

DEI VERBUM (Word of God)

From Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Nov 1965.

This document guides Catholics in their approach to reading sacred scripture. For that reason it is placed in the front pages of every Catholic Bible. The following is a summary of the high points of this document. Paragraph numbers (§) indicate location within the document.

When we read the scripture we must keep in mind that,

- §2 God in His goodness and wisdom chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will (Eph 1:9)
- §4 After speaking in many and varied ways through the Prophets, God has spoken to us through His son, Jesus. (Heb 1:1-2)
- §5 Jesus perfected revelation by fulfilling it through His words and deeds, His signs and wonders, but especially through His death and glorious resurrection from the dead and final sending of the Spirit of truth. To bring about an ever deeper understanding of revelation, the Holy Spirit constantly brings faith to completion by His gifts. We await no further new public revelation before the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Divine Revelation has been handed down to us in two ways:

1 Through TRADITION

- §7 Jesus commissioned the Apostles to preach to all men the Gospel which is the source of all saving truth and moral teaching.
- §7 In order to keep the Gospel forever whole and alive, the Apostles left the Bishops as their successors and gave them the authority to teach in their place.
- §10 [S]acred tradition, sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church...are linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.

2 Through SCRIPTURE

- §11 Sacred scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and **without error** that **truth** which God wanted to put into sacred writings, for the sake of our salvation.
- §12 [S]ince God speaks in sacred Scripture through men in human fashion, in order to see clearly what God wanted to communicate to us, should carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words. To search out the intention of the sacred writers, attention should be given, among other things, to literary forms.” For truth is set forth and expressed differently in texts which are variously historical, prophetic, poetic, or of other forms of discourse. (Ch III)
- §21 The Church has always venerated the divine Scripture just as she venerates the body of the Lord. In the liturgy of the mass, the Church unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life through God’s word and Christ’s body. (Ch VI) (venerate: to revere; hold in reverence.)
- §22 Sacred scripture should be accessible to the faithful and the faithful should be encouraged to read and study scripture.
- §23 Scripture provides nourishment for the People of God, to enlighten their minds, strengthen their will, and set men’s hearts on fire with the love of God.
- §25 Reading of scriptures should be accompanied by prayer, so “that God and man may talk together”, for we speak to God when we pray and we hear Him when we listen to or read the scriptures.