the tumultuous years of adolescence, God longs to offer peace, forgiveness, and affirmation. Jesus’ model of living and teaching can speak powerfully in their lives.

Scriptural exegesis is a dialogue between the person who reads the Bible and the scriptural text. Each individual or group brings personal questions and concerns to the reading of the Scriptures, and this allows for many rich interpretations of the same passages. Marvelously, God works through this interchange to inspire, challenge, and express love for us. While human teachers may share scholarly interpretations of a passage with the students, the main teacher of this course is God. God speaks to the students, and the teacher facilitates that process and encourages reflection on its mystery. This teaching manual is invitational in nature rather than simply instructive.

The students can hear God speaking to them only when they come to God honestly from the reality of their own lives. This manual provides opportunities for them to reflect on the mysteries of the Scriptures in age-appropriate ways. And in the meantime, they will be educating *you* about who they are and what is important to them.

The manual asks you, as the teacher, to create opportunities for the scriptural text to speak to the students on a personal level, and then to invite the students to reflect on and share what each of them finds there. You must take a discerning role with the students. After they have engaged with the text, listen to their insights, and ask further questions to help them reflect on their own images of God and their own sense of God’s invitation, message, and

call to each one of them and to the Christian community now. Share your professional knowledge and teaching skills with the students, and then join them in being open to God's word, facilitating this exploration process for them.

The Value of Active Learning in Teaching the Scriptures

Traditionally, the Scriptures have been taught in the linguistic style that has characterized instruction in most disciplines. Reading the Bible, hearing lectures about its meaning, discussing questions related to the material, and writing reflections about its significance have been important ways that students have learned about the word of God. This manual's goal is to complement that style with an active learning approach to exploring the Scriptures. The activities share some of the following characteristics:

Each student must engage in the learning process. The activities in this manual invite *every* student to interact with the scriptural text personally. In addition, the variety of learning styles addressed by the activities can appeal to all students to varying degrees. Dramatic, artistic, and musical students can shine, as well as those whose skills are verbal. The extrovert and the introvert can find activities that interest them. And the process of active learning invites all students to expand their gifts in those different areas and their understanding of how various media can enhance learning in all of life.

The activities in this manual approach the Scriptures from the context of the students' lives. The activities attempt to answer the students' silent question, "Why should I bother reading the Bible or paying attention in class today?" The use of contemporary music, television, and other media as sources for reflection on the Bible helps the Scriptures' "credibility" with teens. The connection of the Scriptures to issues of emotional development, friendship, family, society and world, and personal future helps the students relate a piece of writing from two thousand years ago with what happens to them every day. You can help by narrowing and adapting the context of the activities as much as necessary to address the specific questions of your own students.

An active learning approach invites the students to examine the Scriptures and be open to their message at a deeper level. For instance, the students can explore biblical passages through art projects, role-plays, ethical scenarios, journal entries, musical themes, and other forms of expression. This invites the students to see both familiar and unfamiliar passages in a new light and to explore concepts in a new way. We, and our students, cannot simply look at a passage or issue from a one-dimensional perspective, but must delve more deeply into it and make new connections. An active learning approach encourages the students to explore the complexity and mystery of God's revelation in our world now.

The First Step: A Sprint Through Salvation History

Earlier, we said that students need to have an overview of salvation history, or at least a rough chronology of biblical events, so that they can appreciate certain passages or books of the Bible in the context of "the big Story." We recommended that before tackling specific books or passages, you lead an activity

that will give them this crucial chronological, contextual background. Without that background, they may miss much of the fruit that this course holds out. We recommend facilitating a “sprint” through salvation history at the beginning of the course, even if you choose to structure the whole course according to the Story itself. That will help the young people to see the whole picture before examining the details.

Methods of Sprinting

If you can arrange for a two-hour block of time, consider giving the students an overview of biblical history through a wonderfully creative approach from the Horizons Program, a parish religious education program for senior high students published by Saint Mary’s Press. Session 3 of the course *The Bible: Power and Promise*, by Brian Singer-Towns, offers an imaginative, engaging activity that literally takes the students on a journey through salvation history. Along the way they stop at various points to learn the Story by completing activities that they take turns presenting.

If you are limited to shorter class periods or want to do a simpler version of a biblical journey with your students, we recommend an approach like the one in the next section.



