

Jesus accepted the tensions associated with the religious life. Jesus was not crucified because he was so nice. Jesus did not accept what was politically correct, to find the easy way out. No, Jesus was crucified because, being holy, he exposed the hypocrisy of others, especially the religious leaders of his day. The religious leaders attacked Jesus, in response. These Lectioary readings explain to the Faithful that Jesus also expects his disciples to do likewise.

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### Annotated Bibliography

Material above the double line draws from material below the double line. Those uninterested in scholarly details should stop reading here. If they do, however, they may miss some of the fun stuff scholars are digging up.

#### **First Reading: Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10**

This reading is available in Pastoral Care of the Sick.<sup>1</sup>

Isa 35:5-6

Mary Ann Beavis, "The Trial before the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:53-65): Reader Response and Greco-Roman Readers"<sup>2</sup>

Mark 7:37 reflects Isaiah 35:5-6, *He has done all things well; he even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.*

#### **Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10 (cf. Isaiah 35:4)**

#### **Second Reading: James 5:7-10**

James 5:7

The Greek for *early and late rains* refers to fall and spring, rather than spring and fall. The Jewish calendar begins in the fall.

Jas 5:9

Christopher Pramuk, "Strange Fruit": Black Suffering/White Revelation"<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Roman Ritual: Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI: Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum: Approved for use in the dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See: Prepared by International Commission on English in the Liturgy: a Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops' Conferences (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co. 1983) 257.

<sup>2</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 49, No. 4 (October 1987) 591.

<sup>3</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 67, No. 2 (June 2006) 357.

Writing as a White theologian, Pramuk speculates on the nature of Purgatory. Pramuk thinks that Purgatory will consist of sinners facing their sins and facing those they hurt. In the reconciling spirit of Jesus, the Faithful will forgive those who hurt them. Pramuk associates the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory with African ancestor-worship. Pramuk uses James 5:9 to make this case. *Do not complain, brothers and sisters, about one another, that you may not be judged. Behold, the Judge is standing before the gates.* I find his argument haunting and interesting, but unconvincing.

James 5:9

Mark E. Taylor and George H. Guthrie, "The Structure of James"<sup>4</sup>

Taylor maintains that focusing on the prophets is a main theme of the Letter of James.

James 5:10

Luke Timothy Johnson, "The Mirror of Remembrance (James 1:22-25)"<sup>5</sup>

Johnson explains that James uses *take as an example ... the prophets ...* to make his case that Jesus expects his disciples to live their lives as examples of *hardship and patience* exercised by the prophets. The italicized words, above, are from the Lectionary.

**Alleluia: Isaiah 61:1 (cited in Luke 4:18)**

**Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11**

Matt 11:2—16:20

Mark J. Goodwin, "Hosea and 'the Son of the Living God' in Matthew 16:16b"<sup>6</sup>

Goodwin points out that Jack Dean Kingsbury links the conflict in Matthew 11:2—16:20 [part of which the Lectionary includes in the reading for today] with the "wider theme of Israel's repudiation of Jesus." This is where the first part of these Personal Notes finds support for accepting the tensions of life.

Matt 11:11

Daniel W. Ulrich, "The Missional Audience of the Gospel of Matthew"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 4 (October 2006) 686, 687.

<sup>5</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 50, No. 4 (October 1988) 633.

<sup>6</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 2 (April 2005) 279.

<sup>7</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 1 (January 2007) 75, 78.

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Ulrich contrasts *greater* and *least* with reference to John the Baptist. Ulrich goes on to argue that Jesus is directing the appeal to his *Missional Audience* not necessarily to a few in number, but rather to those undistinguished by class.

For more on sources see the Appendix file, included with the hard copy. Personal Notes are on the web site at [www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes](http://www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes)

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**After-action Report**  
**for**  
Personal Notes  
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The phrase in the third paragraph, *Birth begins as a parasite in the mother*, is not only politically incorrect, but even misleading. After the word *dust*, a sentence extolling the value of human life is needed, especially in this Advent Season, celebrating the pregnancy of Mary, getting ready to bring the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to birth.