

Personal Notes

Second Sunday of Lent_A Catholic Bible Study Reading 25A, March 16, 2014

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Noting Church fluctuating attendance, Sunday after Sunday, I pray about the mess causing the Faithful to come and go. The Faithful have to make it on their own, with but little trust left for the hierarchs. The convicted cover-up criminal, Robert Finn, Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri, illustrates what is happening.¹ The institutional Church is a mess, as fluctuating attendance gives witness.

The Faithful can come to Church to pray together and listen to the Holy Word of God. Getting to God through that Word, sometimes, is possible, despite the poor preaching involved. Poor preaching includes non-standard English grammar and pronunciation as well as naval gazing from refusal to read and risk thinking.

Pope Francis recognizes that preaching uninformed by continued reading and study is too prevalent and sterile.² In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis proclaims, “A preacher who does not prepare is not ‘spiritual’; he is dishonest and irresponsible with the gifts he has received.”³

In the readings, the Patriarch Joseph arises from an unlikely source, Egypt—not Israel. Jacob and his other sons, representing institutional religion, are no sure guide to what is holy and just. Saint Paul tells the Faithful *to bear your share of hardship for the Gospel* (2 Timothy 1:8b). Peter is simply bowled over at how to respond to the Transfiguration. Ultimately, Psalm 33:22, *Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you*, offers some consolation. The point is the Faithful are on their own, as rarely before, as they mature in their spiritual lives.

Readings

First Reading:	Genesis 12:1-4a
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22 (22)
Second Reading:	2 Timothy 1:8b-10
Verse before the Gospel:	cf. Matthew 17:5
Gospel:	Matthew 17:1-9

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Finn_%28bishop%29 (accessed December 30, 2013).

² See “Encyclical Letter Lumen Fidei of the Supreme Pontiff Francis to the Bishops, Priests, and deacons [sic] and lay Faithful on Faith,” *L’Osservatore Romano: Weekly Edition in English*, Vol. 46, No. 28 (2304), Vatican City Wednesday, 10 July, paragraph 57, pages 11-22.

³ [papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium_en.pdf](#) (accessed February 8, 2014).

Annotated Bibliography

Musings above the solid line draw from material below. Those uninterested in scholarly and tangential details should stop reading here. If they do, however, they may miss some interesting details.

As of this Reading, I intend to change my annotations. What I have been doing is copying verbatim. Even with footnotes, this risks plagiarism. What copying does do, however, is keep my personal biases out of the presentation of another's work. Such objectivity is helpful for racial research. As I approach my eightieth birthday, two other factors arise. First, my biases are set. Why not let them influence how I present the research of others by using my words rather than theirs. Second is my short-term memory, which is not what it used to be. When I read something, I will not be able to remember it very well.

Mary Lynn Rampolla, in the seventh 2012 edition of, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History recommends paraphrasing from memory and only then checking the paraphrase for accuracy.⁴ With this 025A Reading for March 16, 2014, the Second Sunday of Lent, I intend to begin incorporating more paraphrasing into my service.

Genesis 12:1-4a

Gen 11:31—12:3

Hyun Chul Paul Kim, "Reading the Joseph Story (Genesis 37—50) as a Diaspora Narrative"⁵

Kim argues,

In the land of Egypt, like his patriarchal and matriarchal forebears (the "wandering Aramean") who sojourned as seminomads (Deut 26:5; cf. Gen 11:31-12:3 [used here]), Joseph is an alien who encounters—and then himself becomes—the surprisingly virtuous Egyptian. This motif of the virtuous foreigner is not uncommon throughout many of the patriarchal narratives in Genesis. . . . both Abraham and Joseph meet dramatic changes of status: Abraham is rebuked by Pharaoh and expelled from Egypt, albeit with newly acquired wealth (12:17—13:2); Joseph, however, is accused by Potiphar and his wife and is thrown in prison, though Yhwh

⁴ Mary Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, 7th ed., (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2012) 104.

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 2 (April 2013) 222-223, 224, 237.