Handout **Intro–A**

A Sample Sprint

1. Give your students a copy of handout Intro–A, “A Sprint Through Salvation History.” It divides the Story of salvation into eight sections or stages:
 1. The founders and the Promise (Abraham and Sarah, and their descendants)
 2. Moses, the Exodus, and the Sinai Covenant
 3. The invasion of Canaan and the period of the Judges
 4. The nation and the Temple (Saul, David, and Solomon)
 5. The divided nation (Israel and Judah, and the kings and the prophets)
 6. The Exile, the return to Judah, and the dispersion of the Jews
 7. More domination by foreign powers (Greek and Roman)
 8. Jesus as the Messiah of Israel (his life, death, and Resurrection) and the growth of the early church after Pentecost

Direct the students all to read the *entire* handout as homework or in class. As they read, they should follow along with the timeline of biblical history in the study aids near the back of the *CYB*. They should also consult the maps in the study aids.

2. Divide the class into eight groups, and assign each group one of the stages of the journey. Instruct the groups each to develop an artistic expression or symbol of their assigned stage, which they will present to the rest of the class at the next class period. Encourage the students to use their creativity. They may come up with a popular song that reminds them of what went on in that stage of salvation history. Or they may do a pantomime of, for instance, the escape from Egypt during the Exodus. They may create a visual—such as a painting, a drawing, or a collage. They may form a “human sculpture” to express a feeling or a theme from their assigned stage.

3. For the class period in which the journey takes place, if possible, set up eight stations in a large space such as a gym so that the students can actually move from place to place to get the feel of journeying. You might be able to

use parts of the whole school, making for a pilgrimage-type procession from one place to another.

Gather the students and then lead them through the space you have arranged, stopping at each station in the journey to read the section of the handout about that stage of salvation history. At each station, tie the material from the handout in with the timeline and maps in the *CYB* to reinforce the chronology. Then invite the assigned group to present its work.

4. When you have completed the journey, gather back in the classroom. Go over the experience, clarify any questions about the sequence and events (referring again to the timeline), and discuss which symbols or artistic expressions were particularly helpful in getting across what was happening during the stages of salvation history.

Ready to Go!

Once you have taken the students through the basic events of salvation history, they will be ready to study the Bible with at least some sense of context. As you explore different books and passages of the Bible throughout the course, refer back to the basic narrative, with the accompanying timeline from the *CYB*, to situate the scriptural stories, prayers, prophecies, and so on, in their historical contexts. A resource such as *The Catholic Bible: Personal Study Edition*, edited by Jean Marie Hiesberger, can provide invaluable guidance to you as you help the students explore the scriptural books and passages.

“Teach Me Your Paths”

Teaching is always an adventure. When you are drawing out students to encounter God’s word in their own lives, teaching may very well be the adventure of a lifetime. This course will be a growing, stretching experience for your students, and perhaps even more for you. After all, you cannot help others meet the living God without yourself meeting God in some pretty unexpected ways!

As you help the students explore the Bible through this course, let these words from Psalm 25 speak deeply in your heart as well as in your students’ lives:

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in you I trust;
do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.

.

Make me to know your ways, O LORD;
teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long.

(Verses 1–5, NRSV)

.....▶ **A Sprint Through Salvation History**

The God revealed in the Old Testament is not aloof or distant from human affairs; this God acts within human history. The Story of God's actions and the people's responses over many centuries is called **salvation history**.

It will help to keep the big picture of that history in mind as we set out to discover the meaning of the Old Testament because the history and the Scriptures of ancient Israel were intertwined. . . . Do not be concerned about memorizing names and events at this point; they will come up again many times in this course. Instead, simply try to recognize the broad pattern of history.

First, referring to the [biblical timeline in the study aids near the back of the *CYB*], note the time period in which the biblical events happened. As you can see, humankind existed for many thousands of years before the biblical era; most of that time is called prehistory because no historical records of those ancient peoples exist. (The time period of the Creation and the earliest stories of humankind appearing in the Old Testament fall into the category of prehistory.) About 3000 [B.C.], history as we know it began, with the development of early forms of writing. The biblical period—from the beginnings of Israel as a people through the time of Jesus and the earliest years of the church—went from about 1850 [B.C.] until about [A.D.] 100. It lasted almost two thousand years. And that is about the same amount of time as has elapsed from the time of Jesus until today.

What follows is a brief overview of the events of the biblical period. You may also refer to the [maps in the study aids].

