DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION ON DIVINE REVELATION  
***DEI VERBUM***  
SOLEMNLY PROMULGATED BY HIS HOLINESS  
POPE PAUL VI  
ON NOVEMBER 18, 1965

[*AAS 58* (1966) 817-836]

**PREFACE**

1. [1] Hearing the word of God with reverence and proclaiming it with faith, the sacred synod takes its direction from these words of St. John: "We announce to you the eternal life which dwelt with the Father and was made visible to us. What we have seen and heard we announce to you, so that you may have fellowship with us and our common fellowship be with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:2-3). [2] Therefore, following in the footsteps of the Council of Trent and of the First Vatican Council, this present council wishes to set forth authentic doctrine on divine revelation and how it is handed on, so that by hearing the message of salvation the whole world may believe, by believing it may hope, and by hoping it may love. (1)

**CHAPTER I** – **REVELATION ITSELF**

2. [1] In His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will (see Eph. 1:9) by which through Christ, the Word made flesh, man might in the Holy Spirit have access to the Father and come to share in the divine nature (see Eph. 2:18; 2 Peter 1:4). [2] Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God (see Col. 1;15, 1 Tim. 1:17) out of the abundance of His love speaks to men as friends (see Ex. 33:11; John 15:14-15) and lives among them (see Bar. 3:38), so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself.

**PROOEMIUM[[1]](#footnote-1)**

1. [1] DEI VERBUM religiose audiens et fiden-ter proclamans, Sacrosancta Synodus verbis S. Ioannis obsequitur dicentis: «Adnuntiamus vobis vitam aeternam, quae erat apud Patrem et apparuit nobis: quod vidimus et audivimus adnuntiamus vobis, ut et vos societatem habeatis nobiscum, et societas nostra sit cum Patre et cum Filio eius Iesu Christo» (I Io. 1, 2-3). [2] Propterea, Conciliorum Tridentini et Vaticani I inhaerens vestigiis, genuinam de divina revelatione ac de eius transmissione doctrinam proponere intendit, ut salutis praeconio mundus universus audiendo credat, credendo speret, sperando amet. (1)

**CAPUT I – DE IPSA REVELATIONE**

2. [1] Placuit Deo in sua bonitate et sapientia Seipsum revelare et notum facere sacramentum voluntatis suae (cf. Eph. 1, 9), quo homines per Christum, Verbum carnem factum, in Spiritu Sancto accessum habent ad Patrem et divinae naturae consortes efficiuntur (cf. Eph. 2, 18; 2 Petr. 1, 4). [2] Hac itaque revelatione Deus invisibilis (cf. Col. 1, 15; I Tim. 1, 17) ex abundantia caritatis suae homines tamquam amicos alloquitur (cf. Ex. 33, 11; Io. 15, 14-15) et cum eis conversatur (cf. Bar. 3, 38), ut eos ad societatem Secum invitet in eamque suscipiat.

[3] This plan of revelation is realized by deeds and words having an inner unity: the deeds wrought by God in the history of salvation manifest and confirm the teaching and realities signified by the words, while the words proclaim the deeds and clarify the mystery contained in them. [4] By this revelation then, the deepest truth about God and the salvation of man shines out for our sake in Christ, who is both the mediator and the fullness of all revelation. (2)

3. [1] God, who through the Word creates all things (see John 1:3) and keeps them in existence, gives men an enduring witness to Himself in created realities (see Rom. 1:19-20). Planning to make known the way of heavenly salvation, He went further and from the start manifested Himself to our first parents. [2] Then after their fall His promise of redemption aroused in them the hope of being saved (see Gen. 3:15) and from that time on He ceaselessly kept the human race in His care, to give eternal life to those who perseveringly do good in search of salvation (see Rom. 2:6-7).

[3] Then, at the time He had appointed He called Abraham in order to make of him a great nation (see Gen. 12:2). Through the patriarchs, and after them through Moses and the prophets, He taught this people to acknowledge Himself the one living and true God, provident father and just judge, and to wait for the Saviour promised by Him, and in this manner prepared the way for the Gospel down through the centuries.