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does acknowledge his loyalty (39:13-23). Abraham's cowardly act allows him to survive at the expense of his wife and Pharaoh, but Joseph's honorable act eventually allows him to thrive, through whom "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (cf. 12:3 [used here]). Therefore, contrary to the sister-wife episodes of the Abraham and Isaac narratives, which depict the protagonists in a morally dubious, if not shameful, way (cf. 20:1-18; 26:6-11), the Joseph narrative, with the adaptation of ancient Egyptian literature, portrays this exiled Hebrew as a person of honor. It would not be difficult for the Diaspora Jews to empathize with this Hebrew-Egyptian, who presents a model of justice, mercy, and humility in his walk with God (cf. Mic 6:8). . . . Thus, with regard to Joseph's own faith journey with God, the Joseph novella highlights God's mysterious but sovereign faithfulness.

Personal Notes cites members of the Protestant Revolt in the spirit of Gerald O'Collins, S.J., writing,⁶

In fact, by allowing the liturgy to be celebrated in the vernacular, by stressing "the table of God's word" along with the importance of the homily (no. 52), and by granting to the laity—although restricted to certain circumstances—communion "under both kinds" (no. 55), Vatican II conceded the demands of Martin Luther and other 16th-century Protestant reformers, albeit in the 20th-century. In short, while SC [Sacrosanctum concilium [sic]] did not use explicitly the language of "reform" or "reformation," what it enacted can and should be described in those terms.

From this 025A Reading for March 16, 2014, the Second Sunday of Lent, I intend to identify Protestant revolutionaries with parenthetical dates after their names. I expect readers to realize that Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), the Council of Trent 1545-1563) and Vincent de Paul (1580-1660) are Roman Catholic landmarks and not Protestant revolutionaries. I intend to repeat this twice, then relegate it to the Appendix.

⁶ Theological Studies, Vol. 73, No. 4 (December 2012) 772.

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Genesis 12:1

Andrew Willet (1562-1621), "Commentary on Genesis 11:31"⁷

Willet speculates that Abraham came from an idolatrous family, so that (1) God loved Abraham first and (2) God wanted Abraham to get out of there. With Willet born in the late Sixteenth Century, he may be justifying himself for abandoning his Roman Catholic Church.

Genesis 12:1

Richard Rohr, Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life⁸

Rohr writes,

Once you can get "out of the house," your "castle" and comfort zone, much of the journey has a life—and death—of its own. The crucial thing is to get out and about, and into the real and bigger issues. In fact, this was the basic plotline of the founding myth that created the three monotheistic religions, with Yahweh's words to Abraham and Sarah: "Leave your country, your family, and your father's house, for the new land that I will show you" (Genesis 21:1).

The Lectionary words it differently, *Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you*. The Lectionary reads like an act of growing up and leaving home; not as an act of abandoning family, as Cavins implies below. Continuing with Rohr,

We seem to have an amazing capacity for missing the major point—and our own necessary starting point along with it. We have rather totally turned around our very founding myth! No wonder religion is in trouble.

⁷ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament I: Genesis I—II, (ed.) John L. Thompson (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2012) 342.

⁸ San Francisco: Jossey-Bass: A Wiley Imprint, 2011, 21-22.

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Genesis 12:1-9

Jeff Cavins, Tim Gray, and Sarah Christmyer, The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation⁹

Cavins makes much of a three-fold promise of land, kingdom, and favoritism. The Faithful need to listen for four *I wills*. The first looks to land, the second to kingdom, and the third and fourth to favoritism. By implication, the Faithful enjoy the same privileges. This is an Opus Dei elitist approach to worship; rather than a liberation theology preference for the poor.

Genesis 12:1-3

“Encyclical Letter Lumen Fidei of the Supreme Pontiff Francis to the Bishops, Priests, and deacons [sic] and lay Faithful on Faith”¹⁰

Pope Francis writes,

The history of faith has been from the beginning a history of brotherhood albeit not without conflict. God calls Abraham to go forth from his land and promises to make of him a great nation, a great people on whom the divine blessing rests (cf. Gen 12:1-3). As salvation history progresses, it becomes evident that God wants to make everyone share as brothers and sisters in that one blessing, which attains its fullness in Jesus, so that all may be one. The boundless love of our Father also comes to us, in Jesus, through our brothers and sisters. Faith teaches us to see that every man and woman [not child?] represents a blessing for me, that the light of God’s face shines on me through the faces of my brothers and sisters.