The Founders and the Promise

The history and the religion of the Israelites began with Abraham. Abraham was a wandering herdsman, or nomad, who lived in the region now called Iraq, around 1850 [B.C.]. According to the Book of Genesis, God made an agreement with Abraham. God promised to make Abraham's descendants a blessing to the world and to give them the land of Canaan, later known as Palestine. The Promise, as this is called, was that Abraham's descendants would reveal the one God to the world. Christians believe that this Promise reached its fulfillment in the coming of Christ.

Abraham's descendants and their families inherited the Promise. Abraham, his son Isaac, and grandson Jacob would be called the patriarchs, or founders, of the Jewish faith. Their wives—Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel—would be called the matriarchs.

The Exodus of the Israelites and the Covenant

At the close of the Book of Genesis, the descendants of Abraham are living in Egypt, having traveled there from Canaan in order to survive



Pentateuch



Genesis

Creation

Creative Presentations of the Creation Story

Genesis, chapters 1–2

The students make the first Genesis story come alive with their own creativity.

1. Call several students to read Gen 1.1–2.3 aloud.
2. Divide the class into seven groups. Assign a different day of Creation to each group and say something like this to the students:
 - Today each group is responsible for reading from Genesis the Bible passage associated with its assigned day of Creation and preparing a creative, nonverbal way to present that day to the other groups in our next class. You may use artwork, music, video, drama, rap, props, the environment of the classroom, costumes, and so on. Each presentation should run no longer than 4 minutes. The presentation should be respectful of the Scriptures, and may also be fun. Before the end of this class, each group will need to pass its ideas by me for approval and suggestions.
3. After the presentations are given at the next class, invite the students to discuss any insights or reflections that resulted from preparing or watching them.

Care for the Earth: Genesis

Genesis, chapter 1

Adapt the activity “Care for the Earth: Psalms,” on page 120 of this manual, for use with Genesis, chapter 1.

Dominion Over the Earth: Genesis

Genesis, chapter 1

The use of modern parallels challenges the students to think more carefully about the meaning of *dominion* in Gen 1.28–30.

1. Begin class by playing the song “Pass It On Down,” by the country-and-western group Alabama, from the album *Pass It On Down* (BMG Music, 1990). That song encourages listeners to take care of the earth’s environment so that future generations can enjoy the planet’s resources. Provide the lyrics

on an overhead or computer projector, and discuss them after the song is played. Ask the students which ideas in the song are meaningful to them, are challenging to them, are disturbing, or speak some truth for them.

2. Give one student a set of keys. Say something like this to the student:
 - I am going away for a month. I want you to take care of my house, my car, and my classroom while I am away. Use these keys as if they were your own. When I come back, I want to see my house, my car, and my classroom in the same condition in which I gave them to you.

Lead the students in a discussion about the various ways that request can be honored or dishonored.

3. Read Gen 1.28–30 aloud. Write two column headings on the board, “Stewardship” and “Ownership,” and help the students brainstorm the differences between those concepts. Ask the students, “Which is more like the dominion given to the human beings in Genesis?” Remind them that only God owns the universe, and help them realize that the human dominion over the earth called for in the Scripture passage is one of stewardship, not ownership.

4. Divide the class into small groups. Instruct the groups each to brainstorm ways in which human beings are responsible and irresponsible stewards of creation today. Ask the groups to report their insights and resolutions back to the class.

5. Tell the students each to identify one way they are an irresponsible steward of creation and to write a reflection paper about that, including ideas for how they will commit to growing in responsibility for the gift of creation in that area.

Sin and Alienation

The Effect of Sin: Distance

Genesis, chapter 3

This activity invites the students to reflect on the effects of sin described in Genesis, chapter 3, and then to consider how sin in their own lives can distance them from God, themselves, others, and nature.

1. Ask five students to stand before the class and read aloud the parts for the characters in Genesis, chapter 3: narrator, serpent, woman, man, and God. Quietly direct the students who have the parts of the man and the woman to move farther from each other and from God as they read their lines.

2. After the reading, ask all the students what they observed about the characters. Then make the following comments in your own words:

- This story of disobedience to God shows how sin can affect our lives. Sin separates us from God and others, and from ourselves and nature. [Ask the students to explain this concept from the story.]

- Before they sin, the man and the woman in the story are in a harmonious relationship with all that is around them. After they sin, they think about themselves only, and they stop looking at God, each other, the world, and even their innermost selves.