4. [1] Then, after speaking in many and varied ways through the prophets, "now at last in these days God has spoken to us in His Son" (Heb. 1:1-2). [2] For He sent His Son, the eternal Word, who enlightens all men, so that He might dwell among men and tell them of the innermost being of God (see John 1:1-18). [3] Jesus Christ, therefore, the Word made flesh, was sent as "a man to men." (3) He "speaks the words of God" (John 3:34), and completes the work of salvation which His Father gave Him to do (see John 5:36; 17:4). [3] Haec revelationis oeconomia fit gestis verbisque intrinsece inter se connexis, ita ut opera, in historia salutis a Deo patrata, doctrinam et res verbis significatas manifestent ac corroborent, verba autem opera proclament et mysterium in eis contentum elucident. [4] Intima autem per hanc revelationem tam de Deo quam de hominis salute veritas nobis in Christo illucescit, qui mediator simul et plenitudo totius revelationis exsistit. (2)

3. [1] Deus, per Verbum omnia creans (cf. Io. 1, 3) et conservans, in rebus creatis perenne sui testimonium hominibus praebet (cf. Rom. 1, 19-20) et, viam salutis supernae aperire intendens, insuper protoparentibus inde ab initio Semetipsum manifestavit. [2] Post eorum autem lapsum eos, redemptione promissa, in spem salutis erexit (cf. Gen. 3, 15) et sine intermissione generis humani curam egit, ut omnibus qui secundum patientiam boni operis salutem quaerunt, vitam aeternam daret (cf. Rom. 2, 6-7).

[3] Suo autem tempore Abraham vocavit, ut faceret eum in gentem magnam (cf. Gen. 12, 2-3), quam post Patriarchas per Moysen et Prophetas erudivit ad se solum Deum vivum et verum, providum Patrem et iudicem iustum agnoscendum, et ad promissum Salvatorem expectandum, atque ita per saecula viam Evangelio praeparavit.

4. [1] Postquam vero multifariam multisque modis Deus locutus est in Prophetis, «novissime diebus istis locutus est nobis in Filio» (Hebr. 1, 1-2). [2] Misit enim Filium suum, aeternum scilicet Verbum, qui omnes [819] homines illuminat, ut inter homines habitaret iisque intima Dei enarraret (cf. Io. 1, 1-18). [3] Iesus Christus ergo, Verbum caro factum, «homo ad homines» missus, (3) «verba Dei loquitur» (Io. 3, 34), et opus salutare consummat quod dedit ei Pater faciendum (cf. Io. 5, 36; 17, 4).

[4] To see Jesus is to see His Father (John 14:9). For this reason Jesus perfected revelation by fulfilling it through his whole work of making Himself present and manifesting Himself: 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. Moreover He confirmed with divine testimony what revelation proclaimed, that God is with us to free us from the darkness of sin and death, and to raise us up to life eternal.

[5] The Christian dispensation, therefore, as the new and definitive covenant, will never pass away and we now await no further new public revelation before the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ (see 1 Tim. 6:14 and Tit. 2:13).

5. [1] “The obedience of faith” (Rom. 13:26; see 1:5; 2 Cor 10:5-6) "is to be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which man commits his whole self freely to God, offering the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals," (4) and freely assenting to the truth revealed by Him. [2] To make this act of faith, the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit must precede and assist, moving the heart and turning it to God, opening the eyes of the mind and giving "joy and ease to everyone in assenting to the truth and believing it." (5) [3] To bring about an ever deeper understanding of revelation the same Holy Spirit constantly brings faith to completion by His gifts.

6. [1] Through divine revelation, God chose to show forth and communicate Himself and the eternal decisions of His will regarding the salvation of men. That is to say, He chose to share with them those divine treasures which totally transcend the understanding of the human mind. (6)

[4] Quapropter Ipse, quem qui videt, videt et Patrem (cf. Io. 14, 9), tota Suiipsius praesentia ac manifestatione, verbis et operibus, signis et miraculis, praesertim autem morte sua et gloriosa ex mortuis resurrectione, misso tandem Spiritu veritatis, revelationem complendo perficit ac testimonio divino confirmat, Deum nempe nobiscum esse ad nos ex peccati mortisque tenebris liberandos et in aeternam vitam resuscitandos.

[5] Oeconomia ergo christiana, utpote foedus novum et definitivum, numquam praeteribit, et nulla iam nova revelatio publica expectanda est ante gloriosam manifestationem Domini nostri Iesu Christi (cf. I Tim. 6, 14 et Tit. 2, 13).

