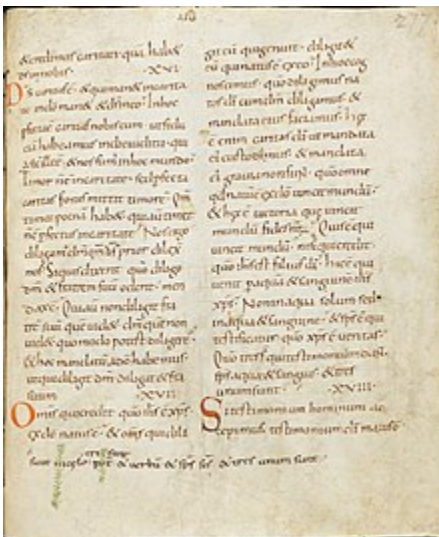


Vulgate

The **Vulgate** (/ˈvʌlɡɛt, -ɡɛt/; also called *Biblia Vulgata* (Bible in common tongue), Latin: [ˈbɪbli.a vʊlˈɡaːta]) is a late-4th-century Latin translation of the Bible.



8th-century Vulgate (*Codex Sangallensis 63*) with the *Comma Johanneum* at the bottom margin

The Vulgate is largely the work of **St Jerome** who, in 382, had been commissioned by **Pope Damasus I** to revise the *Vetus Latina Gospels* used by the **Roman Church**. Later, on his own initiative, Jerome extended this work of revision and translation to include most of the **books of**

[the Bible](#). The Vulgate became progressively adopted as the Bible text within the [Western Church](#). Over succeeding centuries, it eventually eclipsed the *Vetus Latina*. By the 13th century it had taken over from the former version the designation *versio vulgata*^[1] (the "version commonly used") or *vulgata* for short. The Vulgate also contains some *Vetus Latina* translations which Jerome did not work on.

The Vulgate was to become the [Catholic Church](#)'s officially [promulgated Latin](#) version of the Bible as the [Sixtine Vulgate](#) (1590), then as the [Clementine Vulgate](#) (1592), and then as the [Nova Vulgata](#) (1979). The Vulgate is still currently used in the [Latin Church](#). The Catholic Church affirmed the Vulgate as its official Latin Bible at the [Council of Trent](#) (1545–1563), though there was no authoritative edition at that time.^[2] The [Clementine edition of the Vulgate](#) became the standard Bible text of the [Roman Rite](#) of the Catholic Church, and remained so until 1979 when the [Nova Vulgata](#) was promulgated.

Terminology

The term "Vulgate" is used to designate the Latin Bible only since the 16th century. An example of the use of this word in this sense at the time is the title of the 1538 edition of the Latin Bible by [Erasmus](#): *Biblia utriusque testamenti juxta vulgatam translationem*.^[3]

Authorship

The Vulgate has a compound text that is not entirely Jerome's work.^[4] Jerome's translation of the four Gospels are revisions of *Vetus Latina* translations he did while having the Greek as reference.^{[5][6]}

The Latin translations of the rest of the [New Testament](#) are revisions to the *Vetus Latina*, considered as being made by [Pelagian](#) circles or by [Rufinus the Syrian](#), or by [Rufinus of Aquileia](#).^{[5][7][8]} Several unrevised books of the *Vetus Latina* Old Testament also commonly became included in the Vulgate. These are: [1 and 2 Maccabees](#), [Wisdom](#), [Ecclesiasticus](#), [Baruch](#) and the [Letter of Jeremiah](#).^{[9][10]}

Having separately translated the book of [Psalms](#) from the Greek *Hexapla Septuagint*, Jerome translated all of the books of the [Jewish Bible](#) - the Hebrew book of Psalms included - from Hebrew himself. He also translated the books of [Tobit](#) and [Judith](#) from [Aramaic](#) versions, the [additions to the Book of Esther](#) from the *Common Septuagint* and the [additions to the Book of Daniel](#) from the Greek of [Theodotion](#).^[11]

Content

The Vulgate is "a composite collection which cannot be identified with only Jerome's work," because the Vulgate contains *Vetus Latina* which are independent from Jerome's work.^[9]

The *Alcuinian pandects* contain:^[9]

- *Revision of Vetus Latina* by Jerome: the *Gospels*, corrected with reference to the *Greek manuscripts* which Jerome considered the best available.^{[12][9]}
- *Translation from the Hebrew* by Jerome: all the books from the *Hebrew canon* except the *Book of Psalms*.^[9]
- *Translation from the Hexaplar Septuagint* by Jerome: his *Gallican version* of the *Book of Psalms*.^[5]
- *Translation from Aramaic* by Jerome: the book of *Tobit* and the book of *Judith*.^[9]
- *Translation from the Greek of Theodotion* by Jerome: the three additions to the *Book of Daniel*: the *Song of the Three Children*, the *Story of Susanna*, and the *Story of Bel and the Dragon*. Jerome marked these additions with an *obelus* before them to distinguish them from the rest of the text.^[13] He says that because those parts "are spread throughout the whole world, [we] have appended by banishing and placing them after the spit (or "obelus"), so we will not be seen among the unlearned to have cut off a large part of the scroll."^[14]
- *Translation from the Common Septuagint* by Jerome: the *Additions to Esther*. Jerome gathered all these additions together at the end of the *Book of Esther*, marking them with an *obelus*.^[15]
- *Revision of Vetus Latina* by *Pelagian* groups or by *Rufinus the Syrian*, or by *Rufinus of Aquileia*: *Acts*, *Pauline epistles*, *Catholic epistles* and the *Apocalypse*.^{[5][8][7]}
- *Vetus Latina, wholly unrevised*: *Epistle to the Laodiceans*, *Sirach*, *Wisdom*, 1 and 2 *Maccabees*.^{[9][10]}