3. Divide the class into four groups, labeling them “God,” “Myself,” “Other people,” and “The natural world.” Ask each group to come up with at least three things someone can do to create a distance between themselves and the entity identified by the group’s label. Then tell the groups each to plan a brief pantomime that presents one of those actions and shows the separation that can occur. The groups should be creative and include all members in their presentation.

4. Invite each group in turn to present its pantomime, and ask the rest of the class to guess what it is portraying. Discuss the points that the groups bring out in the presentations. Conclude by saying this in your own words:

- God knew what the man and woman needed in order to be in harmony with the world around them. God knows what we need today as well. In the Scripture passage, sin is portrayed as the temptation to presume that we know better what we need than God does. Observing what brings us closer to or distances us from others, ourselves, God, and the world is a step toward learning what God wants for us.

Genesis in Hollywood

Genesis, chapter 3

Casting four biblical characters helps the students explore their own understanding of human nature, especially in light of temptation and weakness.

1. Divide the class into groups of four or five and ask them to read Genesis, chapter 3, with each person in the group assuming a different role: narrator, serpent, woman, man, and God.

2. Invite the students to imagine that they have been asked to cast the four main characters in the story (serpent, woman, man, and God) for a movie. Tell the groups to brainstorm about what actors they would like to play each character and then to discuss their selections.

3. With the entire class, take suggestions for each character, and write the suggestions on the board. Lead the students in a discussion of the following questions:

- What kind of personalities did you choose to represent each biblical figure and why?
- How does the selection of actors relate to temptation and sin?
- How was the serpent able to tempt the man and woman? Are some people better at tempting than others? Are some people more vulnerable to temptation? Are people more susceptible to temptation at some times than at others?
- What message does the story give about the nature of temptation and sin?

God Wants Our Best: Comfort and Challenge

Genesis, chapter 4

The students use the Cain and Abel story as an opportunity to think about the damage of comparing ourselves with others.

1. Assign several students to the characters in Gen 4.1–16 (narrator, Eve, the LORD, and Cain) and ask them to read the passage aloud to the class. Then invite those who read the parts of Cain and God to explain to the class (in character) how they felt in the story and why they did the things they did. Allow the class to ask the readers questions, and the readers to answer as their character might. For instance, the class might ask Cain how he felt about the choice God presented to him in Gen 4.6–7.

2. Continue the discussion with the class by raising these questions and observations in your own words:

- Because God suggests that Cain’s best will be accepted, what temptation lurks for Cain if he does not do his best? Does that exist for us, as well?
- This story addresses our everyday lives. There are always people who appear more successful than us in some areas, and others who appear less successful. As in this biblical story, it is important that we focus on our own performance only and not evaluate ourselves based on other people’s success. God simply wants us to try our best, and resist the temptation to compare ourselves with others and, even worse, to take out our frustration on others when we are feeling that we have not done our best or that our best isn’t good enough.

3. Direct the students to work in pairs to come up with realistic modern Cain and Abel scenarios, asking some pairs to prepare feminine versions. Mention that the students may use sports, academics, parental approval, popularity, social life, and so on, in their examples. Invite them to share some of their stories with the class. Discuss the insights that arise.

Field of Dreams: Outrageous Requests

Genesis, chapters 6–9, 12

The movie *Field of Dreams* invites the students to reflect on God’s outrageous requests and human beings’ courageous responses.

1. Begin class by reading Gen 6.11–9.17 (the call of Noah) or Genesis, chapter 12 (the call of Abraham). Address any questions the students have about the content and biblical meaning of the story.

2. Show the students at least the first 40 minutes of the movie *Field of Dreams* (MCA/Universal, 1989, 106 min., rated PG), which gives a modern interpretation of Noah’s and Abraham’s courage to follow an unusual call. Consider playing the entire movie if you have time; though the first 40 minutes is enough to encourage reflection on this topic, the whole movie delivers several meaningful messages.