5. [1] Deo revelanti praestanda est oboeditio fidei (cf. Rom. 16, 26; coll. Rom. 1, 5; 2 Cor. 10, 5-6), qua homo se totum libere Deo committit «plenum revelanti Deo intellectus et voluntatis obsequium» praestando (4) et voluntarie revelationi ab Eo datae assentiendo. [2] Quae fides ut praebeatur, opus est praeveniente et adiuvante gratia Dei et internis Spiritus Sancti auxiliis, qui cor moveat et in Deum convertat, mentis oculos aperiat, et det «omnibus suavitatem in consentiendo et credendo veritati».(5) [3] Quo vero profundior usque evadat revelationis intelligentia, idem Spiritus Sanctus fidem iugiter per dona sua perficit.

6. [1] Divina revelatione Deus Seipsum atque aeterna voluntatis suae decreta circa hominum salutem manifestare ac communicare voluit, «ad participanda scilicet bona divina, quae humanae mentis intelligentiam omnino superant». (6)

[2] As a sacred synod has affirmed, God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certainty from created reality by the light of human reason (see Rom. 1:20); but teaches that it is through His revelation that those religious truths which are by their nature accessible to human reason can be known by all men with ease, with solid certitude and with no trace of error, even in this present state of the human race. (7)

**CHAPTER II** – **HANDING ON DIVINE REVELATION**

7. [1] In His gracious goodness, God has seen to it that what He had revealed for the salvation of all nations would abide perpetually in its full integrity and be handed on to all generations. [2] Therefore Christ the Lord in whom the full revelation of the supreme God is brought to completion (see Cor. 1:20; 3:13; 4:6), commissioned the Apostles to preach to all men that Gospel which is the source of all saving truth and moral teaching, (8) and to impart to them heavenly gifts. This Gospel had been promised in former times through the prophets, and Christ Himself had fulfilled it and promulgated it with His lips. [3] This commission was faithfully fulfilled by the Apostles who, by their oral preaching, by example, and by observances handed on what they had received from the lips of Christ, from living with Him, and from what He did, or what they had learned through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. The commission was fulfilled, too, by those Apostles and apostolic men who under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit committed the message of salvation to writing. (9)

[4] But in order to keep the Gospel forever whole and alive within the Church, the Apostles left bishops as their successors, "handing over" to them "the authority to teach in their own place."(10)

[2] Confitetur Sacra Synodus, «Deum, rerum omnium principium et finem, naturali humanae rationis lumine e rebus creatis certo cognosci posse» (cf. Rom. 1, 20); eius vero revelationi tribuendum esse docet, [820] «ut ea, quae in rebus divinis humanae rationi per se impervia non sunt, in praesenti quoque generis humani conditione ab omnibus expedite, firma certitudine et nullo admixto errore cognosci possint». (7)

# CAPUT II – DE DIVINAE REVELATIONIS TRANSMISSIONE

7. [1] Quae Deus ad salutem cunctarum gentium revelaverat, eadem benignissime disposuit ut in aevum integra permanerent omnibusque generationibus transmitterentur. [2] Ideo Christus Dominus, in quo summi Dei tota revelatio consummatur (cf. 2 Cor. 1,20 et 3,16 - 4,6), mandatum dedit Apostolis ut Evangelium, quod promissum ante per Prophetas Ipse adimplevit et proprio ore promulgavit, tamquam fontem omnis et salutaris veritatis et morum disciplinae omnibus praedicarent, (8) eis dona divina communicantes. [3] Quod quidem fideliter factum est, tum ab Apostolis, qui in praedicatione orali, exemplis et institutionibus ea tradiderunt quae sive ex ore, conversatione et operibus Christi acceperant, sive a Spiritu Sancto suggerente didicerant, tum ab illis Apostolis virisque apostolicis, qui, sub inspiratione eiusdem Spiritus Sancti, nuntium salutis scriptis mandaverunt. (9)

[4] Ut autem Evangelium integrum et vivum iugiter in Ecclesia servaretur, Apostoli successores reliquerunt Episcopos, ipsis «suum ipsorum locum magisterii tradentes». (10)

[5] This sacred tradition, therefore, and Sacred Scripture of both the Old and New Testaments are like a mirror in which the pilgrim Church on earth looks at God, from whom she has received everything, until she is brought finally to see Him as He is, face to face (see 1 John 3:2).