The 13th-century *Paris Bibles* remove the *Epistle to the Laodiceans*, but add:^[9]

- *Vetus Latina, wholly unrevised*: *Prayer of Manasses*, 4 *Ezra*, the *Book of Baruch* and the *Letter of Jeremiah*. The *Book of Baruch* and the *Letter of Jeremiah* were first excluded by Jerome as non-canonical, but sporadically re-admitted into the Vulgate tradition from the *Additions to the Book of Jeremiah* of the *Vetus Latina* from the 9th century onward.^{[9][10]}
- *Independent translation, distinct from the Vetus Latina* (probably of the 3rd century): 3 *Ezra*.^{[9][16]}

Another text which is considered as part of the Vulgate is:

- *Translation from the Hebrew* by Jerome: the books of the Hebrew Bible, including a [translation of the Psalms from the Hebrew](#).^[11] This translation of the Psalms was kept in Spanish manuscripts of the Vulgate long after the [Gallican psalter](#) had supplanted it elsewhere.^[17] Completion dates given by experts for this translation of the Psalms range from between 390 and 398.^[18]

Jerome's work of translation



Saint Jerome in His Study, by [Domenico Ghirlandaio](#).

Jerome did not embark on the work with the intention of creating a new version of the whole Bible, but the changing nature of his program can be tracked in his voluminous correspondence. He had been commissioned by [Damasus I](#) in 382 to revise the *Vetus Latina* text of the [four Gospels](#) from the best Greek texts. By the time of Damasus' death in 384, Jerome had completed this task, together with a more cursory revision from the Greek Common Septuagint of the *Vetus Latina* text of the Psalms in the Roman Psalter, a version which he later disowned and is now lost.^[19] How much of the rest of the New Testament he then revised is difficult to judge,^{[20][21]} but none of his work survived in the Vulgate text of these books. The revised text of

the New Testament outside the Gospels is the work of other scholars. [Rufinus of Aquileia](#) has been suggested, as has [Rufinus the Syrian](#) (an associate of [Pelagius](#)) and Pelagius himself, though without specific evidence for any of them;^{[7][22]} Pelagian groups have also been suggested as the revisers.^[5] This unknown reviser worked more thoroughly than Jerome had done, consistently using older Greek manuscript sources of [Alexandrian text-type](#). They had published a complete revised New Testament text by 410 at the latest, when Pelagius quoted from it in his commentary on the letters of [Paul](#).^{[23][6]}

In Jerome's Vulgate, the Hebrew Book of [Ezra–Nehemiah](#) is translated as the single book of "Ezra". Jerome defends this in his Prologue to Ezra, although he had noted formerly in his Prologue to the Book of Kings that some Greeks and Latins had proposed that this book should be split in two. Jerome argues that the two books of Ezra found in the Septuagint and *Vetus Latina*, [Esdras A](#) and Esdras B, represented "variant examples" of a single Hebrew original. Hence, he does not translate Esdras A separately even though up until then it had been universally found in Greek and *Vetus Latina* Old Testaments, preceding Esdras B, the combined text of Ezra–Nehemiah.^[24]

The Vulgate is usually credited as being the first translation of the Old Testament into Latin directly from the Hebrew [Tanakh](#) rather than from the Greek Septuagint. Jerome's extensive use of [exegetical](#) material written in Greek, as well as his use of the [Aquiline](#) and Theodotionic columns of the Hexapla, along with the somewhat [paraphrastic style](#)^[25] in which he translated, makes it difficult to determine exactly how direct the conversion of Hebrew to Latin was.^{[a][26][27]} [Saint Augustine](#), a contemporary of Saint Jerome, states in Book XVII ch. 43 of his *The City of God* that "in our own day the priest Jerome, a great scholar and master of all three tongues, has made a translation into Latin, not from Greek but directly from the original Hebrew."^[28] Nevertheless, Augustine still maintained that the Septuagint, alongside the Hebrew, witnessed the inspired text of Scripture and consequently pressed Jerome for complete copies of his Hexaplar Latin translation of the Old Testament, a request that Jerome ducked with the excuse that the originals had been lost "through someone's dishonesty".^[29]

Prologues

Prologues written by Jerome to some of his translations of parts of the Bible are to the [Pentateuch](#),^[30] to [Joshua](#),^[31] and to [Kings](#) (1–2 Kings and 1–2 Samuel) which is also called the *Galeatum principium*.^[32] Following these are prologues to [Chronicles](#),^[33] [Ezra](#),^[34] [Tobit](#),^[35] [Judith](#),^[36] [Esther](#),^[37] [Job](#),^[38] the [Gallican Psalms](#),^[39] [Song of Songs](#),^[40] [Isaiah](#),^[41] [Jeremiah](#),^[42]

