

PROPOSALS FOR THE USE OF SCRIPTURE IN CATHOLIC MORAL EDUCATION

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Abstract

This paper examines the importance of Scripture in teaching Christian morality within Philippine religious education. It discusses how the sacred texts are predominantly used as introductory narratives to start a lesson, as historical sources of moral wisdom, and as bases or supports for teaching Christian moral obligations. An assessment of these approaches was made to evaluate their potential and limitations. Drawing on a review of Scripture as an inspired, symbolic, and religious text, this study proposes ways Scripture can be used and interpreted to enrich the teaching of Christian morality.

Keywords: Scripture, Christian Morality, Catholic Moral Education, Religious Education, Use and Interpretation of Scripture, Senses of Scripture, Imagination

Introduction

In the Philippines, Catholic religious education is a discipline that presents the Christian faith in the school setting. It is an academic subject in Catholic schools that is systematically designed to help students develop a holistic understanding and living-out of the Christian faith in their acts of believing, doing, and praying. Teaching Christian morality, an area in Catholic religious education, centres on

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helping the students to respond to Jesus' call for people to be his disciples.¹ The goal of teaching Christian morality is to inspire students to commit themselves to Jesus by following his life and living out his commandments in their everyday decisions and actions. To pursue this aim, the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines*, an authoritative source for teaching catechesis and religious education in the Philippines, insists that a return to Scripture is the first step toward authentic catechesis of Christian moral life in the family, school, and parish.² Catholic religious educators respond to the catechetical directory's call by making sure that scripture texts are incorporated in teaching Christian morality. Lessons in the subject are imbued with appropriate scripture texts. For instance, the current Christian morality textbooks include scripture texts in teaching topics such as freedom, conscience, and sin. Scripture passages are also used in discussing moral issues related to life, sexuality, and property.

There are three predominant ways in which Scripture is used in teaching Christian morality in the Philippines. These approaches are useful in grounding the foundation of the Christian moral life on the word of God. Nevertheless, the current ways of using Scripture in teaching the subject also show spaces that can still be improved. There is a need for a clearer understanding of the nature of Scripture to further enrich the manner in which God's written word is used in teaching Christian morality.

A. Three Predominant Approaches to Scripture in Teaching Christian Morality

A brief survey on seven textbooks³ that are used to teach Christian morality in different Catholic high schools in the Philippines was conducted. The survey is limited to the textbooks that were published

¹ Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines*, para. 275-278 (Manila, Philippines: Episcopal Commission for Catechesis and Catholic Education, 2007).

² *Ibid.*, para. 272.

³ Arlene F. Lobitana, *Afire with Gratitude: We Live a Life of Love* (Manila, Philippines: Rex Book Store, 2012); Noel P. Miranda and Philip S. Javier III, *Called to Follow Christ in True Freedom* (Quezon City, Philippines: Sibis Publishing House, Inc., 2014); Tomas Oandasan, *Echoes of God's Love: Living God's Love* (Manila, Philippines: Rex Book Store, 2014); John Paul A. Bolano, "If Anyone Wants to Come After Me" *The Challenge of Following Jesus Today*, ed. Allan Joseph L. Lipe (Cebu, Philippines: University of San Jose-Recolletos, Recollect Educational Apostolate in the Philippines, 2018); Jerry Bangues, *Jesus Christ: The Moral Norm*, ed. Pilar I. Romero, 2nd ed. (Quezon City, Philippines: Vibal Group, Inc., 2015); Jade M. Diaz, *Signs of the Times: "Obey My Commandments"* (Manila, Philippines: Rex Book Store, 2016); and Rica D. Ancheta et al., *We Celebrate God's Love: Jesus Christ, Our Moral Norm*, ed. Pilar I. Romero (Quezon City, Philippines: Vibal Group, Inc., 2016).

since the shift to the K to 12 curriculum⁴ in 2012. The survey mainly checks if the textbooks use Scripture in teaching Christian morality and assesses how the sacred texts are interpreted and integrated into teaching Christian morality lessons. The survey shows that Scripture is an integral element in teaching contemporary Christian morality and that there are three predominant ways in which the Scripture texts are used. Christian morality lessons constantly refer to the gospels, use and present the historical context of the sacred texts, and cite Scripture as a basis or support for teaching Christian moral obligations.

