

Personal Notes

080113 Sunday after January 6: The Baptism of the Lord (First Sunday in Ordinary Time) 21A

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Humility is the key to these readings. The Bishops of the United States, in their Catechism, omit *humility* in Appendix A. Glossary. There are over seventeen pages referenced for *humility*, however, in their Index. It should not surprise me that the Bishops should have difficulty defining the term *humility*. Humility is the only virtue for which truth is essential. The dictionary definition, however, does not link truth and humility. With a little research on the web, I was unable to find any link between humility and truth.

For those reasons, as a retired professor, to whom truth is essential, kindly bear with my own humble definition of humility. The truth is that God is the Creator and humans are creatures. That means that truth has to determine politics, except when politics and truth unite in the Godhead. Since politics and truth never completely unite in any human, except when the Pope speaks *ex cathedra*, humans require humility in order to prioritize accepting truth as a political reality. This means that love requires truth. Love that is not tough enough to withstand the need for political correctness is not love. Humility is that virtue which enables people to prioritize recognition of what is true, independently of recognition of what is immediately powerful. This means that a powerful person of high social status, such as a bishop, can also be humble.

Isaiah, therefore, prophesies that the Messiah will come quietly, without braggadocio. Psalm 29 extols the greatness of the Creator. Acts presents Jesus as the Suffering Servant of whom Isaiah writes. Matthew presents Saint John baptizing the Divine and sinless Jesus. Jesus baptized, serves as a model for the rest of humanity to accept human limitations.

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.

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

Isa 42:1-4

Alexander A. Di Lella, O.F.M., "One in Human Likeness and the Holy Ones of the Most High in Daniel 7"¹

Isaiah 42:1-4, *here is my servant* is a personification of Israel and the Faithful. It seems to me that the Faithful involved in JustFaith activities personify the personification of Israel, of which Isaiah writes. I keep watching for the JustFaith topics to change, to see where else their interests lie, but so far, they have not changed.²

¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 39, No. 1 (January 1977) 15.

² <http://www.justfaith.org/JM125.html> 071126.

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Isa 42:1-4

Gregory J. Polan, O.S.B., review of John Goldingay, The Message of Isaiah 40—55: A Literary-Theological Commentary³

Isaiah 42:1-4 is one of four Servant Songs Polan and others identify in Isaiah, namely 49:1-6; 50:4-11; 52:13—53:12. God is teaching humans to serve, rather than dominate, one another. Polan praises the scholarship of Goldingay.

Isa 42:1

John Paul Heil, "Jesus with the Wild Animals in Mark 1:13"⁴

Heil writes, "... as 'Son of God' is both a corporate concept referring to Israel and an individual concept referring to Jesus, so the Isaian 'servant' of God is both a corporate and an individual concept." As a humble corporate individual, humility, therefore, extends to the Faithful.

Isaiah 42:3

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy⁵

Using the Hebrew, Barker does something interesting with *a bruised reed he shall not break*. Barker writes that this verse,

... described the menorah, 'reed' being also the term for the branches of the lamp ... the branch of the menorah is symbolic of the Servant, the royal high priest, the Branch of the great tree. ... It must be more than coincidence that a treelike object in the temple was remembered by Zechariah, was missing from the Deuteronomic accounts of the temple and from the lists of loot taken by the Babylonians, yet was of such importance that it would be restored in the time of the Messiah. The menorah and its significance were sensitive issues in the second temple period.

³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (July 2007) 544.

⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 1 (January 2006) 71.

⁵ London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003 244.

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Isaiah 42:6

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy⁶

Isaiah 42:6 is a renewal of the covenant, a renewal-taking place at every Mass, but especially this Sunday. For me, *I formed you and set you as a covenant of the people* relates immediately to all ministries of the Faithful.

Isaiah 42:7

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy⁷

Barker associates the release of prisoners with the year of Jubilee. Would not that be something for all of those imprisoned in the United States.

Psalm 29:1-2, 3-4, 9-10

Acts 10:34-38

Acts 10:1—11:18

William O. Walker, Jr., "Galatians 2:7b-8 as a Non-Pauline Interpolation"⁸

Walker argues that there was not a division of labor between Paul and Peter, with the "pillar" apostles. Acts 10:1—11:18 identify Peter, not Paul, as the pioneer missionary to the Gentiles.

Acts 10:24

In 2003, I laughed when I read the Latin, *Aperiens autem Petrus os dixit*, that I translated to myself, *Opening his mouth, again, Peter said*. New Jerusalem has *Then Peter addressed them*; Douay-Rheims, *But Peter began, and said*; King James,⁹ *Then Peter opened his mouth, and said*; The Jerusalem Bible,¹⁰ *Then Peter addressed them*.

