Catholic Biblical Federation

FEBIC LAC

Report of the Caribbean Zone of FEBIC LAC

December 2, 2020

Necessity is the mother of invention.

The activities of the year were profoundly affected by the onslaught on the coronavirus, COVID-19. However, in spite of, or maybe because of the challenges that were faced as a result of the restrictions on travel and meeting face to face, we have had to rethink our strategy of how to promote the Word of God in the region of the Antilles. Everything had to be virtual.

This report will be an overview of the main activities of the Zone during the course of the year 2020. All done within the context of the Year of the Word of God (First Sunday of Advent 2019 to the Feast of St. Jerome, 30 September 2020) promulgated by the Catholic Biblical Federation.

I. Promulgation of the Year of the Word of God

II. Ongoing Courses on Sacred Scripture and the Church Documents on the Word of God

III. Promotion of Enthronement of the Word and Lectio Divina

IV. Liturgical and Biblical Formation for Proclaimers of the Word

V. ABP Virtual Encounter – June 13, 2020

VI. Webinar on the Origins of the various translations of the Word – September 18, 2020

VII. Festive Celebration in Preparation of the Closing of the Year of the Word of God

I. Promulgation of the Year of the Word of God

In August 2019, as zonal coordinator, I prepared and disseminated a 5-minute video explaining the CBF's rationale and vision for the Year of the Word of God. It included excerpts from the Letter of Cardinal Tagle, President of the Federation, and an exhortation with practical suggestions to all the dioceses, archdioceses and other biblical groups of the zone encouraging them to make good use of this opportunity to study, celebrate and live the Word of God. (Attached is a copy of the video)
https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/FMfcgxwKjfBwnBhqRJShQhTTGbpgGQzn

II. Ongoing Courses on Sacred Scripture and Church Documents on the Word of God

In the Diocese of Roseau, the Diocesan Pastoral Center offered courses in Sacred Scripture.
The courses were scheduled as follows:

1. **Sacred Scripture – Classes of 3 hour duration**
   2019
   November 30: Overview of the Pentateuch
   2020
   February 1: Overview of the Prophetic Literature
   February 15: Overview of the Wisdom Literature
   February 29: Overview of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles
   March 14: Overview of the Pauline Corpus and the Catholic Epistles
2. **Church Documents**
   The following documents dealing with the Word of God were studied.
   Dei Verbum (Vatican II Document on Divine Revelation)
   - ✔ The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church and its Concluding Message (Synod of Bishops 2008)
   - ✔ Verbum Domini (Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI)
   - ✔ ABP (The word of God in all aspects of pastoral life)
   - ✔ Evangelii Gaudium (Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis)

III. Promotion of the Enthronement of the Word of God and lectio divina

On the Launching of the Year on the First Sunday of Advent,

- The Enthronement of the word of God was encouraged in all parish communities; enthronement accompanied by acts of reverence for the word; procession, lights, incense, festive ribbons, banners, etc.
- A similar Enthronement of the word of God was encouraged in all families.

IV. Liturgical and Biblical Formation of Proclaimers of the Word

Recognizing the importance of the Proclamation of the Word during the liturgy, special training and formation courses were designed for lectors and readers. This was done in various parishes

V. ABP Virtual Ecounter June 13, 2020

On Saturday, June 13, Msgr. William John-Lewis convened a virtual Encounter of the ABP representatives of the various (arch)dioceses of the Caribbean region. The meeting, the first of its kind, was attended by the representatives of the archdioceses of Port of Spain, (Trinidad), and Kingston, (Jamaica), the dioceses of Paramaribo (Suriname), Belize City and Belmopan (Belize), St. George's-in-Grenada (Grenada), Mandeville (Jamaica), and Roseau (Dominica).