a. Constant Reference to the Gospels in Teaching Christian Morality

The teaching of Christian Morality in the Philippines employs gospel texts in presenting lessons. The gospels are faith narratives of the early Christians about their encounters with Jesus Christ. The gospels are a unique form of literature because they are the most fundamental sources in understanding Jesus' life, ministry, and paschal mystery. "Among all the Scriptures, even those of the New Testament, the Gospels have a special preeminence, and rightly so, for they are the principal witness for the life and teaching of the incarnate Word, our saviour."⁵ The gospel narratives help students know Jesus and his moral demands. The textbooks use the various gospel accounts to show how Jesus cared for the poor, the sick, and the ostracised. A case in point is how Jesus defended and showed compassion for the woman caught in adultery (Jn 8: 2-11), and ate with the sinners and tax collectors (Mark 2:13-17).⁶ Following Jesus is important because he is "the essential and primordial foundation of Christian morality."⁷ He is the source of inspiration and a model for how to live a moral life. The moral imperative is to follow Jesus's commandments and imitate his way of compassion and care for the poor.

⁴ The Philippine government updated the basic education curriculum from a ten-year study program to a mandatory Kindergarten education plus a 12 grade levels of studies (thus, K to 12). See Philippine Government, "What is K to 12 Program?," accessed August 18, 2022, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/k-12/>.

⁵ Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation - Dei Verbum*, para. 18 (November 18, 1965), accessed August 18, 2022, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html.

⁶ See, for example, Diaz, "Jesus Invites Us to Form our Conscience," "The Blessing of Seeking Justice," in *Signs of the Times: "Obey My Commandments,"* 53.

⁷ John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, para. 19, (August 1993), accessed August 18, 2022, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html.

However, the use of the gospel passages and their interpretation are not well integrated into the presentation of Christian morality lessons. For instance, an interpretation of a gospel text is presented at the start of a lesson, but the text and its meaning are no longer mentioned or used in the remaining discussion. The focus shifts from an initial mention and explanation of the gospel account to simply an elaboration of the Church's moral teachings. An example can be seen in a lesson on the "Sense of Sin" that uses the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.⁸

At the outset, the lesson explains that "in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican . . . a proper sense of sin, combined with trust in God's mercy, saves the human being from arrogance on one hand and despair on the other."⁹ This message is followed by quoting the text on the Blessings and Woes (Lk 6:20-26) and an explanation that "the rich, the filled, the happy, and the praised often have no time in their lives for God. On the other hand, the poor, hungry, weeping, and rejected, like the sinner in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, those who depend on God's love, are blessed."¹⁰ After this explanation, the lesson shifts to the discussion of the nature and gravity of sin¹¹ without mentioning the Parable of the Publican and Pharisee and its meaning and connection to the entire lesson. It can be observed here that the gospel story was only used as a starting narrative to begin the lesson. The presentation of the lesson on sin was not enriched by the gospel's meaning and message.¹²

⁸ See Lobitaña, *Afire with Gratitude: We Live a Life of Love*, 54.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ The textbook uses the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* paragraph 1863 to discuss the degrees of sin. See Lobitaña, *Afire with Gratitude: We Live a Life of Love*, 55-57.

¹² Joseph Ratzinger observed a similar problem in moral theology. He noticed that "their [Scripture's] function, with regard to the constitution of moral action, is marginalized as a matter of principle." While Scripture was used in moral theology, its message does not enter into the moral contents of action because the evaluation, discernment, and creation of moral responses "are left to properly human rationality." See, Joseph Ratzinger, "The Renewal of Moral Theology: Perspectives of Vatican II and Veritatis Splendor," *Communio* 32 (Summer, 2005): 363. Contemporary moral theologians address Ratzinger's concern by demonstrating how Scripture can be used as the foundational basis in presenting Christian moral teachings. See, Daniel K. Miller, *Animal Ethics and Theology: The Lens of the Good Samaritan* (New York: NY: Routledge, 2012); Andrew Apostoli, *What To Do When Jesus is Hungry: A Practical Guide to the Works of Mercy* (Mumbai, India: St. Pauls, 2013); and Elizabeth Johnson, "Jesus and Women: You are Set Free," *Global Sisters Report* (April 23 2014), accessed August