Ezekiel,^[43] Daniel,^[14] the minor prophets,^[44] the gospels.^[45] The final prologue is to the [Pauline epistles](#) and is better known as *Primum quaeritur*; this prologue is considered not to have been written by Jerome.^{[46][7]} Related to these are Jerome's *Notes on the Rest of Esther*^[47] and his *Prologue to the Hebrew Psalms*.^[48]

A theme of the [Old Testament](#) prologues is Jerome's preference for the *Hebraica veritas* (i.e., Hebrew truth) over the Septuagint, a preference which he defended from his detractors. After Jerome had translated some parts of the Septuagint into Latin, he came to consider the text of the Septuagint as being faulty in itself, i.e. Jerome thought mistakes in the Septuagint text were not all mistakes made by [copyists](#), but that some mistakes were part of the original text itself as it was produced by the [Seventy translators](#). Jerome believed that the Hebrew text more clearly prefigured [Christ](#) than the Greek of the Septuagint, since he believed some quotes of the Old Testament in the New Testament were not present in the Septuagint, but existed in the Hebrew version; Jerome gave some of those quotes in his prologue to the Pentateuch.^[49] In the *Galeatum principium* (a.k.a. *Prologus Galeatus*), Jerome described an Old Testament canon of 22 books, which he found represented in the 22-letter [Hebrew](#) alphabet. Alternatively, he numbered the books as 24, which he identifies with the 24 elders in the Book of Revelation casting their crowns before the [Lamb](#).^[32] In the prologue to Ezra, he sets the "twenty-four elders" of the Hebrew Bible against the "Seventy interpreters" of the Septuagint.^[34]

In addition, many medieval Vulgate manuscripts included [Jerome's epistle number 53, to Paulinus bishop of Nola](#), as a general prologue to the whole Bible. Notably, this letter was printed at the head of the [Gutenberg Bible](#). Jerome's letter promotes the study of each of the books of the Old and New Testaments listed by name (and excluding any mention of the [deuterocanonical books](#)); and its dissemination had the effect of propagating the belief that the whole Vulgate text was Jerome's work.

The prologue to the Pauline Epistles in the Vulgate defends the Pauline authorship of the [Epistle to the Hebrews](#), directly contrary to Jerome's own views—a key argument in demonstrating that Jerome did not write it. The author of the *Primum quaeritur* is unknown, but it is first quoted by Pelagius in his commentary on the Pauline letters written before 410. As this work also quotes from the Vulgate revision of these letters, it has been proposed that Pelagius or one of his associates may have been responsible for the revision of the Vulgate New Testament outside the Gospels. At any rate, it is reasonable to identify the author of the preface with the unknown reviser of the New Testament outside the gospels.^[7]

Some manuscripts of the Pauline epistles contain short [Marcionite](#) prologues to each of the epistles indicating where they were written, with notes about where the recipients dwelt. [Adolf von Harnack](#), citing De Bruyne, argued that these notes were written by [Marcion of Sinope](#) or one of his followers.^[50]

Relation with the *Vetus Latina* Bible

The Latin biblical texts in use before Jerome's Vulgate are usually referred to collectively as the *Vetus Latina*, or "Vetus Latina Bible". "Vetus Latina" means that they are older than the Vulgate and written in [Latin](#), not that they are written in [Old Latin](#). Jerome himself uses the term "Latin Vulgate" for the *Vetus Latina* text, so intending to denote this version as the common Latin rendering of the [Greek Vulgate](#) or Common Septuagint (which Jerome otherwise terms the "Seventy interpreters"). This remained the usual use of the term "Latin Vulgate" in the West for centuries. On occasion Jerome applies the term "Septuagint" (*Septuaginta*) to refer to the Hexaplar Septuagint, where he wishes to distinguish this from the *Vulgata* or Common Septuagint. The earliest known use of the term *Vulgata* to describe the "new" Latin translation was made by [Roger Bacon](#) in the 13th century.^[51] The translations in the *Vetus Latina* had accumulated piecemeal over a century or more. They were not translated by a single person or institution, nor uniformly edited. The individual books varied in quality of translation and style, and different manuscripts and quotations witness wide variations in readings. Some books appear to have been translated several times. The book of [Psalms](#), in particular, had circulated for over a century in an earlier Latin version (the Cyprianic Version), before it was superseded by the *Vetus Latina* version in the 4th century. Jerome, in his preface to the Vulgate gospels, commented that there were "as many [translations] as there are manuscripts"; subsequently repeating the witticism in his preface to the Book of Joshua. The base text for Jerome's revision of the gospels was a *Vetus Latina* text similar to the [Codex Veronensis](#), with the text of the Gospel of John conforming more to that in the [Codex Corbiensis](#).^[52]

Jerome's work on the Gospels was a revision of the *Vetus Latina* versions, and not a new translation. "High priest" is rendered *princeps sacerdotum* in Vulgate Matthew; as *summus sacerdos* in Vulgate Mark; and as *pontifex* in Vulgate John. The *Vetus Latina* gospels had been translated from Greek originals of the [Western text-type](#). Comparison of Jerome's Gospel texts with those in *Vetus Latina* witnesses, suggests that his revision was concerned with substantially redacting their expanded "Western" phraseology in accordance with the Greek texts of better early [Byzantine](#) and Alexandrian witnesses. One major change Jerome introduced was to re-order the Latin Gospels. Most *Vetus Latina* gospel books followed the "Western" order of