ABP, Animacion Biblica de la Pastoral, Biblical Animation of All Pastoral Life, was adopted by the Antilles Episcopal Conference in early 2011 in response to Pope Benedict XVI in the Post Synodal Exhortation on the Word of God in the Life of the Church, 2010, where he states:"***The Synod called for a particular pastoral commitment to emphasizing the centrality of the word of God in the Church's life, and recommended a greater "biblical apostolate", not alongside other forms of pastoral work, but as a means of letting the Bible inspire all pastoral work***".

Msgr. John-Lewis invited the participants to introduce themselves and give some information regarding their involvement in ABP in their respective dioceses. Then followed lectio divina on the Gospel of John 6: 51-58.

Then the Coordinator of the Caribbean Region of the Catholic Biblical Federation (CBF or FEBICLAC), gave a brief presentation on his role in promoting the Sacred Scriptures in the region. Msgr. explained that FEBICLAC, the Catholic Biblical Federation of Latin America and the Caribbean was divided into four sections—the South Cone, the Andean Zone , Central America and Mexico and The Caribbean.

The main topic for discussion was the continuing celebration of the Year of the Word of God which began on the First Sunday of Advent last year and ends on September 30 this year, the Feast of St. Jerome. It was meant to be an opportunity to share best practices and challenges; and to begin to look as the conclusion of this special year.

Each participant gave a summary of the activities they had developed in the launching and ongoing celebration of the Year of the Word of God.

Sr. Lorraine Royer, ICM reported that in the diocese of Roseau, the Pastoral Center team has offered courses on various papal documents including Dei Verbum, Verbum Domini, the Concluding Document of the Synod on the Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church. The Bible was studied in the form of overview the Pentateuch, the Prophetic Literature, the Wisdom Literature, the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. The last overview on the Pauline Corpus, the Catholic Epistles and Revelation has not taken place due the onset of the Coranavirus epidemic. Radio programmes were broadcast on Dominica Catholic Radio, and on Facebook live.

Other activities included the enthronement of Bibles in all the Churches of the diocese and in families. Lectio divina continues to be taught and encouraged at the beginning of all pastoral activities and meetings. There are no definite plans for the conclusion of the Year on the Feast of St. Jerome, September 30, 2020.

In the Archdiocese of Kingston, Fr. Thomas Dynetius reported that while there had not been much activity, a series of courses on the Bible had been planned but could not be offered due to the onset of the corona virus. There are plans to offer the course in September.

Fr. Roy reported that in the diocese of Mandeville, there was a course for lay leadership attended by 40-60 members. It consisted of advanced catechism, liturgy, *lectio divina*. The plans to continue were thwarted by the advent of Covid-19. It was noted that the people are hungering for the Word of God.

Gerda Misidjang intimated that in the diocese of Paramaribo, the Bishop asked all priests to do the enthronement of the Word in their parishes; there was the re-commissioning of lectors and ministers of the Word; *lectio divina* continues to be encouraged. There had been plans to invite instructors from the Bible Institute in Trinidad to address the Youth, but the event had to be postponed due to the pandemic.

The greatest challenge faced in the diocese is the question of language. The Bibles available are in English while the official language of the Country is Dutch.

Luciano Cuellar from the diocese of Belize City and Belmopan was appointed to the Board of St. Ignatius High School a year ago where a large percentage of the students are not Catholic. There is a need for basic instruction in the faith. He has developed 15 mini-presentations on the faith with Sacred Scripture ending with *lectio*.

Peter Timothy reports that in the archdiocese of Port of Spain, there exists a Bible Institute operated by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. The Archbishop collaborated with the Bible Institute in celebrating a Bible fair on Sunday of Word of God. Of note was the

vibrant representation and participation in various workshops of the young people. Plans to produce a DVD on the Gospel of Matthew were thwarted by the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. The parish of Toco studied the Gospel of Matthew. *Lectio divina* is being encouraged integrating the bible into every aspect of Catholic life. The Institute has begun classes in Tobago.

David Hopkin reported that there had not been much ABP activity in the diocese of St. George's-in Grenada except the observance of the Sunday of the Word of God.