The Scripture contains and shows the specific values or qualities of Jesus. Students learn how to become like Jesus when they are deeply exposed to the sacred texts and their meaning. Exposure to Scripture helps inspire and form the Christian attitude. This is emphasised by James Bretzke when he talked about the "sacred claim" of Scripture in the life of the community of believers. He asserts that Scripture "is constitutive of the [Christian] community's identity, and therefore is absolutely essential both in the establishment and preservation of that community's understanding . . . Scripture helps not just to "inform the community's view, but actually to form them into a community of a particular character."¹³ This means that Scripture provides people with the indispensable help and influence in developing the values and qualities of Christ. Teaching Christian morality is aimed at helping students follow Jesus by imitating his life and values. One way that could be done to make this happen is to integrate the scripture text and use its message throughout the presentation of the Christian morality lesson to expose students to Jesus' life and values.

b. Focus on the Historical Context of the Sacred Texts

Another frequently used approach in the use of Scripture in teaching Christian morality is the presentation of the historical context of the Scripture passages. This way of using Scripture highlights the social, cultural, religious, or political backgrounds of the biblical situation and characters to "carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words."¹⁴ To illustrate, in discussing the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37), the historical conflict between the Jews and Samaritans is often explained to students to highlight the depth of mercy of the Samaritan to the wounded person. This merciful act of the Samaritan is often used as a model for young students in helping people in need in their community.¹⁵

In some lessons, the emphasis has been given to the historical context of certain scripture texts by presenting the original Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, or Latin translation of certain keywords in the biblical narratives, exhortations, and commandments. The etymological understanding of

18, 2022, <https://www.globalsistersreport.org/column/speaking-god/spirituality/jesus-and-women-you-are-set-free-1186>.

¹³ James T. Bretzke, "Scripture: The Soul of Moral Theology? The Second Stage," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (1994): 267.

¹⁴ *Dei Verbum*, para. 12.

¹⁵ See, for instance, Noel P. Miranda and Philip S. Javier III, *Called to Follow Christ in True Freedom* (Quezon City, Philippines: Sibs Publishing House, Inc., 2014), 38-41.

the biblical words clarifies the message and stresses God's moral challenges. Take the case of how the word "listen" from the Transfiguration of Jesus (Mt 17:5) is used in a lesson.¹⁶ The word "listen" is explained by going back to its Latin translation¹⁷ *audire*, which means "to obey." This definition is used to explain how the text "tells us that to listen to Jesus is to obey, to yield, or to conform to the person of Jesus."¹⁸ Another instance can be seen in how the word "amen" is presented by teaching its Hebrew equivalent *he 'emin*. This word is explained in connection to Abraham's faith, which led to the point that faith is not merely believing but doing God's will.¹⁹ A further example can also be seen in the investigation of the meaning of the word "mammon" in Aramaic, which is wealth and property, to present that the text teaches about the challenge of putting one's possessions after loyalty to God.²⁰

The use of Scripture in teaching Christian morality must go beyond historical investigation and the presentation of the meaning of sacred texts. This is because in the Philippines, the "students consider the Bible as a spiritual literature and Bible reading as a spiritual exercise."²¹ For them, reading the Scripture is "an exploration of God's authority captured in the written word as well as an exercise of discernment with God's people, the Church."²² This means that the use of Scripture in teaching Christian morality must help students uncover the will of God for their lives today through a spiritual encounter with God, who speaks to them in the sacred texts. This is being emphasised by Ma. Lucia C. Natividad, who insists that "The purpose and goal of those involved in catechesis and religious education is not directed towards creating biblical experts. Rather, they aim at helping the students read Scripture in order to have a loving encounter with the Lord, leading to a deeper loving knowledge and more mature faith."²³

¹⁶ See, Lobitaña, *Afire with Gratitude: We Live a Life of Love*, 41.

