

What is the difference between a Catholic and a Protestant Bible?

Both Catholic and Protestant Bibles contain the New Testament (27 books). However, the Protestant Old Testament has 39 books. Catholic Bibles contain 46. The extra books included in Catholic Bibles are Tobit, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach, Baruch, and Judith (and additional parts of Esther and Daniel). These are the deuterocanonical books. Generally Catholics call these seven books deuterocanonical, whereas Protestants call these books apocryphal.

Which Bibles are exclusively Catholic?

Exclusive Catholic Bibles include the **New American Bible** (not to be confused with the **New American Standard Bible**), the **New Jerusalem Bible**, and the older **Douay-Rheims**.

The only translation that is accepted for liturgies in the United States is the **New American** translation. The **Contemporary English Version** is approved for children's liturgies.

Imprimatur (from Latin, "let it be printed") is found in Catholic Bibles and indicates that it is published with ecclesiastical permission. This indicates assurance that the text has been approved by a Catholic Bishop and that the edition contains the seven deuterocanonical books.

A Brief Description of the Translations Most Commonly Used by Catholics:

Contemporary English (CEV)

A youth-oriented edition, it has simple language and avoids difficult vocabulary and sentence structure. It meets the needs of a variety of readers.

Douay-Rheims (DR)

[Tan Books & Publishing]

A translation of the Latin Vulgate (St. Jerome translation into Latin from the Greek and Hebrew), it is the closest translation to the **King James Bible**. This translation was used before the NAB. Customers might ask for this Bible that was used in school before 1970.

Jerusalem Bible (JB) [Doubleday]

Published by Doubleday, it is translated from the **French Bible de Jerusalem**. It is known for its exquisite literary style that is used across denominational lines. Used for Mass and liturgies in many European countries, this translation can be recommended for use in prayers and devotions. (In 1999 it was reprinted by Doubleday.)

Living Bible (LI)

[Tyndale House Publishers; Our Sunday Visitor]

Kenneth Taylor's paraphrase of the **American Standard Version** is in everyday language so that anyone, including children, can understand it. It was originally called "The Way" with its earlier New Testament, "Reach Out." Written at an eighth-grade level, some consider it too interpretive.

New American Bible

(NAB) [Various Publishers]

This translation is most familiar to Catholics from the readings at Mass. It is the first English Bible from the Catholic Church translated from the original texts. It is at the eleventh-grade reading level and is direct in style. Completed in 1970, the New Testament was revised in 1986 and the Psalms were revised in 1992.

New Jerusalem Bible

(NJB) [Doubleday]

This is the update of the 1966 **Jerusalem Bible** based on the 1973 French Edition with revised footnotes, updated text and inclusive language. A recent Standard Edition from Doubleday has a four-column format that makes it lightweight and portable.

New Revised Standard

(NRS) [Various Publishers]

This updated Revised Standard translation includes changes from archaeological and textual discoveries made in recent decades. It eliminates male-oriented language. The NRS was used in English editions of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It is used for Mass and liturgies in parts of Canada.

Revised English (RE)

[Cambridge Bibles, Oxford University Press]

An extensive revision of the **New English Bible** features a contemporary text using inclusive language.

Revised Standard (RS)

[Various Publishers]

Some say this is the best English translation for Bible study because it closely follows the Hebrew/Greek originals. It is a revision of the English Bible in the **King James** tradition. It is written at a tenth-grade level.

Today's English (TEV)

[Various Publishers]

Known as the **Good News** translation, it is written in modern English in a simple style that was chosen for the elementary age reading level. Because of its use of paraphrasing, it is not recommended as a study Bible.