

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

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Reflection of Cardinal George on the Synod of Bishops' Theme

The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church

It is important to approach Holy Scripture with a sense of the entire Bible as a written witness to what God has done for his people over the centuries. God is not only the primary author of Scripture; He is the primary actor. We should read and meditate on passages of Scripture to discover how God acts.

One way to begin is to take one of the four Gospels and read it all the way through. Then a commentary can be used to help understand particular passages in their immediate historical context. Then we place our own experience of how God acts in relation to what is revealed to us about God in the pages of Holy Scripture.

From reflection on the life of Jesus and of the Church born of his words and actions, especially his death and resurrection and his sending of the Holy Spirit, we can work back through the history of the Jewish people, through the Exodus and back to Abraham. The pre-historical stories in the first part of Genesis help us to focus again on how God acts and of how our relationship to Him has been contorted by sin and healed through grace.

Lastly, we should not leave a reading or study of Holy Scripture without asking what God asks of us now in the light of the words of Scripture. Personally, I always find spiritual light and nourishment in the Gospel according to St. John and in St. Paul's second letter to the Church in Corinth.

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