¹⁷ The older translation of the Bible is the Greek Septuagint, but the book uses the Latin equivalent of the text.

¹⁸ Lobitaña, *Afire with Gratitude: We Live a Life of Love*, 41.

¹⁹ See, Bolano, "If Anyone Wants to Come After Me" *The Challenge of Following Jesus Today*, 205.

²⁰ See, Ancheta et al., *We Celebrate God's Love: Jesus Christ, Our Moral Norm*, 62.

²¹ Rito V. Baring, "Understanding Student Attitudes Toward Bible Reading: A Philippine Experience," *Religious Education* 103, no. 2 (March-April 2008): 177.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Maria Lucia C. Natividad, *Teaching the Faith: Renewal in Religious Education in the Philippines* (Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Communications Foundation, Inc., 2018), 103.

c. Use of Scripture as Support and Basis for Christian Moral Obligations

Another common approach to using Scripture in teaching Christian morality is to use Scripture texts as support or a basis for teaching Christian moral obligations. In a lesson, the moral call to recognise the universality of human rights²⁴ is emphasised by pointing to the letter of Paul to the Galatians, where he instructed, "As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:27-28). In another lesson, the gospel story about the Sadducees' question on the resurrection (Lk 20:27-28) was cited as the basis for the moral demand to uphold the sanctity of life.²⁵ A further example can be observed when Jesus' words, "I am the Truth" (Jn 14:16), were quoted to emphasise that "lying is contrary to who God is."²⁶

The use of Scripture to support or give a basis to moral teachings has been a practice in the Church. However, Scripture is not merely a basis for proving moral teachings. In teaching Christian morality, the Scripture, the living word of God that touches the lives and experiences of people today, must be used and interpreted in a way that helps students encounter God, whom they believe actively communicates with them in the sacred texts. In Scripture, God comes lovingly to people to speak and disclose to them God's desires and commandments for the life of the world.

B. Proposing Approaches for the Use of Scripture in Teaching Christian Morality

Three challenges can be noted from the review of common approaches to using Scripture in teaching Christian morality in the Philippines. The first is the better integration of Scripture in the presentation of the lesson. The second is the need to go beyond the study of the historical background of the sacred texts. The third is using the Scripture more than as a support or basis of Christian moral obligations. These challenges show that the Scripture is treated as an inspirational resource, a historical record, and a moral manual that helps educate Christian life. There is a need to re-emphasise the

²⁴ See, Oandasan, *Echoes of God's Love: Living God's Love*, 302-306.

²⁵ See, Ancheta et al., *We Celebrate God's Love: Jesus Christ, Our Moral Norm*, 108-10.

²⁶ Diaz, *Signs of the Times: "Obey My Commandments,"* 126.

unique and religious qualities of Scripture to identify approaches that may enrich the way Scripture is used in teaching Christian morality.

a. Scripture as the Inspired Word of God

Vatican II recognises that the whole Scripture has “been written down under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.”²⁷ Inspiration here refers to God’s active work in guiding the human authors in composing sacred texts. God, the inspirer and author of both Testaments,²⁸ chose people who “made use of their powers and abilities”²⁹ in writing the texts. The sacred texts come from both God and the human author, in a way that God causes the activity of the writer but at the same time empowers the latter’s own freedom.³⁰ Through the Spirit, God encourages the mind, heart, sentiments, and desires of the human writers as they consciously and freely write what God wishes to communicate for the world’s salvation. God desires and calls all people through the Spirit to pursue “justice, community, peace, dignity, intimate relationship with God, delight, absence of oppression, security, health, and provision for basic human needs.”³¹ The human authors inscribed this divine will in literary texts using their language, culture, and experiences. Sacred Scripture is the word of God expressed in human words. The saving truth found in Scripture is God’s word communicated in human language.

The Spirit who guided the writing and composition of the Scripture is present and active in the sacred texts. The Spirit reaches out to students when they read or hear the Scripture. The activity of the Spirit in the Scripture and in the life of students must be recognised in the use of the sacred text in teaching Christian morality. The Holy Spirit, who inspired men and women of faith to write the Scripture, also inspires and empowers people today in faith to comprehend its meaning and significance in their life. In teaching Christian morality, students must be led to acknowledge and be open to the movement of

²⁷ *Dei Verbum*, para. 11.

