

Readings

First Reading:	Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7
Psalm:	Psalm 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10 (11b)
Second Reading:	Acts 10:34-38 Cf. Mark 9:7
A Gospel:	Matthew 3:13-17
B Gospel	Mark 1:7-11
C Gospel	Luke 3:15-16, 21-22
B First Reading:	Isaiah 55:1-11 Isaiah 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6
Second Reading:	1 John 5:1-9 Cf. John 1:29
Gospel	Mark 1:7-11
C. Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11	
Psalm 104:1b-2, 3-4, 24-25, 27-28, 29-30 (1)	
Second Reading:	Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7 Cf. Luke 3:16
Gospel	Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

Commentary

When these Personal Notes refer to the Lectionary, they do not assume the reader has access to the Lectionary, except as it is read during the Sunday liturgy. This is so important that I will make it the first sentence in the Appendix.

Although I try to avoid technical notes above the double line, I need a technical note here. As presented in the Lectionary, the Readings are gobbledygook. The options in the Ordo are not much better. I have been disappointed trying to predict what the presiders (priests) would do. What I have decided to do, for now, is all of the readings.

My problem attending Mass is holding hands with people with germs. I suppose that is how I became infected with my present cold. I certainly know that I have made a decision to stop fighting holding hands with people with obvious congestion. I am now doing what the rest of the Faithful do, simply taking any hand that is offered, whether germ filled or not. I do this in memory of Dalton Beattie, a friend and fellow parishioner who told me he was missing Mass for weeks at a time, so as not to spread his colds. I never knew him to refuse a hand. Dalton died October 5, 2003. RIP.

The longer I stay with these Notes, the more I am aware of the certitude of the hierarchy against the lack of certitude by academics. I wonder how Mary and Joseph prepared Jesus, trying to keep him out of trouble.

At issue is the truth. Richard A. McCormick, S.J., the moral theologian, explains.

... The Augustinian-Kantian approach [that I like to follow] holds that every falsehood is a lie. Others would hold that falsehood is morally wrong (a lie) only when it is denial of the truth to one who has a right to know.

Along this line, McCormick describes the conflict between truth and authority, what I describe as the tension between truth and politics. What Jesus did at the time of his Baptism hid the sinlessness of his human nature and the truth of his divinity.

Appropriately, this is "Vocations Sunday." Vocations can be delicate matters, necessarily hidden from general view, because people do not understand the depths of their souls. Vocations also change over time and circumstances.

Annotated Bibliography

Material above the double line draws from material below the double line. Those uninterested in scholarly and tangential details should stop reading here. If they do, however, they may miss some interesting scholarly prayer-provoking information.

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

Psalms 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10 (11b)

Acts 10:34-38

Acts 10:38

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults¹

The Bishops note,

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 Vatican Catechism], no. 1289, citing Acts 10:38).

¹ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006, 204.

Cf. Mark 9:7

A. Matthew 3:13-17

Matthew 3:15

The Greek apparatus indicates a difficulty with the words *to him*, in *Jesus said to him*. The difficulty is whether *him* is the accusative or dative case; whether Jesus speaks to John directly or indirectly.

B Gospel Mark 1:7-11

Mark 1:8

The Greek apparatus indicates a difficulty with the word *with*, which, apparently is missing from significant manuscripts. "... *he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.*" The meaning would change from the Faithful having the Spirit to the Faithful being the Spirit.

Mark 1:1-15

Alicia Batten, review of Jean Delorme, Parole et récit évangéliques: Études sur l'évangile de Marc²

Delorme focuses on "semiotics," which is a "general philosophical theory of signs and symbols that deals especially with their function in both artificially constructed and natural languages and comprises three branches of syntactics, semantics, and pragmatics."³ This study is useful, when remembering that the Christians recited the Gospels from memory, before writing them down.

Mark 1:1-15

Elliott C. Maloney, O.S.B., review of Salvador Villota Herrero, Palabras sin ocaso: Función interpretiva de Mc 13,28-37 en el discurso escatológica de Marcos⁴

Maloney reports, "V.H. excruciatingly details the harmony (*consonancia*) of 13:28-37 with the rest of the Gospel by means of a full semantic exposition of 1:1-15 [used here]; 8:27—9:1; 14:32-43; 16:1-8, texts selected because of terminology similar to 13:28-37." Maloney concludes, "... this is a good explanation of the importance of 13:28-37 for the whole Gospel ..."

² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 4 (July 2007) 820.

³ <http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/unabridged?va=semiotics&x=0&y=0> 081130.

⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 1 (July 2008) 175.

Mark 1:1-11

Jack Dean Kingsbury, "Observations on the 'Miracle Chapters' of Matthew 8-9"⁵

Kingsbury observes that Matthew rearranges the order sequence of miracles from how they appear in Mark. The message of this feast is to counsel caution when it comes to being self-righteous. Evidently, the arrangement of Matthew was not sacred to Mark.

Mark 1:7-11

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.⁶

There is a Sinaitic Syriac text of this section of Mark. Because of the length of these Notes, I am leaving an examination of the Codex Sinaiticus for next year, when I expect less to cover.