One of the important outcomes of this initial encounter was the willingness of the participants to share their expertise with the rest of the zone. Peter offered to disseminate information on the Bible Fair, and the Books used at the Bible Institute where he is an instructor. Fr. Roy, who comes to the diocese of Mandeville from year of teaching Sacred Scripture in Nairobi, Kenya, is excited about the catechetical process as well as offering his expertise in Sacred Scripture to the Region.

Msgr. John-Lewis invited ideas on the Closing of the Year of the Word of God. Following are some of the ideas mentioned:

1. (Peter) Explain who St. Jerome was, his contribution to Biblical Studies
2. (Sr. Lorraine Use the quotations from St. Jerome as a way of reinforcing the love for and understanding of the importance of Sacred Scripture.
3. (David) Develop a Sunday School pdf page for the parish; links with videos on Children's level.

It was agreed that such a meeting is very useful and should be continued every two months . The next meeting is scheduled for a date in August. Information will be forwarded to the members in due time. Fr. Roy was invited to close the meeting with a prayer.

VI. Webinar on Understanding Bible Editions from the Origins to Today

. The Antilles Zone of FEBIC LAC hosts Webinar as part of the observance of the Year of the Word of God

A total of forty-seven (47) Bible enthusiasts participated in the webinar organized by the zonal representative of the Latin American and Caribbean region (FEBIC LAC) of the Catholic Biblical Federation (CBF).

On the evening of Friday, September 18, the Webinar on "Understanding Bible Editions from the Origins to the Present" began with a Prayer by the host, Msgr. William John-Lewis. After establishing the required ZOOM protocols, he gave a brief overview of

the Catholic Biblical Federation highlighting its international nature and its mission of disseminating information on the Sacred Scriptures and promoting the centrality of the Sacred Scriptures in all aspects of Pastoral Life.

The participants represented a wide cross-section of men and women from the various dioceses of the AEC including the diocesan representatives of ABP from the diocese of Paramaribo, Mandeville, Roseau, and the archdiocese of Port of Spain. There were others from the United States.

Fr. Matthew Allman, CSsR, a graduate of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, gave a brilliant exposé of the history of the various translations of the Bible from earliest times up to the present day. He explained the genesis of the "Catholic" vs the "Protestant" bible, the Septuagint, the Vulgate, the work of St Jerome leading up to the most recent editions and translations of the Sacred Scriptures.

Following his presentation, there was a Question and Answer/Discussion period. Following are some of the comments from participants:

" What a great opportunity this is to be encouraged to delve deeper in the Word"

Very refreshing and proving the rich variety of our Catholic Treasure." 13. "

Thank you. This was very eye opening"

" Thank you for a good seminar; quite informative."

" Do this more often; Amazing seminar."

The participants were invited to two upcoming culminating online activities: on September 23rd, the virtual Biblical Encounter of the Antilles Zone and Southern Cone of Latin America Zone; and on September 30th A Virtual Celebration of the Closing of the Year of the Word of God on the Feast of St Jerome.

The evening ended with a prayer and a blessing with gratitude to the AEC Secretariat for their invaluable assistance.

VII. Festive Celebration in preparation of the Closing of the Year of the Word of God—September 23, 2020

This celebration was prepared and executed jointly by the zone of the Caribbean and the Southern Cone.

Objective: To have a virtual biblical encounter between the two areas of Febic Lac. To share through a sign that highlights the Word as the center and source of our entire life of faith and mission.

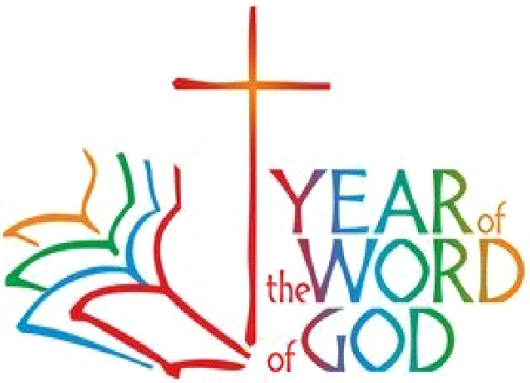
Two moments are proposed: a first moment of enthronement of the Word and a second moment a sign of the Word.

