

Ten After Ten --- Session 5: Sacred Scripture

101. The words of God, expressed in the words of men, are in every way like human language, just as the Word of the eternal Father, when he took on himself the flesh of human weakness, became like men.

102. Through all the words of Sacred Scripture, God speaks only one single Word, his one Utterance in whom he expresses himself completely.

103. The Church has always venerated the Scriptures as she venerates the Lord's Body.

104. In Sacred Scripture, the Church constantly finds her nourishment and her strength... In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children, and talks with them.

105. Holy Mother Church, relying on the faith of the apostolic age, accepts as sacred and canonical the books of the Old and the New Testaments, whole and entire, with all their parts, on the grounds that, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their author and have been handed on as such to the Church herself.

106. To compose the sacred books, God chose certain men who... made full use of their own faculties and powers so that, though he acted in them and by them, it was as true authors that they consigned to writing whatever he wanted written, and no more.

107. We must acknowledge that the books of Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the Sacred Scriptures.

108. Christianity is the religion of the "Word" of God, a word which is not a written and mute word, but the Word which is incarnate and living.

109. To interpret Scripture correctly, the reader must be attentive to what the human authors truly wanted to affirm and to what God wanted to reveal to us by their words.

110. In order to discover the sacred authors' intention, the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture... Truth is differently presented and expressed... in other forms of literary expression.

111. Sacred Scripture must be read and interpreted in the light of the same Spirit by whom it was written.

112. Be especially attentive “to the content and unity of the whole Scripture.”... the Scripture has been opened since the Passion; since those who from then on have understood it, consider and discern in what way the prophecies must be interpreted.

113. Scripture is written principally in the Church’s heart rather than in documents and records, for the Church carries in her Tradition the living memorial of God’s Word.

114. Be attentive to the analogy of faith... the coherence of the truths of faith among themselves and within the whole plan of Revelation.

115. One can distinguish between two senses of Scripture: the literal and the spiritual, the latter being subdivided into the allegorical, moral, and anagogical senses.

116. The literal sense is the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis, following the rules of sound interpretation.

117. The allegorical sense: We can acquire a more profound understanding of events by recognizing their significance in Christ.

The moral sense: The events reported in Scripture ought to lead us to act justly.

The anagogical sense: We can view realities and events in terms of their eternal significance.

118. The Letter speaks of deeds; Allegory to faith; The Moral how to act; Anagogy our destiny.

119. All that has been said about the manner of interpreting Scripture is ultimately subject to the judgment of the Church which exercises the divinely conferred commission and ministry of watching over and interpreting the Word of God.