Matthew, John, Luke, Mark; Jerome adopted the "Greek" order of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. His revisions became progressively less frequent and less consistent in the gospels presumably done later.^[53] In places Jerome adopted readings that did not correspond to a straightforward rendering either of the *Vetus Latina* or the Greek text, so reflecting a particular doctrinal interpretation; as in his rewording *panem nostrum supersubstantialem* at [Matthew 6:11](#).^[54]

The unknown reviser of the rest of the New Testament shows marked differences from Jerome, both in editorial practice and in their sources. Where Jerome sought to correct the *Vetus Latina* text with reference to the best recent Greek manuscripts, with a preference for those conforming to the Byzantine text-type, the Greek text underlying the revision of the rest of the New Testament demonstrates the Alexandrian text-type found in the great [uncial codices](#) of the mid-4th century, most similar to the [Codex Sinaiticus](#). The reviser's changes generally conform very closely to this Greek text, even in matters of word order—to the extent that the resulting text may be only barely intelligible as Latin.^[6]

After the Gospels, the most widely used and copied part of the Christian Bible is the Book of Psalms. Consequently, Damasus also commissioned Jerome to revise the psalter in use in Rome, to agree better with the Greek of the Common Septuagint. Jerome said he had done this cursorily when in Rome, but he later disowned this version, maintaining that copyists had reintroduced erroneous readings. Until the 20th century, it was commonly assumed that the surviving Roman Psalter represented Jerome's first attempted revision, but more recent scholarship—following de Bruyne—rejects this identification. The Roman Psalter is indeed one of at least five revised versions of the mid-4th century *Vetus Latina* Psalter, but compared to the other four, the revisions in the Roman Psalter are in clumsy Latin, and fail to follow Jerome's known translational principles, especially in respect of correcting harmonised readings. Nevertheless, it is clear from Jerome's correspondence (especially in his defence of the Gallican Psalter in the long and detailed [Epistle 106](#))^[55] that he was familiar with the Roman Psalter text, and consequently it is assumed that this revision represents the Roman text as Jerome had found it.^[56]

[Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, 1 and 2 Maccabees](#) and [Baruch \(with the Letter of Jeremiah\)](#) are included in the Vulgate, and are purely *Vetus Latina* translations which Jerome did not touch.^[57]

In the 9th century the *Vetus Latina* texts of Baruch and the Letter of Jeremiah were introduced into the Vulgate in versions revised by [Theodulf of Orleans](#) and are found in a minority of early medieval Vulgate *pandect* bibles from that date onward.^[10] After 1300, when the booksellers of Paris began to produce commercial single volume Vulgate bibles in large numbers, these

commonly included both Baruch and the Letter of Jeremiah as the *Book of Baruch*. Also beginning in the 9th century, Vulgate manuscripts are found that split Jerome's combined translation from the Hebrew of [Ezra](#) and the [Nehemiah](#) into separate books called 1 Ezra and 2 Ezra. Bogaert argues that this practice arose from an intention to conform the Vulgate text to the authoritative canon lists of the 5th/6th century, where 'two books of Ezra' were commonly cited.^[58] Subsequently, many late medieval Vulgate bible manuscripts introduced a Latin version, originating from before Jerome and distinct from that in the *Vetus Latina*, of the Greek Esdras A, now commonly termed [3 Ezra](#); and also a Latin version of an Ezra Apocalypse, commonly termed [4 Ezra](#).

Council of Trent and opinion of the Catholic Church

The Vulgate was given an official capacity by the [Council of Trent](#) (1545–1563) as the touchstone of the biblical canon concerning which parts of books are canonical.^[59] The Vulgate was declared to "be held as authentic" by the Catholic Church by the Council of Trent.^[60]

The council of Trent cited [sacred tradition](#) in support of the Vulgate's [magisterial authority](#):

Moreover, this sacred and holy Synod,—considering that no small utility may accrue to the Church of God, if it be made known which out of all the Latin editions, now in circulation, of the sacred books, is to be held as authentic,—ordains and declares, that the said old and vulgate edition, which, by the lengthened usage of so many years, has been approved of in the Church, be, in public lectures, disputations, sermons and expositions, held as authentic; and that no one is to dare, or presume to reject it under any pretext whatever.^[60]

The qualifier "Latin editions, now in circulation" and the use of "authentic" (not "inerrant") show the limits of this statement.^[61]

When the council listed the books included in the canon, it qualified the books as being "entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the [Catholic Church](#), and as they are contained in the *Vetus Latina* vulgate edition". The fourth session of the Council specified 72 canonical books in the Bible: 45 in the Old Testament, 27 in the New Testament with Lamentations not being counted as separate from Jeremiah.^[62] On 2 June 1927, [Pope Pius XI](#) clarified this decree, allowing that the [Comma Johanneum](#) was open to dispute.^[63]

Later, in the 20th century, Pope Pius XII declared the Vulgate as "free from error whatsoever in matters of faith and morals" in his [encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*](#):

Hence this special authority or as they say, authenticity of the Vulgate was not affirmed by the Council particularly for critical reasons, but rather because of its legitimate use in the Churches throughout so many centuries; by which use indeed the same is shown, in the sense in which the Church has understood and understands it, to be free from any error whatsoever in matters of faith and morals; so that, as the Church herself testifies and affirms, it may be quoted safely and without fear of error in disputations, in lectures and in preaching [...]"^[64]

— Pope Pius XII

The [inerrancy](#) is with respect to faith and morals, as it says in the above quote: "free from any error whatsoever in matters of faith and morals", and the inerrancy is not in a [philological](#) sense:

[...] and so its authenticity is not specified primarily as critical, but rather as juridical.^[64]

The Catholic Church has produced three official editions of the Vulgate: the [Sixtine Vulgate](#), the [Clementine Vulgate](#), and the [Nova Vulgata](#) (see below).