Time	Activity	Responsable	Participants
5 min	**Greetings from the zonal coordinators**	**William-Jaime**	**All**
15 min	**Video Presentation**	**Rubén**	**All**
5 min	**Words of Encouragement**	**Dom Jacinto**	**All**
10 min	**Enthronement of the Word**	**Southern Cone**	**All**
30 min	**Each zone meets separately**	**Southeren Cone/Caribbean**	**Groups by zones**
15 min	**Sign of the Word**	**Caribbean**	**All**
5 min	**Greetings from the coordinator of FEBIC LAC**	**Jesús Antonio**	**aLL**
3 min	**Closing Song**		

- **Recognizing the challenge posed by language,--the fact that the majority of the participants from the Caribbean are English-speaking, while those from Cono Sur are Spanish-speaking, the programmed included moments shared by the entire group, and others where the zones met separately. The two major sections were the Enthronement of the Word, a multi-media presentation incorporating the music, voices and languages of the two zones, organized by the coordinator of Cono Sur. The other was the Signs of the Word, also a multi-media presentation incorporating appropriate Scripture passages and images to emphasize the power other Word of God.**
- **The evening began with Greetings from each of the zonal coordinators. This was followed by a short video on the work of FEBIC LAC. Dom Jacinto Bergman offered a few words of encouragement. Before the final hymn to close the evening, Jesus Antonio Weinsense gave some closing remarks inviting everyone to the X Pleanary Assembly to be held in Mar de Plata in November 2021.**

Appendix

The Year of the Word of God
First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2019 –
Feast of St. Jerome, September 30, 2020



PART I—OVERVIEW OF THE PENTATEUCH

Contents

I. Overview of the Old Testament

- The Jewish Canon of Scripture
- Difference between Protestant and Catholic Bibles
- Composition of the Old Testament

II. Overview of the Pentateuch

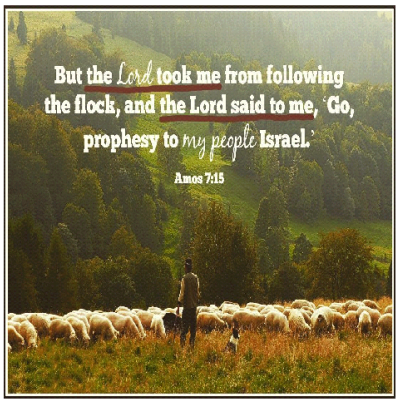
- What is the Pentateuch
- Formation of the Pentateuch
- Themes of the Pentateuch

THE YEAR OF THE WORD OF GOD
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 1, 2019 - FEAST OF ST. JEROME, SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

PART II—OVERVIEW OF THE PROPHETIC LITERATURE

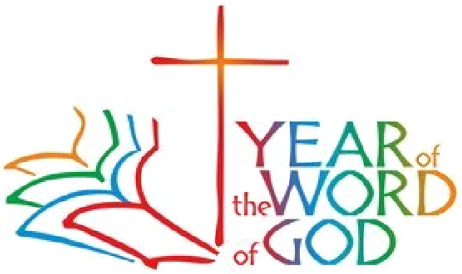
AN IRRESISTIBLE DIVINE CALL

- At some point in their lives each received an irresistible divine call and was chosen as God's envoy





The Year of the Word of God First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2019 – Feast of St. Jerome, September 30, 2020