APPENDIX E

Index of Activities by Biblical Book

The following index lists the activities in this teaching manual chronologically by biblical book and by page number. As you plan to teach a book from the Bible, you can use the titles of the different entries to help you decide which activities you would like to look at more closely. The descriptive words in parentheses identify that a particular activity uses one of the following learning styles or approaches:

- **Action** activities encourage students to behave differently in their personal lives or to address social injustice by either direct or social action.
- **Analysis** activities challenge students to assess material and draw conclusions about it.
- **Art** activities invite students to express themselves creatively on paper or in other visual ways.
- **Current Events** activities ask students to assess the world around them in light of the Scriptures.
- **Drama** activities provide ideas for role-plays or suggest that students create and perform skits.
- **Exegesis** activities use tools and techniques from biblical scholarship to help students read the text more closely.
- **Media** activities recommend movies or Internet-based projects, or suggest that students create their own visual presentations.
- **MI (Multiple Intelligences)** activities give students the opportunity to choose the way they want to express themselves, which allows the learning styles of all students to be appreciated.
- **Music** activities recommend music, discuss or give project ideas about music, or provide opportunities for students to be musical in the classroom.
- **Prayer** activities invite students to pray individually or as a group, or to talk about prayer.
- **Reflection** activities ask students to write down the thoughts and feelings they have on a given topic.
- **Research** activities ask students to learn more about a topic by seeking information outside the classroom.
- **Simulation** activities provide opportunities for you or the students to bring a concept to life through imitation.

Pentateuch

Genesis

- Creative Presentations of the Creation Story (Gen 1–2) 23 [MI]
- Care for the Earth: Genesis (Gen 1) 23
- Dominion Over the Earth: Genesis (Gen 1) 23–24 [simulation]
- The Effect of Sin: Distance (Gen 3) 24–25
- Genesis in Hollywood (Gen 3) 25
- God Wants Our Best: Comfort and Challenge (Gen 4) 26
- Field of Dreams*: Outrageous Requests (Gen 6–9,12) 26–27 [drama] [media]
- Sarai's Journal (Gen 12) 27–28 [reflection]
- Oral Tradition (Genesis) 28 [simulation]
- The Sacrifice of Children (Gen 22) 28–29 [research]
- Abraham and Trust (Gen 12, 15–18,22) 29–30
- Biblical Names (Genesis) 30 [research]
- Sibling Rivalry (Gen 4,25,27, 29–30,33,37,45) 30–31 [drama] [reflection]
- Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Gen 37–50) 31 [media]
- Newsworthy Joseph (Gen 37,39–45) 31–32 [drama]
- Sex and Power in Genesis (Gen 12,34,38–39) 32
- Good Out of Evil (Gen 45) 33
- A Family Tree and a Review (Genesis) 33

Exodus

- An Oral and Visual Overview of Exodus (Ex 1–14) 35 [art]
- Midwives and Nonviolence (Ex 1) 35–36 [research]
- God's Self-Introduction (Ex 3) 36
- A Seder Meal (Ex 12) 37 [simulation]
- The Exodus and Gospel Music (Ex 14–15) 37 [music]

- Moses Needed Support (Ex 17) 38 [prayer]
- Covenant and Commandments (Ex 19–20) 38–39 [drama]
- The Ten Commandments and Morality Plays (Ex 20) 39 [drama]
- Prayer Styles: Guided Imagery—Would You Do It? (Ex 22) 40 [media] [prayer]
- Aaron, the Golden Calf, and Peer Pressure (Ex 32) 40–41 [MI]
- Modern Idolatry (Ex 32) 41 [art]
- Seeing God in Hindsight (Ex 33) 41–42 [reflection]
- Creating a Prayer Space (Ex 35–40) 42
- Wrap-up Reflection Paper: “My Wanderings in the Desert of High School” (Exodus) 43 [reflection]

Leviticus

- Rules My Kids Will Have to Follow (Leviticus) 44
- The Sinai Café: Jewish Food Laws (Lev 11) 44–45
- Israelite and U.S. Law—Reasonable? (Lev 19) 45
- Modern Implications of the Jubilee Year (Lev 25) 46
- Prayer Styles: Communal Prayer—Ritual Atonement Service (Lev 16) 46–47 [prayer]
- Family Holy Days (Lev 23) 47

Numbers

- The Divisive Effects of Jealousy (Num 11–12) 48 [drama]
- One Rash Moment (Num 20) 48–49 [simulation]
- Balaam: A Cartoonist's Perspective (Num 22–24) 49 [art]
- Jewish Holidays Come Alive (Num 28–29) 50 [research]

Deuteronomy

- Remembering the Holocaust (Deut 4) 51 [media] [research]
- Deuteronomy: A Challenge to Do the Right Thing (Deut 6) 51–52