Mark 1:9-11

John Paul Heil, "Jesus with the Wild Animals in Mark 1:13"⁷

Heil has a two-page section with the title, "Mark 1:2-3 and Exodus 23:20; Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3." Heil continues, "In this quotation an anonymous 'voice' crying in the wilderness urgently enjoins the people of Israel, God's Son, to prepare for a new exodus, a new 'way' of salvation, the 'way' by which God himself will lead the people from exile in Babylon through the wilderness and back to their homeland."

Mark 1:9-11

Richard J. Dillon, "The Benedictus in Micro- and Macrocontext"⁸

Dillon compares Luke to Mark, to write, "Luke systematically pushes John's baptizing into the background, even excluding him from the scene of Jesus' baptism (3:19-20; cf. Mark 1:9-11)." The Sunday Lectionary does not use John.

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 4 (July 1978) 560

⁶ Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 250.

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 1 (July 2006) 67.

⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 477.

Mark 1:11 parr
Robert J. Daly, S.J., "The Soteriological Significance of the Sacrifice of Isaac"⁹
Daly argues, "This is almost surely, among other things, an allusion to the LXX of Gen 2:2: "Take your beloved son, the one you love ..." Vocation, then, is to spend one's life in the service of others.

Mark 1:11
Mary Ann Beavis, "The Trial before the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:53-65): Reader Response and Greco-Roman Readers"¹⁰
Mark 1:11, *You are my beloved son* is one of five places in Mark where the identity of Jesus is the issue. Identity and vocation do tend to go together, in the sense that one should find vocation from identity; rather than the other way around, identity from vocation.

Mark 1:10
Mary Ann Beavis, review of Ira Brent Driggers, Following God through Mark: Theological Tension in the Second Gospel.¹¹
Beavis has a problem with Driggers, writing, "... the claim that Jesus is Spirit-possessed throughout the narrative is not especially persuasive, since the Spirit is rarely mentioned after the baptism and not associated with Jesus after the Beelzebug controversy (1:8, 10, 12; 3:29; 12:36; 13:11)."

C Gospel Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

B First Reading: Isaiah 55:1-11

Isaiah 55:4
Matthew J. Lynch, "Zion's Warrior and the Nations: Isaiah 59:15b—63:6 in Isaiah's Zion Traditions"¹²

Lynch writes, "Her [Zion's] children and their descendants, like Israel's descendants in earlier covenants (Exod 19:6; Deut 4:4-6; cf. Isa 55:4 [used here], were to become a blessing in the midst of the nations (Isa 42:6). To sum up, the nations share in and then become beneficiaries of Yhwh's Zion covenant."

⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 39, No. 1 (July 1977) 68, 73.

¹⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 49, No. 4 (July 1987) 584, 587.

¹¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 598.

¹² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 2 (July 2008) 255.

Isaiah 55:10-13

Joseph Blenkinsopp, review of John Goldingay and David Payne, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 40—55, Volume 1, Introduction and Commentary on Isaiah 40:1—44:23; Volume 2, Commentary on Isaiah 44:24—55:13.¹³

Blenkinsopp observes, "In the opening passage (40:1-11), presented under the title 'YHWH is returning to Jerusalem,' they [Goldingay and Payne] invoke the scenario of the divine council, which has become practically canonical in English-language scholarship but is not well supported (pp. 60-95)." Blenkinsopp continues, this Commentary "contains a mine of information on matters text-critical, lexical, and bibliographical ..."

Isaiah 55:8f.

Matthew R. Schlimm, "Different Perspectives on Divine Pathos: An Examination of Hermeneutics in Biblical Theology"¹⁴

Hermeneutics is the study of the methodological principles of interpretation. The problem is assigning human attributes to God. The answer to how God can suffer is through Jesus. Schlimm quotes Abraham Heschel, "What Isaiah (55:8f.) said concerning the thoughts of God may equally apply to His pathos: For My pathos is not your pathos, neither are your ways My ways, says the Lord."

Isa 55:10-11

Reed Lessing, review of Bryan E. Beyer, Encountering the Book of Isaiah: A Historical and Theological Survey¹⁵

Lessing concludes, "This handbook aims for simplicity, yet sometimes ends up overly simplistic. Nevertheless, those seeking a conservative Christian overview of Isaiah will be adequately served." The target audience "appears to be undergraduates at an evangelical Christian university."

Isaiah 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6

¹³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 2 (April 2008) 342-343.

¹⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 4 (July 2007) 679.

¹⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 562.

Second Reading: 1 John 5:1-9

1 John 5:1

I do not recognize the Johannine Comma in the Greek apparatus. I explain the Johannine Comma below. What I do recognize is a difficulty with the word *also*. *Everyone who loves the father loves also the one begotten by him.* The word *also* is omitted in some manuscripts.

1 John 5:5

The difficulty in the Greek apparatus is with the word *indeed* in *Who indeed is the victor over the world ...* Omitting *indeed* makes the question less rhetorical and more of a true question.