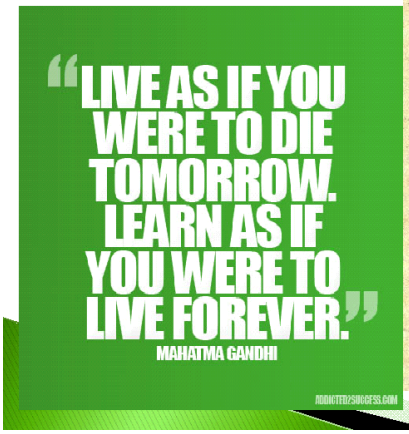
PART III—OVERVIEW OF THE WISDOM LITERATURE

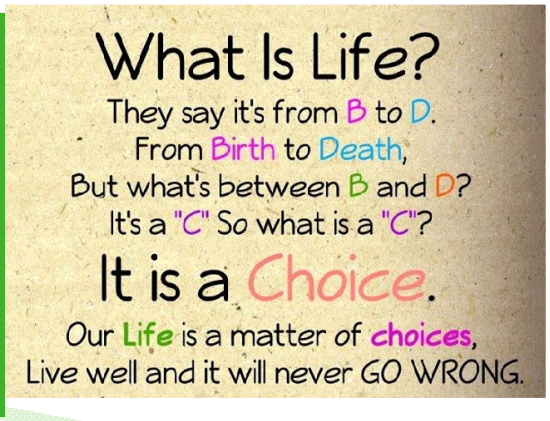
YEAR of the WORD of GOD

DIOCESE OF ROSEAU
Diocesan Pastoral Center
Msgr. William John- Lewis
February 2020

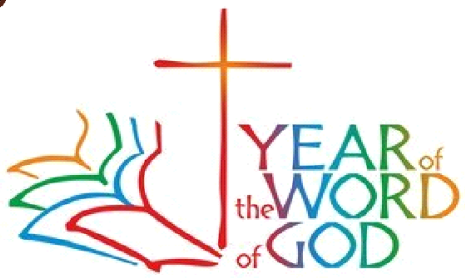
Overview of Wisdom Literature

- Biblical wisdom literature concentrates on daily human experience: how is life to be lived?





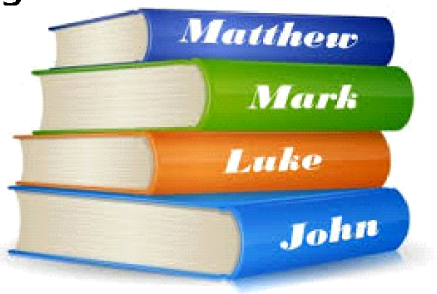
The Year of the Word of God
First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2019 –
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PART IV—OVERVIEW OF THE GOSPELS and ACTS

Examining our Sources for Jesus' Life.

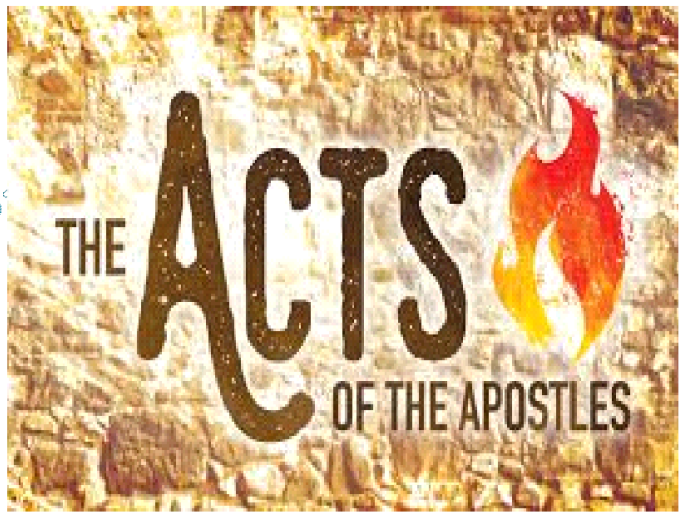
The four New Testament gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are our most important sources for understanding Jesus' life and teachings.





