



Walking God's Paths



3. Common Texts, Different Scriptures

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. After viewing the video, what questions about the other tradition's understanding of the Bible would you want to ask your Jewish or Christian dialogue partners?
2. Fr. Smiga notes that the meaning of texts change if the world of their readers' changes. This is so true that, as Prof. Kimelman observes, one can wonder if two distinct groups are really reading the same text because their interpretive worlds of meanings are so different. Apply these ideas to the scriptures of ancient Israel. Give examples from your own tradition of how Christians read the "Old Testament" through the lens of the "New Testament" or how Jews read the *Tanakh* through the perspectives of the rabbis.
3. Consult the handouts "Catholic Weekly First Readings" and "Jewish Weekly Bible Readings." What differences do you see about the organization of these lists of weekly worship readings? What do these disclose about the primary emphases of each community?
4. Rabbinic commentaries have always valued a variety of interpretations of biblical texts. Recent Catholic documents [see, e.g., the handout "The Interpretation of the Bible in the [Roman Catholic] Church"] discuss that a range of interpretations of biblical texts is possible. The video also mentioned a 2001 Pontifical Biblical Commission study that called rabbinic and Christian readings of the scriptures from ancient Israel "analogous" and "parallel" to each other. What are the implications of this acceptance of multiple interpretations for meaningful dialogue between Christians and Jews?
5. The video concludes that the Bible both unites and divides Christians and Jews. Do you agree with this? Why or why not?