Make sure that you and your Catholic parish celebrate the Sunday of the Word of God on January 26, 2020. Pope Francis suggests that parishes undertake "initiatives to make the sacred Scripture more accessible to believers, to increase their gratitude for so great a gift, and to help them to strive daily to embody and bear witness to its teaching."

Pope Francis has issued an apostolic letter entitled "Aperuit Illis," instituting the "Sunday of the Word of God" for all dioceses and churches throughout the world. "I hereby declare that the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be devoted to the celebration, study and dissemination of the word of God."

Here are two such initiatives that may be used by every parish:

1. Parishioners bring their personal or family Bible to Mass with them on this Sunday so that the celebrant can offer a prayer of commitment and blessing over the people as they hold their own Bibles at Mass.

2. Parishioners bring their Bibles home to be enthroned in their homes, using the enthronement service I have provided. Please click on the links below for these two initiatives.

Enthrone the Bible in Your Home

Click here to access a prayer service for enthroning the Bible. You may make as many copies as you wish for your family or the families of your parish. Print on both sides to create a four-page booklet. It is available in English and Spanish.

Thanks to the American Bible Society - Catholic Initiatives.

Blessing of Bibles at Sunday Mass

Click here to access a blessing prayer over the Sunday Mass congregation for Sunday of the Word of God. Instruct the people to bring their personal or family Bibles to Mass, then offer this prayer of commitment and blessing.

More information about "Sunday of the Word of God" with links to "Enthrone the Bible in Your Home" and "Blessing of Bibles at Sunday Mass" may be found here:

https://www.bridge-b.com/

I hope that this new universal celebration of the Sunday of the Word of God may bring many of God's people to give new emphasis to the sacred Scriptures and learn to listen to God's word as a regular practice in their lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. I invite you to read the new apostolic letter of Pope Francis, which is a beautiful teaching on the centrality of Scripture for our Catholic life. Click here to read "Aperuit Illis."

Stephen J. Binz is a Catholic biblical scholar and award-winning author of over fifty books. As a popular speaker, he offers keynotes, seminars, and workshops at international, national, and regional conferences as well as education for clergy and pastoral leaders. He also offers topical presentations, missions, and retreats in churches internationally. Invite Stephen Binz to address your next conference, education days, retreat, mission, or other event.

Please forward this email to as many people as you can, especially pastors and diocesan and parish staffs. I also invite you to respond to me with comments or questions at sjbinz@aol.com.