Influence on Western Christianity



First page of the first volume of the [Gutenberg Bible](#): the [epistle of St Jerome to Paulinus](#) from the University of Texas copy. The page has 40 lines.

For over a thousand years (c. AD 400–1530), the Vulgate was the most commonly used edition of the most influential text in Western European society. Indeed, for most medieval [Western Christians](#), it was the only version of the Bible ever encountered.

In about 1455, the first Vulgate published by the [moveable type](#) process was produced in [Mainz](#) by a partnership between [Johannes Gutenberg](#) and banker [John Fust](#) (or Faust).^{[65][66][67]} At the time, a manuscript of the Vulgate was selling for approximately 500 [guilders](#). Gutenberg's works appear to have been a commercial failure, and Fust sued for recovery of his 2026 guilder investment and was awarded complete possession of the Gutenberg plant. Arguably, the [Reformation](#) could not have been possible without the diaspora of biblical knowledge that was permitted by the development of moveable type.^[66]

Aside from its use in prayer, liturgy, and private study, the Vulgate served as inspiration for [ecclesiastical art and architecture](#), [hymns](#), countless paintings, and popular [mystery plays](#).

Reformation

The fifth volume of [Walton's London Polyglot](#) of 1657 included several versions of the New Testament: in Greek, Latin (a Vulgate version and the version by [Arius Montanus](#)), Syriac, Ethiopic, and Arabic. It also included a version of the Gospels in Persian.^[68]

The Vulgate Latin is used regularly in [Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*](#) of 1651; in the *Leviathan* Hobbes "has a worrying tendency to treat the Vulgate as if it were the original".^[69]

Translations

Before the publication of [Pius XII's *Divino afflante Spiritu*](#), the Vulgate was the source text used for many translations of the Bible into vernacular languages. In English, the interlinear translation of the [Lindisfarne Gospels](#)^[70] as well as other [Old English Bible translations](#), the translation of [John Wycliffe](#),^[71] the [Douay–Rheims Bible](#), the [Confraternity Bible](#), and [Ronald Knox's translation](#) were all made from the Vulgate.

Influence upon the English language

The Vulgate had a large influence on the development of the English language, especially in matters of religion. Many Latin words were taken from the Vulgate into English nearly unchanged in meaning or spelling: *creatio* (e.g. [Genesis](#) 1:1, [Heb](#) 9:11), *salvatio* (e.g. [Is](#) 37:32, [Eph](#) 2:5), *justificatio* (e.g. [Rom](#) 4:25, [Heb](#) 9:1), *testamentum* (e.g. [Mt](#) 26:28), *sanctificatio* ([1 Ptr](#) 1:2, [1 Cor](#) 1:30), *regeneratio* ([Mt](#) 19:28), and *raptura* (from a noun form of the verb *rapere* in [1 Thes](#) 4:17). The word "publican" comes from the Latin *publicanus* (e.g., [Mt](#) 10:3), and the phrase "far be it" is a translation of the Latin expression *absit*. (e.g., [Mt](#) 16:22 in the [King James Bible](#))^[72] Other examples include *apostolus*, *ecclesia*, *evangelium*, *Pascha*, and *angelus*.

Critical value

In translating the 38 books of the Hebrew Bible (Ezra-Nehemiah being counted as one book), Jerome was relatively free in rendering their text into Latin, but it is possible to determine that the oldest surviving complete manuscripts of the Masoretic Text which date from nearly 600 years after Jerome, nevertheless transmit a consonantal Hebrew text very close to that used by Jerome.^[73]

Manuscripts and editions

The Vulgate exists in many forms. The [Codex Amiatinus](#) is the oldest surviving complete manuscript from the 8th century. The [Gutenberg Bible](#) is a notable printed edition of the Vulgate by Johann Gutenberg in 1455. The [Sixtine Vulgate](#) (1590) is the first official Bible of the Catholic

Church. The [Clementine Vulgate](#) (1592) is a standardized edition of the medieval Vulgate, and the second official Bible of the Catholic Church. The [Stuttgart Vulgate](#) is a 1969 critical edition of the Vulgate. The [Nova Vulgata](#) is the third and latest official Bible of the Catholic Church; it was published in 1979, and is a translation in [Classical Latin](#) from modern critical editions of original language texts of the Bible.

Manuscripts and early editions



A page from the [Codex Amiatinus](#).

A number of [manuscripts containing or reflecting the Vulgate](#) survive today. Dating from the 8th century, the [Codex Amiatinus](#) is the earliest surviving [manuscript](#) of the complete Vulgate Bible. The [Codex Fuldensis](#), dating from around 545, contains most of the New Testament in the Vulgate version, but the four [gospels](#) are harmonised into a continuous narrative derived from the [Diatessaron](#).