The above is a quote from what I wrote for Reading 21B in 2003. My idea was that mouth and brain were disengaged, as Peter began to speak. For the Bible

⁶ London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003.

⁷ London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003 36.

⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 4 (October 2003) 570.

⁹ General Editor, The Reverend Cain Hope Felder, Ph.D., The Original African Heritage Study Bible: King James Version (Nashville: The James C. Winston Publishing Company, 1993).

¹⁰ Alexander Jones, General Editor, The Jerusalem Bible: Reader's Edition (Garden City, New York: Double Day * Company, Inc., 1968).

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to have that, struck me as a surprise and, therefore, humorous. A little more reflection follows.

I have a problem assuming that people in authority prioritize truth over politics. Upon a closer inspection of the Greek, the Greek is taking over Semanticism for speaking in a solemn way. I, therefore, apologize to Saint Peter for my laughing three years ago, the last time through these readings. I may make up for that apology, however, in what follows. ☺

Acts 10:36

Robert C. Tannehill, review of Robert F. O'Toole, S.J., Luke's Presentation of Jesus: A Christology¹¹

O'Toole describes the titles of Jesus. In response, Tannehill, the reviewer, writes,

In his last Chapter, O'Toole assembles evidence that Luke predicates the same or similar things of Jesus and of God. Although some of this evidence is significant, it must be placed alongside evidence that Jesus acts as God's instrument or viceroy, a subordinate position. In Acts there are references to what God has done *though* Jesus (2:22; 10:36 [used today], and even Jesus' position as Lord and Messiah is the result of God's action (2:36). Jesus poured out the Spirit at Pentecost, but first he had to receive it from the Father (2:33). In Luke 22:29 royal authority passes from God to Jesus to the apostles in a similar two-step procedure. God remains distinct as the ultimate source and authority.

My reason for the lengthy quotations is twofold. Without mentioning the hypostatic union of Divine and human persons in Jesus, the quotation above seems to belie the Trinitarian doctrine of the Church. The second reason is that the Bishops seem to ignore the research O'Toole provides. *Subsidia biblica* 25; Rome: Biblical Institute, which is the Pontifical Biblical Institute,¹² publishes O'Toole. In his review, Tannehill has other interesting paragraphs.

The title Son of God indicates a close and special relationship with God, and the authority that goes with this relationship (Luke 3:22; 9:35). O'Toole argues that it also expresses "the mystery of Jesus'

¹¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 4 (October 2006) 773.

¹²

<http://www.ask.com/web?q=Subsidia+biblica+25%3B+Rome%3A+Biblical+Institute&search=search&qsrc=0&o=333&l=dir> 071126.

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divinity.” He relies heavily on Luke 1:35, which provides a guide to interpreting the title Son elsewhere in Luke-Acts. When the title Son follows Christ in a passage, it is a matter of step-parallelism; the two are not equivalent. I note, however, that Jesus is first introduced as “Son of the Most High” in connection with his role as the promised Davidic king, the Messiah (Luke 1:32-33), and in the one passage in Acts where the title Son is prominent, it is connected with the fulfillment of the promise to David (Acts 13:22-23, 32-37) O’Toole gives too little attention to the promise to David that David’s heir would be God’s Son (2 Sam 7:11-14). Furthermore, the title Son (of the Most High, of God) is not so divine that it cannot be applied to others than Jesus, as Luke 6:35 and 20:36 show.

... In later chapters, especially the chapters on Son of God and Lord, O’Toole frequently states that the title “communicates the mystery of Jesus’ divinity” (e.g., p. 166).

We should be cautious about assuming that the title Lord, applied to Jesus, carries such a meaning. Strong evidence is needed, for *kyrios* is a word of wide application in ancient society. Basically, it simply means a person of superior status with the right of command. So the owners of a slave girl can be called *kyrioi* (Acts 16:16, 19). O’Toole emphasizes the influence of the LXX [Septuagint] on Luke’s use of *Kyrios*. Presumably he has in mind the frequent application of this title to God, but the LXX also applies *kyrios* to human persons. The application of *kyrios* to a king fits Luke’s references to Jesus as Royal “Messiah Lord” (cf. Luke 2:11 with Acts 2:29-36, 1 Kgdms 24:9, 11; 2 Kgdms 9:11).