8. [1] And so the apostolic preaching, which is expressed in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved by an unending succession of preachers until the end of time. [2] Therefore the Apostles, handing on what they themselves had received, warn the faithful to hold fast to the traditions which they have learned either by word of mouth or by letter (see 2 Thess. 2:15), and to fight in defense of the faith handed on once and for all (see Jude 1:3) (11) [3] Now what was handed on by the Apostles includes everything which contributes toward the holiness of life and increase in faith of the people of God; and so the Church, in her teaching, life and worship, perpetuates and hands on to all generations all that she herself is, all that she believes.

[4] This tradition which comes from the Apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. (12) For there is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down. This happens through the contemplation and study made by believers, who treasure these things in their hearts (see Luke, 2:19, 51) through a penetrating understanding of the spiritual realities which they experience, and through the preaching of those who have received through episcopal succession the sure gift of truth. [5] For as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her.

[6] The words of the holy fathers witness to the presence of this living tradition, whose wealth is poured into the practice and life of the believing and praying Church.

[5] Haec igitur Sacra Traditio et Sacra utriusque Testamenti Scriptura veluti speculum sunt in quo Ecclesia in terris peregrinans contemplatur Deum, a quo omnia accipit, usquedum ad Eum videndum facie ad faciem sicuti est perducatur (cf. I Io. 3, 2).

8. [1] Itaque praedicatio apostolica, quae in inspiratis libris speciali modo exprimitur, continua successione usque ad consummationem temporum conservari debebat. [2] Unde Apostoli, tradentes quod et ipsi acceperunt, fideles monent ut teneant traditiones quas sive per sermonem sive per epistulam didicerint (cf. 2 Thess. 2, 15), utque pro semel sibi tradita fide decertent (cf. Iud. 3).(11) [3] Quod vero ab Apostolis traditum est, ea omnia complectitur quae ad Populi Dei vitam sancte ducendam fidemque augendam conferunt, sicque Ecclesia, in sua doctrina, vita et cultu, perpetuat cunctisque generationibus transmittit omne quod ipsa est, omne quod credit.

[4] Haec quae est ab Apostolis Traditio sub assistentia Spiritus Sancti in Ecclesia proficit: (12) crescit enim tam rerum quam verborum traditorum perceptio, tum ex contemplatione et studio credentium, qui ea conferunt in corde suo (cf. Lc. 2, 19 et 51), tum ex intima spiritualium rerum quam experiuntur intelligentia, tum ex praeconio eorum qui cum episcopatus successione charisma veritatis certum acceperunt. [5] Ecclesia scilicet, volventibus saeculis, ad plenitudinem divinae veritatis iugiter tendit, donec in ipsa consummentur verba Dei.

[6] Sanctorum Patrum dicta huius Traditionis vivificam testificantur praesentiam, cuius divitiae in praxim vitamque credentis et orantis Ecclesiae transfunduntur.

[7] Through the same tradition the Church's full canon of the sacred books is known, and the sacred writings themselves are more profoundly understood and unceasingly made active in her; and thus God, who spoke of old, uninterruptedly converses with the bride of His beloved Son; and the Holy Spirit, through whom the living voice of the Gospel resounds in the Church, and through her, in the world, leads unto all truth those who believe and makes the word of Christ dwell abundantly in them (see Col. 3:16).

9. [1] Hence there exists a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture. [2] For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. [3] For Sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, while sacred tradition takes the word of God entrusted by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and hands it on to their successors in its full purity, so that led by the light of the Spirit of truth, they may in proclaiming it preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known. [4] Consequently it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore both sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of loyalty and reverence. (13)

10. [1] Sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, committed to the Church. Holding fast to this deposit the entire holy people united with their shepherds remain always steadfast in the teaching of the Apostles, in the common life, in the breaking of the bread and in prayers (see Acts 2, 42, Greek text), so that holding to, practicing and professing the heritage of the faith, it becomes on the part of the bishops and faithful a single common effort. (14)

[7] Per eandem Traditionem integer Sacrorum Librorum canon Ecclesiae innotescit, ipsaeque Sacrae Litterae in ea penitius intelliguntur et indesinenter actuosae redduntur; sicque Deus, qui olim locutus est, sine intermissione cum dilecti Filii sui Sponsa colloquitur, et Spiritus Sanctus, per quem viva vox Evangelii in Ecclesia, et per ipsam in mundo resonat, credentes in omnem veritatem inducit, verbumque Christi in eis abundanter inhabitare facit (cf. Col. 3, 16).

