**WHY IS THE CATHOLIC BIBLE DIFFERENT FROM THE PROTESTANT BIBLE?**

Hebrew Bible contained only the Old Testament and from its Old Testament it excluded seven entire books - namely, Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, First and Second Maccabees - and parts of Esther (10:14 to 16:14) and Daniel (3:24- 90; 13; 14).

Jewish Torah was not officially canonized till Roman Empire was trying to destroy all teachings (writings) of the Early Christian Church.

the Septuagint, a pre-Christian Greek translation of the Old Testament included seven entire books - namely, Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, First and Second Maccabees - and parts of Esther (10:14 to 16:14) and Daniel (3:24- 90; 13; 14). With equal ranking as the rest of the Old Testament before the Torah became officially established.

The additional books were of comparatively recent origin and since some of them were written in Greek - the language of paganism - they naturally aroused the opposition of the Jews who preferred a conservative non-pagan influence in their faith. The early Christians used the Septuagint in their debates/disagreements with the Jews and this served to confirm the opposition to this translation of the Old Testament.

The Protestants of the sixteenth century objected to the additional books because of the doctrinal teachings of these books. Called them "apocryphal"

doctrine of purgatory, of prayers and sacrifices for the dead

importance in the eyes of God of good works

They removed the additional books, which had been in the Christian Bible up till 1517 and placed them at the end of the Bible in a special appendix. Labelled them as "apocryphal" (spurious, uninspired), a designation which helped to lower them in the estimation of Protestant readers.

The Catholic Church has never referred to these books as uninspired or apocryphal, they formed a part of the Bible of united Christendom **before** the Protestant separation.

The Catholic Church has always considered these books as inspired and of the same rank as the other Old Testament books. Her attitude is based upon the following facts:

1) The Apostles and New Testament writers quoted principally the Septuagint. In fact, of the three hundred and fifty Old Testament quotations found in the New Testament, about three hundred are taken from the Septuagint.

2) Some of the New Testament writers made use of the additional books themselves, particularly of the Book of Wisdom, which seems to have been St. Paul's favorite volume. The Epistle of St. James - to take another example - shows an acquaintance with the Book of Ecclesiasticus**. If the Apostles and New Testament writers used some of the additional books, did they not thereby approve the entire Septuagint collection?**

3) The additional books were accepted in the Church from the beginning. The Epistle of Pope Clement, written before the end of the first century, makes use of Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom, gives an analysis of the book of Judith, and quotes from the additional sections of the book of Esther. The same is true of other early Christian writers.

4) The oldest Christian Bibles in existence (Codex Vaticanus, etc.) contain the additional books intermingled with the rest, just as we find them in the Catholic Bibles today.

5) The oldest Christian lists of Biblical books contain the additional books. In 382 Pope Damasus in a Roman Council issued a formal list of Old and New Testament books and the list contains the same books as we have in our Bibles.

6) Finally, Christian art of the first four centuries - especially that found in the catacombs and cemeteries - furnishes among others the following illustrations from the additional books: Tobias with the fish (Tobias 6), Susanna (Daniel 13), Daniel and the dragon (Daniel 14), the angel with the three children in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:49), Habacuc and Daniel in the lion's den (Daniel 14:35).

**What does Apocryphal mean?**

To a Protestant it means uninspired by God.

To a Catholic the word "apocryphal" came to have a very specific meaning. It does not apply to the books removed from the Protestant Bible. It came to be applied to a class of books, which pretended to possess divine authority and Scriptural rank but which never succeeded in obtaining a place among the books of the Bible. These Books were composed during the last two centuries before Christ or during the early centuries of the Christian era. The authors remained unknown or wrote under a fictitious name. As many as fifty Gospels, twenty- two Acts, and many Epistles and Apocalypses were known to have belonged to this group at one time.

1. What seven books, and parts of two others, were not found in the Hebrew Old Testament?
2. Why were the Jews opposed to these seven books?
3. Give five reasons why the Catholic Church accepts these books.
4. Were the Protestants justified in labelling these books as "Apocryphal" based upon early Christian faith?
5. When is the term "apocryphal" used in an objectionable manner to a Catholic and why?