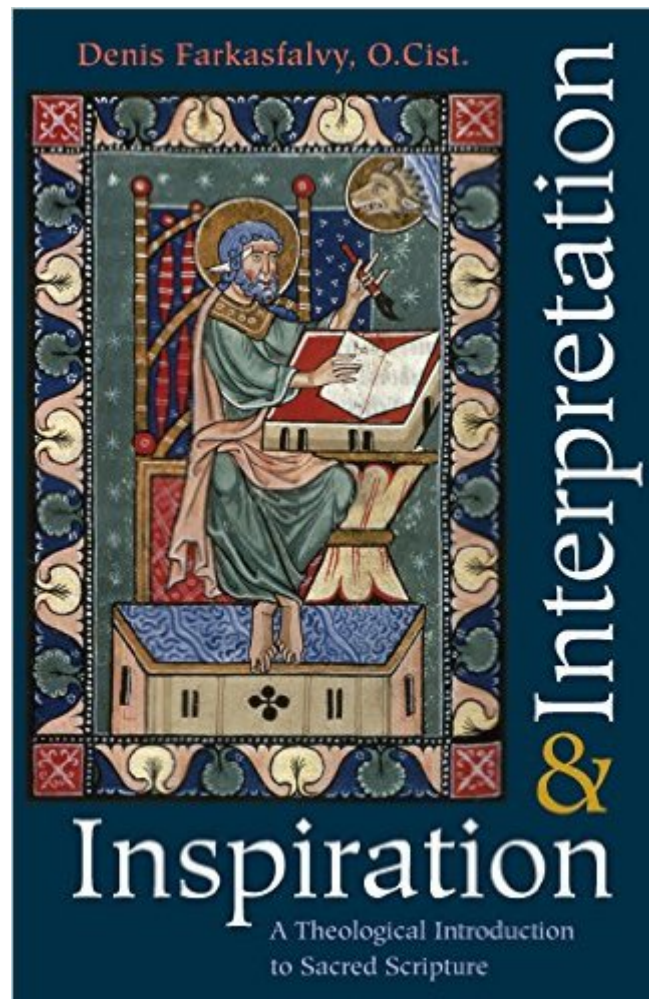


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# Inspiration And Interpretation: A Theological Introduction To Sacred Scripture



## Synopsis

Inspiration and Interpretation provides readers with a much needed general theological introduction to the study of Sacred Scripture. Denis Farkasfalvy presents the Catholic understanding of biblical inspiration, canon, and interpretation from historical and systematic points of view, starting with the apostolic age and ending with Dei Verbum of the Second Vatican Council. Although written from an explicitly Catholic point of view, the book is of import to non-Catholic Christians, especially traditional Protestants interested in exploring the foundations of biblical theology retained and developed by the Reformation. The book begins with a thoughtful examination of the way inspiration and interpretation made their interrelated appearance in the early Church, from Pauline exegesis and the Gospel tradition to the early patristic teaching and preaching of the fourth and fifth centuries. It continues through the medieval period, surveying monastic and scholastic exegesis, and leads to a presentation of the new context in which inspiration, canon, and exegesis appeared amid the doctrinal and cultural changes of the Renaissance and Reformation. Surveying the effects of Trent and its aftermath, Farkasfalvy leads the reader to an understanding of the new biblicism embedded in the problems of the nascent rationalist age and historical consciousness. This is followed by a more detailed examination of modern Catholic biblical theology and its confrontation with and assimilation of the critical-historical method. Finally, the author provides a doctrinal synthesis on inspiration and interpretation in the context of contemporary Catholic theology. Bringing together a wide range of disciplines—New Testament, exegesis, history, and systematic theology—Farkasfalvy illuminates the connection between the logic and history of biblical interpretation as a theological problem and the practice of biblical exegesis as a problem-solving exercise, one that seeks to answer, rediscover, and reformulate the ongoing hermeneutical quest of theology.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Denis Farkasfalvy is abbot of Our Lady of Dallas Cistercian Monastery, adjunct professor and research scholar at the University of Dallas, and teacher at the Cistercian Preparatory School in Irving, Texas. He is the author of more than one hundred journal articles and has published eight books in Hungarian including Introduction to Biblical Theology and Introduction to the New Testament.

**PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:** "Denis Farkasfalvy applies his astonishing learning and theological acumen to the theology of Scripture, especially with regard to the inadequately investigated history and meaning of inspiration. He writes from within the Catholic tradition, but his work is valuable for non-Catholics as well. He gives a balanced, moderate perspective on the interconnected themes of inspiration, canonicity, and interpretation, set in the context of revelation. If there is not agreement on every point, readers will find him a knowledgeable and agreeable conversation partner."—Everett Ferguson, Distinguished Scholar in Residence,

Abilene Christian University "One might not have thought it possible to do so many things so well as Denis Farkasfalvy does here. Into a single coherent narrative he weaves early Christian preaching, the Eucharist, formation of the canon, history of exegesis, methods of biblical interpretation, and much else. All of this will stimulate scholars and instruct students. But most of all, by developing a rich and suggestive theory of the inspiration of scripture, Farkasfalvy offers a profound answer to a question now too rarely asked: why do we care about these ancient texts in the first place?"  
•Bruce Marshall, Professor of Historical Theology, Southern Methodist University  
This work is the result of familiarity with a remarkably wide range of primary sources, control of

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The book gives a wonderful historical sketch of how the concept of the inspiration has been thought of from the time of the New Testament all of the way through to modern times. Conservative evangelical treatments of the subject often only begin at the turn of the

20th century with B.B. Warfield. (F)arkasfalvy, a Cistercian Abbot and professor, focuses on dialogue about the topic within the Catholic Church. However, he at least nods to some recent conservative evangelical works on the topic. Unfortunately, as the author points out, liberals imply what they think about biblical inspiration by not writing on it at all. F explains that the biblical authors conceived of inspiration as both "subjective" (the Holy Spirit's influence on but not necessarily mind-control of the author) and "objective" (the inspiration of the documents themselves).

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