9. [1] Sacra Traditio ergo et Sacra Scriptura arcte inter se connectuntur atque communicant. [2] Nam ambae, ex eadem divina scaturigine promanantes, in unum quodammodo coalescunt et in eundem finem tendunt. [3] Etenim Sacra Scriptura est locutio Dei quatenus divino afflante Spiritu scripto consignatur; Sacra autem Traditio verbum Dei, a Christo Domino et a Spiritu Sancto Apostolis concreditum, successoribus eorum integre transmittit, ut illud, praelucente Spiritu veritatis, praeconio suo fideliter servent, exponant atque diffundant; quo fit ut Ecclesia certitudinem suam de omnibus revelatis non per solam Sacram Scripturam hauriat. [4] Quapropter utraque pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipienda et veneranda est. (13) [822]

10. [1] Sacra Traditio et Sacra Scriptura unum verbi Dei sacrum depositum constituunt Ecclesiae commissum, cui inhaerens tota plebs sancta Pastoribus suis adunata in doctrina Apostolorum et communione, fractione panis et orationibus iugiter perseverat (cf. Act. 2, 42 gr.), ita ut in tradita fide tenenda, exercenda profitendaque singularis fiat Antistitum et fidelium conspiratio. (14)

[2] But the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, (15) has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, (16) whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. [3] This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed.

[4] It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, Sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so 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 one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.

[2] Munus autem authentice interpretandi verbum Dei scriptum vel traditum (15) soli vivo Ecclesiae Magisterio concreditum est, (16) cuius auctoritas in nomine Iesu Christi exercetur. [3] Quod quidem Magisterium non supra verbum Dei est, sed eidem ministrat, docens nonnisi quod traditum est, quatenus illud, ex divino mandato et Spiritu Sancto assistente, pie audit, sancte custodit et fideliter exponit, ac ea omnia ex hoc uno fidei deposito haurit quae tamquam divinitus revelata credenda proponit.

[4] Patet igitur Sacram Traditionem, Sacram Scripturam et Ecclesiae Magisterium, iuxta sapientissimum Dei consilium, ita inter se connecti et consociari, ut unum sine aliis non consistat, omniaque simul, singula suo modo sub actione unius Spiritus Sancti, ad animarum salutem efficaciter conferant.

1. cf. St. Augustine, "De Catechizandis Rudibus," C.IV 8: PL. 40, 316.

2. cf. Matt. 11:27; John 1:14 and 17; 14:6; 17:1-3; 2 Cor 3:16 and 4, 6; Eph. 1, 3-14.

3. Epistle to Diognetus, c. VII, 4: Funk, Apostolic Fathers, I, p. 403.

4. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 3, "On Faith:" Denzinger 1789 (3008).

5. Second Council of Orange, Canon 7: Denzinger 180 (377); First Vatican Council, loc. cit.: Denzinger 1791 (3010).

6. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 2, "On Revelation:" Denzinger 1786 (3005).

7. Ibid: Denzinger 1785 and 1786 (3004 and 3005).

8. cf. Matt. 28:19-20, and Mark 16:15; Council of Trent, session IV, Decree on Scriptural Canons: Denzinger 783 (1501).

9. cf. Council of Trent, loc. cit.; First Vatican Council, session III, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 2, "On revelation:" Denzinger 1787 (3005).

10. St. Irenaeus, "Against Heretics" III, 3, 1: PG 7, 848; Harvey, 2, p. 9.

11. cf. Second Council of Nicea: Denzinger 303 (602); Fourth Council of Constance, session X, Canon 1: Denzinger 336 (650-652).

12. cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 4, "On Faith and Reason:" Denzinger 1800 (3020).

13. cf. Council of Trent, session IV, loc. cit.: Denzinger 783 (1501).

14. cf. Pius XII, apostolic constitution, "Munificentissimus Deus," Nov. 1, 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950) p. 756; Collected Writings of St. Cyprian, Letter 66, 8: Hartel, III, B, p. 733: "The Church [is] people united with the priest and the pastor together with his flock."

15. cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 3 "On Faith:" Denzinger 1792 (3011).

16. cf. Pius XII, encyclical "Humani Generis," Aug. 12, 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950) pp. 568-69: Denzinger 2314 (3886).

1. Latin version courtesy of EWTN. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)