Breaking Open the Word

A LOOK AT THE SUNDAY READINGS
Catholics and the Bible

- It is often said that Catholics ‘are more interested in their silly traditions and ignore God’s word.’ In other words, our belief system ‘trumps’ what is written in Scripture.

- Well, first of we WROTE the Bible. For the first 1517 years after the Birth of Christ there was only one.

- Our Worship Services are broken into 2 parts ‘The Liturgy of the Word’ and the ‘Liturgy of the Eucharist.’ Both are biblically based.

- However there is a valid ‘disconnect,’ according to some, in the way they are delivered.

- The ‘Cotton Candy Issue.’
Books in the Catholic Bible

- The Catholic Bible has 73 Books
  - 46 in the Old Testament
  - 27 in the New Testament
- The ‘Pentateuch’ is the first five Books of the Old Testament. The include Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
- The Catholic Bible has Seven Books not included in the King James (or similar versions) of the Protestant Bible. They are Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Sirach, Baruch, and 1st & 2nd Maccabees
At every Mass there are four Readings
An Old Testament Reading
A Psalm
A New Testament Reading
A Gospel Reading
There is always a ‘connection’ between the 1st Reading and the Gospel.

The Psalm is usually selected in keeping with the ‘theme’ of the Season.

The other New Testament Reading (usually a Letter) are done in a repeating cycle and may or may not have a significant connection to the other readings.
The Gospels
The A, B, or C represents the Readings used during each Liturgical Year.

John does not have his own Year but is ‘woven in’ where appropriate in each of the yearly Cycles.
Matthew, Mark, and Luke are referred to as ‘Synoptic Gospels.’
That is to say, they are written as a synopsis of the Life of Christ.
They all have a particular starting place and follow Jesus life through an ending place (The Resurrection)
Matthew starts with the Genealogy and has the Birth of Christ (Story of the Magi)
Mark starts with the Baptism of Christ (the beginning of His public ministry)
Luke starts with the ‘Infancy Narrative’ which includes the birth of John the Baptist and follows to the Annunciation of Mary and the Birth of Christ (Visit of the Shepherds)
Relationships between the Synoptic Gospels

MARK
- Unique to Mark: 3%
- Mark and Luke: 3%
- Mark and Matthew: 18%
- Triple Tradition: 76%

LUKE
- Unique to Luke: 41%
- Double Tradition: 35%
- Unique to Matthew: 23%

MATT.
- Unique to Matthew: 45%
- Double Tradition: 25%
- Unique to Luke: 10%
A recent theory by biblical scholars suggests that all three of the Synoptic Gospels came from a single source, ‘The Q Document.’

‘Q’ stands for quelle which is German for ‘Source’ or ‘Well.’

It’s theorized that the three Gospel writers had access to this document, and used it as the foundation of their writings.

There has been no suggestion as to whom the author may have been, and as yet, no copy of the document has ever been found.
John takes a very different approach

Highly literary and symbolic.

Follows no particular order in relationship to a ‘time line.’

Dwells on theological reflection and an inner application of the Life of Christ
So....what does this all mean to YOU?
First off, always bring your Missalette!

We will open with the prayer from the Collect for the upcoming Sunday.

We will then go to the Readings for that Sunday.

I will ask someone to read the 1st Reading and then the Gospel.
Volunteering to Read

- I know it’s tough early on.
- I know there are some tricky words.
- Relax…nobody cares.
We will then discuss the Readings

- We will always try to determine what the ‘connection’ between the two readings are.
- We will try to set the readings within the era when they were written and how the people of that time might have understood them based on the political, social, economic, and spiritual climate.
- We will allow you to make a conclusion of how it might apply to your everyday life and spiritual growth.
Then we will Close

- With a prayer….which will always be the ‘Glory Be!’
- Why? Because it’s a great prayer of Praise and Acclamation and it only takes 5 seconds to say!
- Then we go on break….and the second part of the session will reconvene.
- Any questions?
Okay...lets try it!