Carolingian period

"The two best-known revisions of the Latin Scriptures in the early medieval period were made in the [Carolingian period](#) by [Alcuin of York](#) (c. 730–840) and [Theodulf of Orleans](#) (750/760–

821).^[74]

[Alcuin of York](#) oversaw efforts to make a Latin Bible, an exemplar of which was presented to [Charlemagne](#) in 801. Alcuin's edition contained the Vulgate version. It appears Alcuin concentrated only on correcting errors of grammar, [orthography](#) and punctuation. "Even though Alcuin's revision of the Latin Bible was neither the first nor the last of the [Carolingian period](#), it managed to prevail over the other versions and to become the most influential edition for centuries to come." The success of this Bible has been attributed to the fact that this Bible may have been "prescribed as the official version at the emperor's request." However, [Bonifatius Fischer](#) believes its success was rather due to the productivity of the scribes of [Tours](#) where Alcuin was abbot, at the [monastery of Saint Martin](#); Fischer believes the emperor only favored the editorial work of Alcuin by encouraging work on the Bible in general.^[75]

"Although, in contrast to Alcuin, Theodulf [of Orleans] clearly developed an editorial programme, his work on the Bible was far less influential than that of his slightly older contemporary. Nevertheless, several manuscripts containing his version have come down to us." Theodulf added to his edition of the Bible the Book of Baruch, which Alcuin's edition did not contain; it is this version of the Book of Baruch which later became part of the Vulgate. In his editorial activity, on at least one manuscript of the Theodulf Bible (S Paris, BNF lat. 9398), Theodulf marked variant readings along with their sources in the margin of the manuscripts. Those marginal notes of variant readings along with their sources "seem to foreshadow the thirteenth-century [correctoria](#)."^[76] In the 9th century the *Vetus Latina* texts of Baruch and the Letter of Jeremiah were introduced into the Vulgate in versions revised by [Theodulf of Orleans](#) and are found in a minority of early medieval Vulgate [pandect](#) bibles from that date onward.^[10]

[Cassiodorus](#), [Isidore of Sevilla](#), and [Stephen Harding](#) also worked on editions of the Latin Bible. Isidore's edition as well as the edition of Cassiodorus "ha[ve] not come down to us."^[77]

By the 9th century, due to the success of Alcuin's edition, the Vulgate had replace the *Vetus Latina* as the most available edition of the Latin Bible.^[78]

Late Middle Ages

The [University of Paris](#), the [Dominicans](#), and the [Franciscans](#) assembled lists of *correctoria*—approved readings—where variants had been noted.^[79]

Printed editions

Renaissance

Though the advent of printing greatly reduced the potential of human error and increased the consistency and uniformity of the text, the earliest editions of the Vulgate merely reproduced the manuscripts that were readily available to publishers. Of the hundreds of early editions, the most notable today is the Mazarin edition published by [Johann Gutenberg](#) and [Johann Fust](#) in 1455, famous for its beauty and antiquity. In 1504, the first Vulgate with variant readings was published in Paris. One of the texts of the [Complutensian Polyglot](#) was an edition of the Vulgate made from ancient manuscripts and corrected to agree with the Greek.

[Erasmus](#) published an edition corrected to agree better with the Greek and Hebrew in 1516. Other corrected editions were published by [Xanthus Pagninus](#) in 1518, [Cardinal Cajetan](#), [Augustinus Steuchius](#) in 1529, Abbot [Isidorus Clarius](#) ([Venice](#), 1542) and others. In 1528, [Robertus Stephanus](#) published the first of a series of critical editions, which formed the basis of the later Sistine and Clementine editions. [John Henten's critical edition of the Bible](#) followed in 1547.^[51]

In 1550, Stephanus fled to [Geneva](#), where he issued his final critical edition of the Vulgate in 1555. This was the first complete Bible with full [chapter and verse divisions](#) and became the standard biblical reference text for late-16th century [Reformed](#) theology.

Sistine and Clementine Vulgates



Frontispiece of the original Sixtine Vulgate



Frontispiece of the original 1592 Sixto-Clementine Vulgate

After the [Reformation](#), when the Catholic Church [strove to counter Protestantism](#) and refute its doctrines, the Vulgate was declared at the Council of Trent to "be, in public lectures, disputations, sermons and expositions, held as authentic; and that no one is to dare, or presume to reject it under any pretext whatever."^[60] Furthermore, the council expressed the wish that the Vulgate be printed *quam emendatissime*^[b] ("with fewest possible faults").^{[2][80]}

In 1590, the [Sixtine Vulgate](#) was issued, under Sixtus V, as being the official Bible recommended by the Council of Trent.^{[81][82]} On 27 August 1590, Sixtus V died. After his death, "many claimed that the text of the [Sixtine Vulgate](#) was too error-ridden for general use."^[83] On 5 September of the same year, the [College of Cardinals](#) stopped all further sales of the Sixtine Vulgate and bought and destroyed as many copies as possible by burning them. The reason invoked for this action was printing inaccuracies in Sixtus V's edition of the Vulgate. However, [Bruce Metzger](#), an American biblical scholar, believes that the printing inaccuracies may have been a pretext and that the attack against this edition had been instigated by the [Jesuits](#), "whom Sixtus had offended by [putting one of Bellarmine's books on the 'Index'](#)".^[84]