Symbols ascribed to the Gospel Writers

- Traditionally, the four Gospel writers have been represented by the following symbols:
  - St. Matthew, a divine man
  - St. Mark, a winged lion
  - St. Luke, a winged ox
  - St. John, a rising eagle
- These symbols are taken from the Prophet Ezekiel, 1:1-21.
- A similar description is found in the Book of Revelation, 4:6-8.

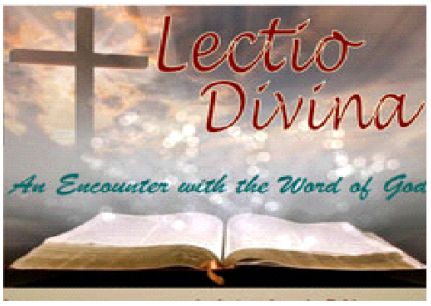


LECTIO DIVINA



LECTIO DIVINA

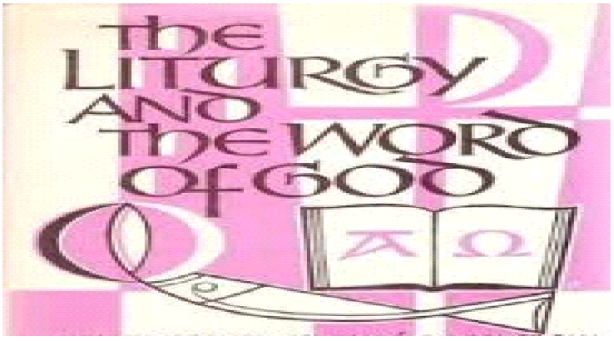
- If we are to know Christ more we will need to be nourished by the Scriptures, and what better way than by practicing Lectio Divina.
- Lectio Divina, or "divine reading" is an encounter with the Word of God





WORKSHOPS FOR READERS

Diocese of Roseau
Diocesan Pastoral Center



- Sr. Lorraine Royer, ICM
- Msgr. William John-Lewis

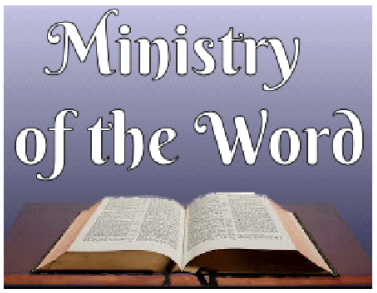
The Effect of Scripture Within the Liturgy

- Augustine's letters and sermons show that the reading of scripture was a real event, a genuine happening for the people
- The sharing of God's word was of equal importance to the sharing of communion. They were both privileged moments in which God was really present and close to the people.

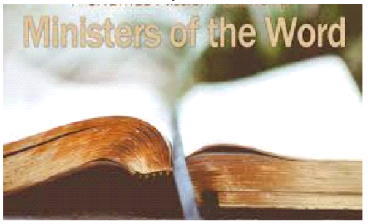


The Ministry of the Word

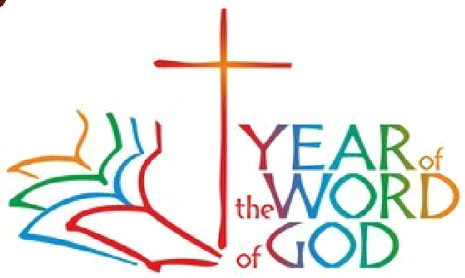
- Augustine considered his role in the Liturgy of the Word as a 'ministry.'



It is really God, not Augustine, that is speaking to God's people:
"What I say is only the means. It serves as a warning. The one who speaks to your hearts has his cathedra in heaven. We are ministers of the Word; not our own word, but the Word of our God and Lord ...it is the Lord Jesus Christ himself who says to us what we have heard just now in the gospel."



The Year of the Word of God
First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2019 – Feast of St. Jerome, September 30, 2020



MINISTRYOF READER

Formation/Training for the Ministry of Reader

- All those entrusted with this ministry, **should be truly suitable and carefully trained.**
- **This training should be biblical and liturgical, as well as technical.**

(LMI§55)