

Letter-deeds; Moral-how to act; Anagogy-our destiny; Allegory-faith **118**

1. Literal – “meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis following rules of sound interpretation” **116**
2. Spiritual (all three based on literal sense – Aquinas) “can be signs” **117**
  - a. Moral – how we live (to act justly) As St. Paul says, they were written “for our instruction.”
  - b. Anagogical – “leading”, about the future, viewed in terms of eternal significance (Church on earth sign of heavenly Jerusalem)
  - c. Allegorical (Typological) – “signs,” significance in Christ (example: Red Sea Crossing is sign/type of Christ's victory & of Christian Baptism)

Purpose of exegetes/theologians: to work, according to the four senses & Criteria for Biblical Interpretation, towards a better understanding and explanation of the meaning of Sacred Scripture in order that their research may help the Church to form a firmer judgement; all interpretation of Scripture is ultimately subject to the judgement of the Church **119**

1 Peter 1:20-21 *Know this first of all, that there is no prophecy of scripture that is a matter of personal interpretation, for no prophecy ever came through human will; but rather human beings moved by the holy Spirit spoke under the influence of God.*

#### Criteria for Biblical Interpretation

1. Be attentive to the content and unity of the whole Scripture **112** – context of passage & all Scripture
2. Read Scripture within the living Tradition of the whole Church **113** – living Tradition is for some examples: sermons & homilies, prayer and meditation, Christian art, liturgical celebrations (lex orandi, lex credendi)
3. Be attentive to the analogy of faith **114** – the coherence of the truths of the faith among themselves & within the whole plan of salvation. Scripture is divinely inspired, internally coherent & consistent with all doctrines/dogmas; Church dogmas (Immaculate Conception, Infallibility of the Pope, etc.) are not added to Scripture, but are the Church’s infallible interpretation of Scripture

#### Three stages in the formation of the Gospels **126:**

1. Life and teaching of Jesus: “the Church holds firmly that the four Gospels, “whose historicity she unhesitatingly affirms, faithfully hand on what Jesus, the Son of God, while he lived among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation, until the day when he was taken up.””
2. Oral tradition: “For, after the ascension of the Lord, the apostles handed on to their hearers what he had said and done, but with that fuller understanding which they, instructed by the glorious events of Christ and enlightened by the Spirit of truth, now enjoyed.”
3. The written Gospels: “The sacred authors, in writing the four Gospels, 1. selected certain of the many elements which had been handed on, either orally or already in written form; 2. others they synthesized or explained with an eye to the situation of the churches, the while sustaining the form of preaching, 3. but always in such a fashion that they have told us the honest truth about Jesus.”