In the same year he became pope (1592), Clement VIII recalled all copies of the Sixtine Vulgate.^{[85][86]} The reason invoked for recalling Sixtus V's edition was printing errors, however the Sixtine Vulgate was mostly free of them.^{[86][82]}

The Sistine edition was replaced by [Clement VIII](#) (1592–1605). This new edition was published in 1592 and is called today the [Clementine Vulgate](#)^{[87][88]} or Sixto-Clementine Vulgate.^[88] "The misprints of this edition were partly eliminated in a second (1593) and a third (1598) edition."^[87]

The Clementine Vulgate is the edition most familiar to Catholics who have lived prior to the [liturgical reforms](#) following [Vatican II](#). Roger Gryson, in the preface to the 4th edition of the [Stuttgart Vulgate](#) (1994), asserts that the Clementine edition "frequently deviates from the manuscript tradition for literary or doctrinal reasons, and offers only a faint reflection of the original Vulgate, as read in the *pandecta* of the first millennium."^[89]

Modern critical editions

Most other later editions were limited to the New Testament and did not present a full critical apparatus, most notably [Karl Lachmann](#)'s editions of 1842 and 1850 based primarily on the Codex Amiatinus and the Codex Fuldensis,^[90] Fleck's edition^[91] of 1840, and [Constantin von Tischendorf](#)'s edition of 1864. In 1906 [Eberhard Nestle](#) published *Novum Testamentum Latine*,^[92] which presented the Clementine Vulgate text with a critical apparatus comparing it to the editions of Sixtus V (1590), Lachman (1842), Tischendorf (1854), and Wordsworth and White (1889), as well as the Codex Amiatinus and the Codex Fuldensis.

To make a text available representative of the earliest copies of the Vulgate and summarise the most common variants between the various manuscripts, [Anglican](#) scholars at the [University of Oxford](#) began to [edit the New Testament](#) in 1878 (completed in 1954), while the [Benedictines](#) of Rome began [an edition of the Old Testament](#) in 1907 (completed in 1995). Their findings were condensed into [an edition of both the Old and New Testaments, first published at Stuttgart in 1969](#), created with the participation of members from both projects. These books are the standard editions of the Vulgate used by scholars.^[93]

Oxford New Testament

As a result of the inaccuracy of existing editions of the Vulgate, in 1878, the delegates of the [Oxford University Press](#) accepted a proposal from classicist [John Wordsworth](#) to produce a critical edition of the New Testament.^{[94][95]} This was eventually published as *Nouum Testamentum Domini nostri Iesu Christi Latine, secundum editionem sancti Hieronymi* in three volumes between 1889 and 1954.^[96]

The edition, commonly known as the [Oxford Vulgate](#), relies primarily on the texts of the Codex Amiatinus, Codex Fuldensis (Codex Harleianus in the Gospels), [Codex Sangermanensis](#), Codex

Mediolanensis (in the Gospels), and Codex Reginensis (in Paul).^{[97][98]} It also consistently cites readings in the so-called DELQR group of manuscripts, named after the *sigla* it uses for them: [Book of Armagh](#) (D), [Egerton Gospels](#) (E), [Lichfield Gospels](#) (L), [Book of Kells](#) (Q), and [Rushworth Gospels](#) (R).^[99]

Benedictine (Rome) Old Testament

In 1907, Pope [Pius X](#) commissioned the [Benedictine](#) monks to prepare a critical edition of Jerome's Vulgate, entitled *Biblia Sacra iuxta latinam vulgatam versionem*.^[100] This text was originally planned as the basis for a revised complete official Bible for the Catholic church to replace the Clementine edition.^[101] The first volume, the Pentateuch, was completed in 1926.^{[102][103]} For the Pentateuch, the primary sources for the text are the [Codex Amiatinus](#), the [Codex Turonensis](#) (the [Ashburnham Pentateuch](#)), and the [Ottobonianus Octateuch](#).^[104] For the rest of the Old Testament (except the [Book of Psalms](#)) the primary sources for the text are the [Codex Amiatinus](#) and [Codex Cavensis](#).^[105]

Following the [Codex Amiatinus](#) and the Vulgate texts of [Alcuin](#) and [Theodulf](#), the [Benedictine Vulgate](#) reunited the [Book of Ezra](#) and the [Book of Nehemiah](#) into a single book, reversing the decisions of the [Sixto-Clementine Vulgate](#).

In 1933, Pope [Pius XI](#) established the [Pontifical Abbey of St Jerome-in-the-City](#) to complete the work. By the 1970s, as a result of liturgical changes that had spurred the Vatican to produce a new translation of the Latin Bible, the [Nova Vulgata](#), the [Benedictine edition](#) was no longer required for official purposes,^[106] and the abbey was suppressed in 1984.^[107] Five monks were nonetheless allowed to complete the final two volumes of the Old Testament, which were published under the abbey's name in 1987 and 1995.^[108]

Stuttgart Vulgate



Concordance to the Vulgate Bible for the Stuttgart Vulgate

Based on the editions of Oxford and Rome, but with an independent examination of the manuscript evidence and extending their lists of primary witnesses for some books, the Württembergische Bibelanstalt, later the [Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft](#) (German Bible Society), based in Stuttgart, first published a critical edition of the complete Vulgate in 1969. The work has continued to be updated, with a fifth edition appearing in 2007.^[109] The project was originally directed by Robert Weber, OSB (a monk of the same Benedictine abbey responsible for the Benedictine edition), with collaborators [Bonifatius Fischer](#), [Jean Gribomont](#), Hedley Frederick Davis Sparks (also responsible for the completion of the Oxford edition), and Walter Thiele. Roger Gryson has been responsible for the most recent editions. It is thus marketed by its publisher as the "Weber-Gryson" edition, but is also frequently referred to as the Stuttgart edition.^[110]

The Weber-Gryson includes of Jerome's prologues and the [Eusebian Canons](#).