Acts 10:38

Richard J. Dillon, review of Scott Shauf, Theology as History, History as Theology: Paul in Ephesus in Acts 19¹³

Dillon uses exorcism in the name of Jesus, Acts 10:38, *healing all those oppressed by the devil* as an apostolic proclamation of salvation through Jesus Christ, known as *kerymga*.

Dillon writes neither Scott Shauf, Hans Conzelmann nor Rudolph Bultmann (1884-1976)¹⁴ would contest “that history is an imaginative construct tailored to the social context of the writing.” I, however, would contest that statement, because it

¹³ Theological Studies, Vol. 68, No. 3 (September 2007) 685.

¹⁴ <http://www.theology.ie/theologians/bultmann.htm> 071126.

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omits the need to incorporate all relevant facts, especially facts that do not fit *an imaginative construct*.

Acts 10:38

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults¹⁵

The Bishops offer some interesting perspective, based on Acts 10:38. The Bishops write,

By the second century, Confirmation was also conferred by anointing with holy oil, which came to be called sacred Chrism. "This anointing highlights the name 'Christian,' which means 'anointed' and derives from that of Christ himself whom God 'anointed with the Holy Spirit.' (CCC [the Pope's catechism], no. 1289, citing Acts 10:38).

The problem is that the word *anointed* does not appear in the Lectionary reading at Acts 10:38. The reference to the Pope's catechism, however, is correct. Looking at the Greek, I find no word for *anoint* either in the eclectic version or on references to the other manuscripts, which are the basis for the current eclectic version of the original Greek.¹⁶ The difference the Bishops present between the Lectionary translation, which does not use *anoint* and the reference to the Papal catechism, which does, is an indication that church politics emanating from Rome is trumping a solid translation, emanating from the English-speaking world. The papacy seems to be throwing its weight around at the risk of its credibility.

Cf. Mark 9:7

¹⁵ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006 204.

¹⁶ Nestle-Aland,: Novum Testamentum: Graece et Latine: Textum Graecum post Eberhard et Erwin Nestle communiter ediderunt Barbara et Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger: Textus Latinus Novae Vulgatae Bibliorum Sacrorum Editioni debetur: Utriusque textus apparatus criticum recensuerunt et editionem novis curis elaboraverunt Barbara et Kurt Aland una cum Instituto Studiorum Textus Novi Testamenti Monasterii Westphaliae (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 1999) Editio XXVII. 351.

Matthew 3:13-17

Matt 3:16

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy¹⁷

Barker observes “accounts of the baptism show that this was a crucial moment in Jesus’ life.” This, evidently, was a moment of discernment for Jesus.

Matt 3:17

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults¹⁸

At “Doctrinal Statements” in Chapter 7, “The Good News: God Has Sent His Son,” the Bishops write,

The title *Son of God* refers to the truth that Jesus Christ is the unique and eternal Son of the Father. At Christ’s baptism and Transfiguration, the Father says of Jesus, “This is my beloved Son” (Mt 3:17 [used here]; 17:5). To profess Jesus as *Lord* is to believe in his divinity.”

The Bishops write similarly in Chapter 5, “Belief in God.”¹⁹ The Bishops wrote their Catechism in 2006, with the second printing in September. O’Toole wrote in 2004. The review appeared in October 2006. Unscrambling the chronology means that the Bishops had access to O’Toole (reviewed on page 4 here), but not the review. The problem with that excuse is my marginalia, “versus scholarship” written in July of this year. In other words, in July, I lacked documentation, but had a sense, that the statement of the Bishops would not hold up to scholarly scrutiny. I do not think it does.

Matt 3:17

Mark F. Whitters, “Jesus in the Footsteps of Jeremiah”²⁰

Whitters uses Matthew 3:17, *you are my beloved Son* to echo LXX (the Greek Septuagint First Testament) Jer 38:20 *Ephraim is my beloved son*. Whitters thinks that Matthew not only used Jesus as a typology of Moses but also as a typology of Jeremiah.

¹⁷ London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003 30.

¹⁸ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006 85.

¹⁹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006) 62.

²⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 2 (April 2006) 234.

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In the past, this Sunday has sometimes been *Vocation Sunday*. The Ordo does not indicate that for this year. We will have to listen for how preachers approach the readings.

For more on sources see the Appendix file. Personal Notes are on the web site at www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes

After-action Report

These Notes focus on only one aspect of humility, its relationship with truth. These Notes overlook the reality that telling the truth is capable of being cruel. Humility is a virtue that needs constant attention.

Whether or not related to Vocation Sunday, today, the Bethlehem Monastery of Poor Clares in Barhamsville, Virginia did recognize silver jubilees of several Sisters, Sisters outside their own monastery.