

## An Invitation to Dioceses, Parishes and Schools

In an effort to encourage our customers to read the Bible and related books, the Catholic Book Publishers Association sponsors a FREE online Bible study program called **CatholicsRead!**

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**All dioceses are invited to participate**, and plans are underway to involve national organizations, parishes, schools, individuals, bookstores that sell to the Catholic market and, of course, our member publishers.

### **How will this work?**

Each year, **CatholicsRead** will highlight three books from the Bible. For the first few years at least the books will be related to the liturgical cycle. Publisher members of CBPA are invited to offer titles from their lists that are related to the featured biblical books *themselves* or to a major *theme* of the biblical books.

For example, the first year, the three books from the Bible were Job, Luke, and Romans. Suitable books for the program that are related to the Job selection, for instance, might range from a scholarly exegesis on Job to a prayer book on suffering. In this way, we hope to involve publishers serving a wide range of readers.

For the 2007 Liturgical Year the featured books from the Bible are John, Psalms and “God is Love,” inspired by Pope Benedict XVI’s first encyclical, “Deus Caritas Est.”

There are Supplemental Resources Available: Bibles, Study Guides, Biographies, Children’s Books, Books About Loss and Grieving, Music, Spirituality, and Prayer Books.

**CatholicsRead** will be driven by many factors, but the internet site, [www.CatholicsRead.org](http://www.CatholicsRead.org), will be an integral part of the program. There, readers will find basic information about the program, the featured books, historical information, author biographies, plus information about Bible translations and available versions.

On this web site, participating publishers will also provide a descriptions of each of their titles, along with the ISBN number and the cost of each book. To purchase books, readers will be able to browse a list of bookstores to locate one in their area or link directly to the publisher’s site.

**The CatholicsRead program for the 2007 Liturgical Year will be promoted in the CBPA exhibit booth at the 2007 National Conference for Catechetical Leadership and the 2007 Religious Booksellers Trade Exhibit.**

## **How you can participate?**

### How dioceses can participate

- Feature a **CatholicsRead** area at diocesan gatherings. Contact a CBPA-member publisher for assistance.
- Include a workshop on Catholic reading at all diocesan conferences, gatherings, and training sessions, especially those for catechists, teachers, and youth ministers.
- Organize presentations to explain the mechanics of **CatholicsRead**. Introduce each cycle’s titles to priests and lay leaders during key diocesan meetings, such as presbyteral council meetings. It is important for gatekeepers, especially priests, to buy into the program if it is to be sustained at the parish level. Contact the publishers to ask them to give clergy discounted copies of **CatholicsRead** titles.

### How individuals can participate

- Make a reading commitment for the year—a book a month, one book per Scripture.
- Invite a group of friends to read the same book and share your reflections online.
- Read the selected Scripture and choose the one that resonates most strongly. Buy and read a few of the recommended titles for that book. Then purchase the same titles for your friends and family as Christmas presents.
- Use the Scripture and one of the recommended titles as guides for your daily journaling or reflection.
- Make the daily readings from the Lectionary part of your daily devotion or spiritual reading. Accompany that with a title selected from one of the **CatholicsRead** featured books.

### How parishes can participate

The cornerstone of this program is the parish. Encourage the parish staff—pastor, director of religious education, youth minister, director of evangelization, deacon—to share information about **CatholicsRead** with parishioners.

- Host a book club that focuses on one of the Bible choices. Identify 3-4 other titles from which parishioners can choose. Meet on a regular basis and discuss the biblical text as a large group, then divide into smaller groups to discuss the individual titles.
- Plan a multi-week program that focuses on one of the titles and Scripture texts during Advent, Lent, or summer.
- Encourage small faith communities to choose a title for each of the Scripture texts during the year as the source of their reflection for three 4-6 week periods.
- Let the teen leaders of the parish choose a title per month. Set up a graffiti board in the youth ministry room or parish school of religion and let them write comments for the parish to read. Let the **CatholicsRead** program help improve their biblical literacy as they lead the parish in sharing their insights on the Scripture and a chosen title.
- Invite the pastor to host a reading group so that the reflections from the Scripture and the book can help in his homily preparations.
- Purchase a variety of the recommended titles. Read them to the shut-ins or elderly of the parish or to those living in nursing homes in the area.
- Donate one book from each category to the parish library.
- Purchase a quantity of one of the lesser expensive titles and use it as an evangelization tool in the parish community. Go door-to-door to meet the neighbors by delivering the book as a gift.
- Continue the trend of people in a community all reading the same book by starting a parish-wide program (for instance, “St. John the Evangelist Reads!”). Encourage members to choose a book featured in **CatholicsRead**. Organize discussion groups around program titles.
- Make arrangements with your local Catholic booksellers to offer a special discount to parishes in your area for placing significant orders on books featured in **CatholicsRead**.
- Co-sponsor a talk and signing party for selected authors whose works are featured in **CatholicsRead**. Work with your local bookstore and publishers to arrange to get the author to the party.

### How a bookstore can participate

- Develop a special mailing to customers on the **CatholicsRead** books you carry.
- Host readings or in-store discussions on the featured books.
- Host events for **CatholicsRead**: author lectures, children's story hours, possible lectio-type sessions.
- Advertise the events in parish bulletins and diocesan papers. Offer discounts on selected Scripture titles.
- Host book signings of some of the authors of featured books.
- Contact parishes in your area about the program and the featured books in stock.
- Do a fax mailing to local parishes listing the books you carry.
- Set up a small in-store display with the **CatholicsRead** poster and books.
- For bookstores that do parish book exhibits, organize Bible displays during weekend Masses in November.
- Feature the **CatholicsRead** poster and logo in store window.
- Devote a special page to the **CatholicsRead** books on store's website.
- List the featured books in special section of your catalog, or position the **CatholicsRead** logo by those titles.
- Develop billing/invoice/package inserts with the **CatholicsRead** books.
- Contact diocesan paper to feature the **CatholicsRead** books or reviews of them.

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