- Insiders and Outsiders (Deut 24) 52 [reflection]
- The Rewards of Obedience (Deut 28) 53
- Choose Life (Deut 30) 53–54

Historical Books

Joshua

- Unlikely Heroes (Josh 2) 57 [reflection]
- Prayer Styles: Sharing Personal Symbols—Memorial Stones (Josh 4) 57–58 [prayer]
- Exegetical Tools: What Is Exegesis? 58 [exegesis]
- Exegetical Tools: Form Criticism—the Saga (Josh 6) 59 [exegesis]
- Music and the Conquest of Jericho (Josh 6) 59–60 [music]
- The Twelve Tribes and the Cafeteria (Josh 13–19) 60

Judges

- Personal Idols: Reflections of God? (Judg 2) 62
- Are We in Need of Judges? (Judg 2–3) 63
- Comic Strip Judges (Judg 3–4,6–8,13–16) 64 [art]
- God's Use of Weakness: Samson (Judg 13–16) 64–65

Ruth

- Loyalty Lyrics (Ruth 1) 66–67 [music]
- God's Silent Presence (Ruth) 67 [reflection]
- The Domino Effect of Goodness (Ruth) 67
- Exegetical Tools: Historical Criticism in Ruth (Ruth) 68 [drama] [research]

1 Samuel

- Searching for Unconditional Love: Hannah and Elkanah (1 Sam 1) 69
- Divided Loyalties: Church and State (1 Sam 8) 69–70 [simulation]



APPENDIX F

Index of Activities by Topic

The following index lists the activities in this teaching manual by different topics. The descriptive words in parentheses identify that a particular activity uses one of the following learning styles or approaches:

- **Action** activities encourage students to behave differently in their personal lives or to address social injustice by either direct or social action.
- **Analysis** activities challenge students to assess material and draw conclusions about it.
- **Art** activities invite students to express themselves creatively on paper or in other visual ways.
- **Current events** activities ask students to assess the world around them in light of the Scriptures.
- **Drama** activities provide ideas for role-plays or suggest that students create and perform skits.
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- **MI (multiple intelligences)** activities give students the opportunity to choose the way they want to express themselves, which allows the learning styles of all students to be appreciated.
- **Music** activities recommend music, discuss or give project ideas about music, or provide opportunities for students to be musical in the classroom.
- **Prayer** activities invite students to pray individually or as a group, or to talk about prayer.
- **Reflection** activities ask students to write down the thoughts and feelings they have on a given topic.
- **Research** activities ask students to learn more about a topic by seeking information outside the classroom.
- **Simulation** activities provide opportunities for you or the students to bring a concept to life through imitation.

Aaron

Aaron, the Golden Calf, and Peer Pressure (Ex 32) 40–41 [MI]

The Divisive Effects of Jealousy (Num 11–12) 48 [drama]

One Rash Moment (Num 20) 48–49 [simulation]

abortion

Midwives and Nonviolence (Ex 1) 35–36 [research]

Divided Loyalties: Church and State (1 Sam 8) 69–70 [simulation]

Abraham and Sarah

Field of Dreams: Outrageous Requests (Gen 6–9,12) 26–27 [drama] [media]

Sarai's Journal (Gen 12) 27–28 [reflection]

The Sacrifice of Children (Gen 22) 28–29 [research]

Abraham and Trust (Gen 12, 15–18,22) 29–30

Sex and Power in Genesis (Gen 12,34,38–39) 32

action

A Social-Action Step (Neh 1) 95 [action] [prayer]

Purposeful Acts of Kindness (Sir 3) 138–139 [action]

A Lenten Project (Joel 2) 175 [action] [prayer] [reflection]

Service Learning: Jonah and Other Children's Stories (Jonah and other passages) 179 [action] [art]

Modern Miracles (Lk 9) 226 [action]

Christmas Cards (Titus 2–3) 299 [action] [art]

Entertaining Angels (Heb 13) 303–304 [action]

Acts of the Apostles

Acts of the Apostles Comic Book: An Overview (Acts of the Apostles) 244 [art]

Newspaper Headlines: Miraculous Events in Acts (Acts 5,9–10,12–14,16,19–20) 250–251

Acts of the Apostles Floor Map (Acts 12–28) 253

Adam and Eve

The Effect of Sin: Distance (Gen 3) 24–25

advertising

The Lure of Advertising (Eccl 1) 131

Advertising: False Prophecy (Jer 14) 157 [media]