It contains two Psalters, the [Gallicanum](#) and the [juxta Hebraicum](#), which are printed on facing pages to allow easy comparison and contrast between the two versions. It has an expanded [Apocrypha](#), containing Psalm 151 and the Epistle to the Laodiceans in addition to 3 and 4 Ezra and the [Prayer of Manasses](#). In addition, its modern prefaces in Latin, German, French, and English are a source of valuable information about the history of the Vulgate.

Nova Vulgata

The *Nova Vulgata* (*Nova Vulgata Bibliorum Sacrorum Editio*), also called the Neo-Vulgate, is the official Latin edition of the Bible published by the [Holy See](#) for use in the contemporary [Roman rite](#). It is not a critical edition of the historical Vulgate, but a revision of the text intended to accord with modern critical Hebrew and Greek texts and produce a style closer to Classical Latin.^[111]

In 1979, the *Nova Vulgata* was promulgated as "typical" (standard) by [John Paul II](#).^[112]

Online versions

The title "Vulgate" is currently applied to three distinct online texts which can be found from various sources on the Internet. The text being used can be ascertained from the spelling of [Eve](#)'s name in Genesis 3:20:^{[113][114]}

- **Heva**: the [Clementine Vulgate](#)
- **Hava**: the [Stuttgart edition of the Vulgate](#)
- **Eva**: the [Nova Vulgata](#)

See also

Related articles

- [Bible translations into Latin](#)
- [Biblia Pauperum](#)
- [Books of the Vulgate](#)
- [Ferdinand Cavallera](#)
- *[Divino afflante Spiritu](#)*
- [Gutenberg Bible](#)
- [Jerome](#)
 - [Paula](#) and [Eustochium](#), Catholic saints, important collaborators of Jerome^{[115][116][117]}
- [Latin Psalters](#)
- [The Philobiblon](#)
- [Poor Man's Bible](#)

Some manuscripts

- [Codex Amiatinus](#)
- [Codex Complutensis I](#)
- [Codex Fuldensis](#)
- [Codex Gigas](#)
- [Codex Sangallensis 1395](#)
- [List of New Testament Latin manuscripts](#)
- [Vulgate manuscripts](#)

Notes

1. Some, following P. Nautin (1986) and perhaps E. Burstein (1971), suggest that Jerome may have been almost wholly dependent on Greek material for his interpretation of the Hebrew. A. Kamesar (1993), on the other hand, sees evidence that in some cases Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew exceeds that of his exegetes, implying a direct understanding of the Hebrew text.
2. Literally "in the most correct manner possible"

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Clementine Vulgate

- [The Clementine Vulgate \(http://www.catholicbible.online\)](http://www.catholicbible.online) , fully searchable and possible to compare with both the Douay Rheims and Knox Bibles side by side.
- [Clementine Vulgate 1822, including Apocrypha \(http://www.sacredbible.org/vulgate1822/\)](http://www.sacredbible.org/vulgate1822/)
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- [The Clementine Vulgate, searchable \(http://vulsearch.sourceforge.net/html/\)](http://vulsearch.sourceforge.net/html/) . Michael Tweedale, *et alii*. Other installable modules include Weber's Stuttgart Vulgate. Missing 3 and 4 Esdras, and Manasses.
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- [Latin Vulgate with Parallel English Douay-Rheims and King James Version \(http://www.latinvulgate.com\)](http://www.latinvulgate.com) , Stuttgart edition, but missing 3 and 4 Esdras, Manasses, Psalm 151, and Laodiceans.

Nova Vulgata

- [Nova Vulgata \(https://www.vatican.va/archive/bible/nova_vulgata/documents/nova-vulgata_index_lt.html\)](https://www.vatican.va/archive/bible/nova_vulgata/documents/nova-vulgata_index_lt.html) , from the Vatican website

Miscellaneous translations

- [Jerome's Biblical Prefaces \(http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/\)](http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/)
- [Vulgate text of Laodiceans](#) including a parallel English translation

- [Psalmus 151 \(http://www.speedbible.com/vulgate/B78C001.htm\)](http://www.speedbible.com/vulgate/B78C001.htm) Latin text

Works about the Vulgate

- [Eight examples of the Vulgate, 13th – 15th centuries, Center for Digital Initiatives, University of Vermont Libraries \(https://web.archive.org/web/20110218052112/http://cdi.uvm.edu/collections/getCollection.xql?pid=manuscripts&title=Medieval%20and%20Renaissance%20Manuscripts\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20110218052112/http://cdi.uvm.edu/collections/getCollection.xql?pid=manuscripts&title=Medieval%20and%20Renaissance%20Manuscripts)
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- [Works by Vulgate \(https://librivox.org/author/4121\)](https://librivox.org/author/4121) at LibriVox (public domain audiobooks) 

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