1 John 5:1-9

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.¹⁶

These verses survive in at least one papyrus manuscript. These verses are known as the Comma Johanneum.

Critics compelled Erasmus to add the following to his Greek, “the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth.” This is a wonderful support of the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, but it does not appear in the original manuscripts.¹⁷ The Alands assume the reader already knows what the Comma Johanneum is.

Cf. John 1:29

Gospel Mark 1:7-11

¹⁶ Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 101, 249, 311.

¹⁷ http://www.answers.com/Comma_Johanneum_081201.

C. Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Isa 40:1-11

Gregory J. Polan, O.S.B., review of John Goldingay, The Message of Isaiah 40—55: A Literary-Theological Commentary¹⁸

Polan writes, "He [Goldingay] also explains briefly, without using the word 'chiasm' how he reads Isa 40:1-11 (with its mention of Jerusalem/Zion and 'my people') as a preview to Isaiah 49—55 and Isa 40:12-31 (where it speaks of Jacob-Israel) in relation to Isaiah 41—47." Polan concludes, "He [Goldingay] provides a commentary that will be standard and essential reading for years to come."

Isa 40:1-2 a

Steven James Schweitzer, "Mythology in the Old Greek of Isaiah: The Technique of Translation"¹⁹

Schweitzer writes, "scholars generally agree that the original reference of the Hebrew was to a council of heavenly beings, and some claim that this mythological concept was apparently unacceptable to the translator. There is another explanation, however ..." basically a copying error. What the unhappy translator did was change *council of heavenly beings* to *the hand of the LORD*, used in the Lectionary.

Isa 40:2

Reed Lessing, review of Archibald L. H. J. M. Van Wieringen, The Reader-Oriented Unity of the Book of Isaiah²⁰

Lessing approves when Van Wieringen observes, "Israel is punished for its own sins (40:2 [used here]; 43:27-28; 50:1), whereas the Servant suffers for the sins of others (53:4-6)." Jesus, then, as an antitype of Israel, suffers for its sins, as do many of the Faithful, especially Sisters in service industries.

¹⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (July 2007) 544.

¹⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 2 (July 2004) 226.

²⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 1 (July 2008) 133.

Isaiah 40:3

John Paul Heil, "Jesus with the Wild Animals in Mark 1:13"²¹

As mentioned above, Heil has a two-page section with the title, "Mark 1:2-3 and Exodus 23:20; Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3." Heil continues, "In this quotation an anonymous `voice' crying in the wilderness urgently enjoins the people of Israel, God's Son, to prepare for a new exodus, a new `way' of salvation, the `way' by which God himself will lead the people from exile in Babylon through the wilderness and back to their homeland." Jesus makes clear that the exodus for Christians is from temporary life on this earth to eternal life away from this earth.

Isa 40:3

Richard J. Dillon, "The Benedictus in Micro- and Macrocontext"²²

Dillon explains, "The title given to the newborn by his father is `prophet of the Most High,' which he immediately explicates by alluding to that mixed *vaticinium* [prophecy]²³ of Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3 [used here], known to us from Mark 1:2-3 rather than from Luke himself: `for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways' (Luke 1:76)."

Isaiah 40:3-5

Charles H. Talbert, review of Michael E. Fuller, The Restoration of Israel: Israel's Re-gathering and the Fate of the Nations in Early Jewish Literature and Luke-Acts²⁴

Talbert has a problem with Fuller. Talbert writes "There are continuities [that Fuller develops] between this Lucan view of restoration and the varieties of early Jewish beliefs, but there seem to be even more discontinuities [that Fuller does not develop]."

²¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 1 (July 2006) 67.

²² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 472.

²³ Cassell's Latin Dictionary: Latin-English and English-Latin, revised by J. R. V. Marchant, M.A. and Joseph F. Charles, B.A. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1952) 607.

²⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (July 2007) 580.

Isaiah 40:40b

Aelred Cody, O.S.B., "A Palindrome in Isaiah 40:4b: Allowing Restoration of an Original Reading"²⁵

Palindrome means repeating consonants. I wonder how this relates to the name of Sara Palin. ☺ Cody concludes "the consensus that Second Isaiah was written in the late exilic period [586-538 BC]²⁶ or in the early Persian period [the Persian Period was 520-532 BC]²⁷ may be strengthened. The significance of this article is placing Second Isaiah in historical context, late exile or early return.

Psalm 104:1b-2, 3-4, 24-25, 27-28, 29-30 (1)

Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7

Titus 2:13

The Greek apparatus shows a difficulty with *Jesus Christ* in *we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and savior Jesus Christ* ... The difference is in specifically naming Jesus or assuming that is who is meant. For Christians such specification is unnecessary.

Cf. Luke 3:16

Gospel

Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

²⁵ [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 66, No. 4 (October 2004) 551-560.

²⁶ [http://www.answers.com/exilic period](http://www.answers.com/exilic%20period) 081201.

²⁷ [http://cojs.org/cojswiki/Overview: Jews in the Persian Period \(520-332 BCE\)](http://cojs.org/cojswiki/Overview:_Jews_in_the_Persian_Period_(520-332_BCE)) 081201.