Advertising the Good News (Lk 6) 224

Ads for Inner Needs (2 Cor 5) 278–279 [art]

alcohol

Temperance (Prov 23) 128–129 [reflection] [simulation]

almsgiving

A Lenten Project (Joel 2) 175 [action] [prayer] [reflection]

Amos

Status-of-Society Images (Am 7–9) 176 [art]

Power Simulation: Amos (Am 8) 176–177

Standing Up for the Poor (Am 8) 177 [action] [reflection]

angels

Entertaining Angels (Heb 13) 303–304 [action]

Exegetical Tools: The Concordance—the Nature of Angels (Heb 13) 304–305 [media]

anger

Jesus' Comments on Our Society (Mk 11) 216–217

Practical Relationship Advice (Eph 4) 285–286 [drama]

animals

Exegetical Tools: Historical Criticism and the Biblical Dictionary—the Prophets' World (Isa 3,5,13,34,43; Ez 16; Dan 3) 147–148 [MI]

The Living Creature Sketch (Ezek 1) 164 [art]

anxiety

Prayer Styles: Mindfulness (Lk 12) 228–229 [prayer] [reflection]

apocalyptic literature

Exegetical Tools: Form Criticism and the Biblical Commentary (Dan 7–12) 171

Coded Language (Revelation) 317

Exegetical Tools: Form Criticism—Apocalyptic Literature (Revelation) 318

apostles

Explaining One's Call (Lk 4–6) 223 [drama]

A Decision-Making Simulation (Acts 1) 245–246 [simulation]

ark of the Covenant

Prayer Styles: Ritual Prayer (1 Chr 16) 91 [drama]

arrogance

Wisdom and Folly (Prov 9) 128 [drama]

Ascension

Filming the Ascension (Acts 1) 245 [simulation]

Assyrians

Our Perception of Foreign Nations (Jonah) 180

athletics

Music and the Conquest of Jericho (Josh 6) 59–60 [music]

atonement

Prayer Styles: Communal Prayer—Ritual Atonement Service (Lev 16) 46–47 [prayer]

attentiveness

Pay Attention! (Heb 2) 301

attitude

Disposition and the Path Toward God (2 Kings 5) 84 [drama]

Becoming Like Children (Mt 18) 205

Balaam

Balaam: A Cartoonist's Perspective (Num 22–24) 49 [art]



APPENDIX G

Reading Plans

In addition to the eight reading plans found in *The Catholic Youth Bible*, revised edition, several reading plans offered here can help you plan a course that focuses on a specific theme or help ensure that you do not miss covering a particular topic or person.

The following short reading plans could not shape a semester course, but they could lend a focus to the study of the Scriptures. That focus may deepen the study of the books that are traditionally covered in a high school curriculum, and might also provide some direction for exposing students to other biblical books that teachers often are not able to cover because of time constraints.

Each lesson plan consists of a list of entries from appendix F, “Index of Activities by Topic.” For each listing, look at the corresponding entry in appendix F to find activities that will help you explore the material with your students. The number next to each topic or person lets you know how many corresponding activities you will find in appendix F.

Reading Plan 1: People of the Bible

- Abraham and Sarah (5)
- Moses (10)
- Joseph (5)
- David (8)
- Elijah (1)
- Tobit and Sarah (4)
- Judith (3)
- Esther (3)
- Job (5)
- Jeremiah (6)
- Ezekiel (4)
- Micah (3)
- John the Baptist (1)
- Mary, the Mother of God (1)
- Jesus Christ (47)
- Peter (2)
- Paul (18)

Reading Plan 2: Important Themes and Topics in the Scriptures

- Christian life (*see* life) (8)
- conversion (2)
- faith (10)
- forgiveness (5)
- healing (5)
- justice (5)

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Station 1 in the exercise “Seeing Others with God’s Eyes,” on page 70, is based on the activity “Who Would You Choose?” and the exercise “The Christian Team” on pages 264–265 is based on the activity “Football Stadium,” in *Get ‘Em Talking: 104 Great Discussion Starters for Youth Groups*, by Mike Yaconelli and Scott Koenigsaecker (El Cajon, CA: Youth Specialties; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989), page 93 and 45. Copyright © 1989 by Youth Specialties.

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