²⁸ *Dei Verbum*, para. 16.

²⁹ *Dei Verbum*, para. 11.

³⁰ Philip Moller, “What Should They Be Saying About Biblical Inspiration? A Note on the State of the Question,” *Theological Studies* 74, no. 3 (2013): 619.

³¹ Mary Elsbernd and Reimund Bieringer, “Interpreting the Signs of the Times in the Light of the Gospel Vision and Normativity of the Future,” in *Normativity of the Future: Reading Biblical and Other Authoritative Texts in An Eschatological Perspective* (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 60.

the Spirit, who communicates with them and actively helps them grasp and live out the message of the sacred texts.

The Church lists four senses of Sacred Scripture, which can help students discover the movements of the Spirit in Scripture. The first is the literal sense or "that which has been expressed directly by the inspired human authors"³² and "discovered by exegesis, following the rules of sound interpretation."³³ The literal sense refers to the historical and contextual background of the text. The rest of the senses are called the spiritual senses. These are "the meaning expressed by the biblical texts when they are read under the influence of the Holy Spirit in the context of the Paschal Mystery of Christ and the new life which comes from it."³⁴ The three spiritual senses communicated in the Scripture texts are allegorical, moral, and anagogic.³⁵ The allegorical sense is the meaning that relates to the person, ministry, and paschal mystery of Christ. The moral sense centres on Jesus, the norm of the Christian life. It centres on God's summons that ought to be pursued so one can participate in God's active work of transforming the world. The anagogic sense is the future vision of the fulfilled existence that God dreams for all to realise today. The spiritual senses are used by the Church today to draw the context of the paschal mystery of Christ and the new life which flows from it in the interpretation of Scripture.³⁶ These spiritual senses are important in teaching Christian morality since this subject is focused on helping students know and follow Christ by accepting the life and fulfillment that he calls them to live out and pursue.

b. Scripture as Symbolic

The active presence of the Spirit in the sacred texts makes it possible for the Scripture to become deeply symbolic. Symbols are "perceptible

³² Biblical Pontifical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, II. B. 1 (April 23, 1993), accessed August 18, 2022, https://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/PBC_Interp-FullText.htm.

³³ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para. 116 (Manila, Philippines: Episcopal Commission for Catechesis and Catholic Education and Word and Life Publications, 1994).

³⁴ The spiritual senses of Scripture are the allegorical, moral, and anagogic senses. See, XII Ordinary General Assembly, *Instrumentum Laboris – The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church*, para. 21 (May 11, 2008), accessed August 18, 2022, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=8270>

³⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 28.

³⁶ *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, II. B. 2.

expressions of a subject matter that is fundamentally imperceptible."³⁷ They are physical indicators of truths beyond the physical senses, such as love, forgiveness, and freedom. They mediate the supernatural, spiritual, and immaterial in ways that enable people to see, hear, and feel them. Scripture is symbolic because, through the power of the Spirit, it stirs up human attention toward God who speaks in the text. The Scripture engages and helps the human mind and heart to discern God, who is supernatural and beyond human senses. The capacity of the Scripture to communicate the divine reality to human beings enables them to have a personal encounter with God, who not only spoke to people in the past but also continues to communicate to the readers and hearers of the text across time. Human beings see and hear God through the sacred texts. The Scripture is a tangible expression of God's constant presence and message for people.

In teaching Christian morality, students must be led to pay attention to the symbolic words of Scripture. This can be done by helping them become familiar with the details of the text, such as characters, actions, emotions, and events in the biblical account. Engaging these elements helps students' imagination to become sensitive to God, who is communicating to them in and through the texts. These elements mediate God's presence and message and must be used as sources in presenting entire lessons. In faith, they can see deeper meanings that they will not be able to discover when Scripture is only mentioned and left at the beginning of a lesson or when only particular keywords are the focus of interpretation.

