Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework 2007 by USCCB

Core Curriculum

**1st Semester:** The Revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture

**Main Points:**

1. **How Do We Know About God?**
   1. We all have a thirst and desire
   2. God is revealed in many ways
      1. Natural Revelation (creation, human person)
      2. Divine Revelation
         1. History (Old Testament – prophets, covenants, etc.)
         2. Jesus Christ – fullness of Revelation
   3. Transmission of Divine Revelation (Apostolic Tradition; Tradition & Scripture, Deposit of the Faith)
2. **About Sacred Scripture**
   1. Divine Inspiration – God inspired biblical authors
      1. God is the author (without error)
      2. Bible is inerrant in Revelation and faith
   2. How Bible came to Be (oral then written)
      1. Canon of Scripture (books in Bible)
   3. Sacred Scripture in the Role of the Church
      1. Importance; study of Scripture; Scripture in prayer
3. **Understanding Scripture**
   1. Authentic interpretation of Bible (responsibility of Church)
   2. Criteria for interpreting Sacred Scripture
      1. what the human authors intended (culture, time, idioms etc.)
      2. within the unity of content
      3. attentive to the analogy of the faith
   3. Senses of Scripture: literal and spiritual (allegorical, moral, anagogical)
   4. Bible in relation to science and history (no conflict in relationship to them)
   5. Historical finding (Dead Sea Scrolls, Nag Hammadi,etc)
4. **Overview of the Bible**
   1. Old Testament: 46 books (Protestants 39 books)
      1. divisions: Pentateuch, Historical, Wisdom, Prophetic
   2. New Testament: 27 books
      1. Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, Letters, Revelation
   3. Unity of the Old and the New Testaments
5. **The Gospels**
   1. Central place in Scripture
   2. Three Stages in the formation of the Gospels
   3. Synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke
      1. authors, audience,
      2. content: Infancy Narrative, Baptism of Jesus, Temptation, Sermon on the Mount, Jesus’ parables & miracles
      3. Paschal Mystery: Last Supper, Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension
   4. Gospel of John
      1. author, audience
      2. Content: Prologue, Christ’s dialogues and testimonies more mystical, miracles/signs, discourses (Bread of Life, Last Supper)
      3. Jesus’ Passion, Death, Resurrection

**1st Semester:** The Revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture

**Challenges**

1. **Is it true that Catholics do not use or read the Bible?**
   1. No, Catholics use the Bible regularly. (Mass, prayer, liturgy of the hours, sacraments)
   2. The Church urges Catholic to use the Bible for personal prayer
      1. *Divino Afflante Spirit* (Puis XII, 1943)
      2. *Dei Verbum (DV)* Vatican II
   3. Scripture study & prayer groups using Scripture are common
2. **Isn’t the Bible just another piece of literature?**
   1. No, it contains various types of literary forms and genres – more than literature
   2. Inspired Word of God – cannot just be understood as other literature
   3. Scripture always needs to be either read or understood merely in the same way as other literature.
3. **Is the Bible always literally true?**
   1. “literally”? we do not believe in literalist or fundamentalist approach
   2. “literally” in a contextualist approach - all Scripture is true on matters pertaining to religious and salvific teaching because it is inspired by God
   3. Bible has a definite historic basis for events recounted in both Old and New Testaments; Church particularly upholds the historicity of the Gospels;
   4. The Church does NOT claim that the Bible’s purpose is to present scientific or historical facts
   5. The Church give guidelines for interpretation of Sacred Scripture
4. **Isn’t the Bible about the past? Why do people today think it applies to them?**
   1. Scripture is the living Word of God. While the content is rooted in particular moments in history, the message is timeless and universal.
   2. God continues to speak to us through Scripture: this is why the liturgies of the church always contain Scripture and why personal prayer focused on Scripture is vital
5. **Why do Catholics maintain beliefs and practices that are not in the Bible?**
   1. The Bible is not the only means that God chose to hand on truths of Revelation. The two complementary ways Revelation is passed on: Scripture and Tradition.
   2. Nothing taught through Tradition can ever contradict Scripture since both came from Christ through the Apostles.
6. **Why do some people try to change what the Church teaches about Jesus Christ?** 
   1. Various reasons: justify their personal belief or lack of belief, out of sincerity but misguided or misinformed efforts to try to explain mysteries about Jesus.
   2. Early Church History there were different heresies about Jesus
   3. Sometimes people did not like what Jesus taught or did or what happened to him. Several gospels shied away from teachings of Incarnation, suffering, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus
   4. Modern times – some individuals and groups who try to reduce miracles of Jesus to natural scientific terms which undermines Jesus’ divinity.