

# *How to Pick out a Bible:*

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## **Where to buy a Bible:**

Anywhere you would like. Pauline Books and Media at 172 N. Michigan is the closest with the most complete selection - and clerks and nuns who could help you choose.

## **Translations:**

There are four popular English translations - either Catholic, or ecumenical - in descending order of popularity in the United States:

- *New American Bible Revised Edition* (NABRE) A Catholic translation. The readings we hear on Sundays are based on this translation.
- *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV) An ecumenical translation, which can be found with the Deuterocanonals/Apocrypha. A scholarly translation, which is close to the sentence structure in the Greek and Hebrew texts.
- *Good News Bible* or *Today's English Version*. An ecumenical translation, which can be found with Deuterocanonals/Apocrypha. It is a more free translation, rendered into contemporary American style. (The *Breakthrough Bible* and the *Catholic Children's Bible* use this translation.)
- *New Jerusalem Bible*. This is a Catholic translation, which is more popular in Europe, but can be found here.

*Note: Apocry...what?* There are seven books which are found in Catholic Bibles, not in Protestant editions. They are Judith, Sirach, Wisdom, Baruch, Tobit, 1 and 2 Maccabees, and some bits of Esther and Daniel. A long story, but making it short, they were originally written in Greek, not Hebrew. Jews and early Christians accepted them all. Then Jews put them in a different category since they were not in Hebrew. Then, during the Protestant Reformation, they were rejected by some of the reformers. So "Protestant" Bibles don't contain them. Look for either a Catholic translation or a Protestant/ecumenical translation that includes them.

## **Editions:**

All of the above translations come in numerous editions - different publishers, different features. Below are some features of the ones included in the St. Alphonsus Amazon store.

- ***Lectio Divina Bible*** The NRSV translation with the addition of meditation points and suggestions for reflection and prayer on almost every page. An excellent Bible for devotional use, rather than classic 'study.'
- ***Catholic Study Bible*** This does not yet come with the NABRE text, but the earlier NAB. It is an excellent Bible for serious study. It includes a 500 page commentary written by top Scripture scholars.
- ***Personal Study Bible*** This does include the NABRE text. It also includes a 500 page commentary, outlines and other aids. It is a more accessible version than the scholarly one, but it is also full of good scholarship.

- **NABRE** from the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine is just a straightforward Bible without the study aids.
- For sheer beauty, look for the various editions of the St. John's Bible, published by Collegeville. The monks at the abbey commissioned the first hand calligraphed, hand illuminated Bible in 500 years. It is a stunning work of art. You can buy portions of it in various editions, facsimiles of the original.



## Commentaries and Books on the Bible:

If you would like the 'easiest way in', pick up Joe Paprocki's *The Bible Blueprint* (In the style of *Practice Makes Catholic*.)

Commentaries discuss a book or series of books in the Bible in great detail, passage by passage. The best for beginners, by far, is the *Collegeville Bible Commentary* series. It is published in inexpensive editions. For example, a Gospel with commentary is about \$7.00. Each book in the series has the Scripture text on half the page, with the commentary running below it. Excellent scholars have written these, but in language that someone who is not a scholar can understand.