The Scripture's symbolic meaning is uncovered through imagination. Imagination is the creative process by which human beings open up to and engage with God.³⁸ Imagination in Scripture is the process by which people interweave their human experiences with the meaning that they discover in the sacred texts. By closely analysing the contents of the text, which include the characters, objects, events, actions, and emotions³⁹, and reflecting on the

³⁷ Reimund Bieringer, "The Normativity of the Future: The Authority of the Bible for Theology," in *Normativity of the Future: Reading Biblical and Other Authoritative Texts in an Eschatological Perspective* (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 39.

³⁸ See Bieringer and Elsbernd, "The 'Normativity of the Future' Approach Its Roots, Development, Current State and Challenges," 12-13.

³⁹ One example how this can be done is through the characterization method where the reader reflects on what the main character in the narrative says and does, and what other characters also say and do to the main character. See Ma. Maricel S. Ibita, "Preaching the Joy of the Gospel as Cornerstone of Parish Community Life," *Pamisulu* 5, no 2 (2018): 38-39.

connection of these elements to human life and experiences, people make sense of God’s message and discover how they can respond to God’s moral calling in their lives. For instance, by bringing together the human desire for reconciliation and Scripture’s words about God’s forgiveness, students can recognise or intuit God’s will for all people to be in a loving relationship with God and others, as symbolically manifested in the sacred texts.

c. Scripture as Religious Text

The Scripture encourages people to believe and love God, who is present in the sacred texts. The narratives, prayers, commandments, and other literary forms in the Bible assist people to know God and accept God’s loving will for their lives. The Scripture moves people to know and to have faith in God, who, over time, manifests as Creator, Liberator, and Inspirer-Sanctifier.

The Scripture speaks of the beginning of the world and reveals God the Creator, who wills that all creation experience freedom from chaos and destruction. Psalm 104:1-35, for example, describes in length God’s act of creating the world and putting it in order and abundance. The psalmist exalts and praises God and invites the readers and hearers of the text to join in glorifying God, the creator. “When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground” (v.30).

Narratives in both the Old and the New Testaments reveal God as the Liberator of the world from sin and evil, and who calls all to reject all forms of evil. For Christians, Scripture reveals that Jesus is the fulfilment of the Old Testament promise of a Saviour. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus is the one who is anointed by the Spirit and is sent “to bring good news to the poor . . . proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour” (Lk 4:18-19). Jesus is the norm and source of inspiration for moral living. Scripture, as a religious text, motivates people to follow the ways of Jesus and become loving persons to God and others, especially the poor and downtrodden.

The Scripture reveals the Spirit, who is the Inspirer and Sanctifier of the world, and empowers people to hope in and seek the fulfilment of God’s plan for the human community to build a society of justice and peace. As a religious text, Scripture discloses the dawning of the new world where God “will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more” (Rev 21:4) because God will make all things new. God’s promise inspires

and deepens hope, moving people to reject evil and oppression in the world today that contradict God's saving plan. The impetus to work for a free and loving world is an inner drive awakened by the Spirit, who touches and encourages how to live individual and communal life through the words of Scripture.

The religious nature of Scripture demands that, in teaching Christian morality, the communication of Christian moral obligations proceed from a relationship with God rather than merely from following a particular quote or commandment from the sacred texts. The Scripture is not to be treated merely as a supporting document in the teaching of the duties and responsibilities of the Christian life. It is not merely a book containing codes of conduct. The Scripture has to be recognised as a venue where people can meet and fall in love with God. Human beings respond to their love for God by committing to their Christian duties and responsibilities, as outlined in the commandments and moral laws.

Conclusion

This paper presents three common ways Scripture is currently used in teaching Christian morality, an area of Catholic religious education in the Philippines. It was found from a survey of seven Christian morality textbooks that Scripture is commonly used (1) as a story to begin a lesson, (2) by presenting its historical context, and (3) as support or a basis for teaching moral obligations. The reason for this could be the tendency to view Scripture as an inspirational resource, a historical record, and a moral manual that educates and shapes students' Christian lives. The paper reviews the unique religious nature of Scripture as an inspired, symbolic, and religious text to enrich how the sacred texts are used and interpreted in teaching Catholic religious education. This review provides insights and proposals for improving the use and interpretation of Scripture in teaching Christian morality.