

the Scriptures; search out and expound the spiritual sense; avoid other figurative senses. Literary criticism should be employed. Stated that there are but few texts whose sense was determined by the authority of the Church (only seven biblical passages have been definitively interpreted in defending traditional doctrine and morals--Jn 3:5, Lk 22:19, 1 Cor 11:24, Jn 20:22, Jn 20:23, Rom 5:12, Ja 5: 14); this counteracts the frequent misunderstanding that Catholics have no freedom interpreting the Scriptures.

Humani Generis (1950), Pope Pius XII, Bishop of Rome, 1939 - 1958

Instructs scholars on evolution, polygenism and OT historical narratives

Vatican II Council (1962-1965)

The decree, ***On Divine Revelation***, declares that there is one source of Divine Revelation, Jesus Christ; that there are two modes of handing on revelation: Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition: "in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end," and "it is not from sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything that has been revealed." Concerning Inerrancy of Scripture: "The Books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching firmly,

faithfully, and without error that truth which God wanted put into the sacred writings for the sake of our salvation. "Emphasized that "in order to see what God wanted to communicate in Scripture, we must investigate the intention of the sacred author, and one way to do this is by paying attention to the literary form employed by the sacred writer."

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Major Church Pronouncements on the Bible

Pentecost (30/33AD)

The beginning of the Church; the Church exists before a determination of a canon or a definitive list of books of what was later called the Bible. The NT was not even written yet. The Bible is the book of the Church, we are not a church of the Bible.

Melito, Bishop of Sardis (c. 170)

Produced the first known Christian attempt at an Old Testament canon. His list maintains the Septuagint order of books but contains only the Old Testament protocanonicals minus the Book of Esther.

Council of Laodicea (c. 360)

A local council of the church in union with Rome produced a list of books of the Bible similar to the Council of Trent's canon. This was one of the Church's earliest decisions on a canon.

Council of Rome (382)

Local church council under the authority of Pope Damasus, (366-384) gave a complete list of canonical books of the OT and NT which is identical with the list later approved by the Council of Trent.

Council of Hippo (393)

Local North African Church council in union with and under the authority of the Bishop of Rome approved a list of OT and NT canon (same as later approved by the Council of Trent)

Council of Carthage (397)

Local North African Church council in union with and under the authority of the Bishop of Rome approved a list of OT and NT canon (same as later approved by the Council of Trent)

Pope Innocent I, Bishop of Rome, 401-417 (405)

Responded to a request by Exuperius, Bishop of Toulouse, with a list of canonical books of Scripture; this list was the same as later approved by the Council of Trent.

Council of Carthage (419)

Local North African Church council in union with and under the authority of the Bishop of Rome approved a list of OT and NT canon (same as later approved by the Council of Trent). This canon was ratified by the Second Council of Nicea (An Ecumenical Council).

Council of Florence, an ecumenical council (1441)

Complete list of OT and NT canon was drawn up; this list later adopted

by the Fathers of the Council of Trent

Council of Trent, an ecumenical council called to respond to the heresy of the Reformers (1545-1563)

The canon of OT and NT received final definitions: 46 books in the OT; 27 in the NT; "Henceforth the books of the OT and the NT, protocanonical and deuterocanonical alike, in their entirety and with all their parts, comprise the canon and are held to be of equal authority." The ancient Vulgate edition of the Bible was called the authoritative edition of the Bible.

Vatican I Council (1869-1870)

Reaffirmed the decree of Trent. The Church holds the books of Holy Scripture as sacred and canonical, not because she subsequently approved them, nor because they contain revelation without error, but precisely because "having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their author and, as such, they have been handed down to the Church itself."

Providentissimus Deus (1893), Pope Leo XIII, Bishop of Rome, 1878-1903

Inaugurated a new era in Roman Catholic biblical studies. Presented a plan for biblical study; Defined inspiration: "By supernatural power God so moved and impelled the

human authors to write - he so assisted them in writing - that the things he ordered and those only they first rightly understood, then willed faithfully to write and finally expressed in apt words and with infallible truth."

Pascendi Dominica Gregis (1907), Pope Pius X, Bishop of Rome, 1903-1914

Refuted the errors of the Modernists; Scored erroneous teaching on the origin and nature of the Sacred Books, on inspiration; on the distinction between the purely human Christ of history and the divine Christ of faith; on the origin and growth of the Scriptures.

Spiritus Paraclitus (1920), Pope Benedict XV, Bishop of Rome, 1914-1922

Commends modern critical methods in biblical studies. All biblical interpretation rests upon the literal sense. Goal of biblical studies is to learn spiritual perfection, to arm oneself to defend the faith, to preach the word of God fruitfully.

Divino Afflante Spiritus (1943), Pope Pius XII, Bishop of Rome, 1939-1958

Permitted scholars to use original text of Scriptures. No claim was made that the Vulgate is always an accurate translation, but that it is free from any errors in faith or morals. The scholar must be principally concerned with the literal sense of