Pope Francis goes on,

Even death is illumined and can be experienced as the ultimate call to faith, the ultimate “Go forth from your land” (Gen 21:1), the ultimate “Come!” spoken by the Father, to whom we abandon ourselves in the confidence that he will keep us steadfast even in our final passage.

Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22 (22)

⁹ West Chester, Pennsylvania: Ascension Press, 2004, 2011, Session 4, page 1; Session 4, page 30.

¹⁰ L’Osservatore Romano: Weekly Edition in English, Vol. 46, No. 28 (2304), Vatican City Wednesday, 10 July, 2013 paragraph 54 and 57, pages 20-21/13.

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Psalm 33:5

Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563), "Commentary on Ephesians"¹¹

Musculus reports "People interpret this verse [Ephesians 3:18] in different ways. Some say that it refers to the goodness of God that pours itself out into everything, and they quote this text from the Psalms: `The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.'" The Lectio has *of the kindness of the LORD the earth is full*. The Lectio is awkward.

Psalm 33:5

John Calvin (1509-1564), "Commentary on Genesis 3:17"¹²

Calvin does not see the earth *full* of the Glory of God; but rather *sprinkled*, as a reminder of what once was, before Original Sin.

2 Timothy 1:8b-10

2 Tim 2:8

Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499-1562), "Commentary on the Apostles' Creed"¹³

Vermigli urges the Faithful to "buckle-up" against hard times, because they have their own resurrection from the dead now in sight.

cf. Matthew 17:5

Matthew 17:1-9

Matt 17:9

Philip W. Comfort, New Testament Text and Translation Commentary: Commentary on the variant readings of the ancient New Testament manuscripts and how they relate to the major English translations¹⁴

¹¹ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament X: Galatians, Ephesians, (ed.) Gerald L. Bray (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2011) 322.

¹² in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament I: Genesis I—II, (ed.) John L. Thompson (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2012) 170.

¹³ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament XI: Philippians, Colossians, Graham Tomlin (ed.) in collaboration with Gregory B. Graybill, general editor, Timothy George, associate General editor, Scott M. Manetsch, (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic: An imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2013) 209.

¹⁴ Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2008, 49.

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The variant, unused, translation brings into question the difference between active and passive voice. Did Jesus rise from the dead or was he raised from the dead? Probably Matthew borrowed from Mark to say Jesus rose from the dead, but that further copyists preferred the more usual approach, Jesus was raised from the dead, which is how the translation remains.

Matt 17:1-2

William Greenhill (1591-1671), "An Exposition of Ezekiel"¹⁵

Greenhill sees purpose in the transfiguration. God is revealing his Glory to his disciples to encourage them in their efforts to evangelize hardhearted people. Born in the late Sixteenth Century, Greenhill does seem concerned about the institutional Church.

Matt 17:4

Daniel B. Wallace, With Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes: Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament¹⁶

Then Peter said to Jesus in reply is redundant, but acceptable Greek. Wallace also notes, *If you wish, I will make three tents here* is an amplification of the situation, not a true condition.

Matt 4:4

Jared Wicks, S.J., "Scripture Reading Urged *Vehementer* (DV No. 25): Background and Development"¹⁷

The ecumenical document preparing Vatican II asserted that Sacred Scripture was true nourishment for individual souls.

Matt 17:4

Edward Collins Vacek, S.J., "Discernment Within a Mutual Love Relationship with God: A New Theological Foundation"¹⁸

Where the Lectionary has *Lord, it is good that we are here*, Vacek has *Lord it is good for us to be here*. The Lectionary brings out simple physical presence. Vacek brings out the nature of the presence, namely *being*. *Being* is part of discernment.

¹⁵ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament XII: Ezekiel, Daniel, (ed.) Carl L. Beckwith (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2012) 20.

¹⁶ Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 1996, 650, 691.

¹⁷ Theological Studies, Vol. 74, No. 3 (September 2013) 574.

¹⁸ Theological Studies, Vol. 74, No. 3 (September 2013) 694.

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Certain aspects are like contemplation, though Vacek does not use the word. Just having a relationship with God is enough, without anything more specific required. Discernment, then, consists in keeping the relationship. I intend to repeat this twice, then relegate it to the Appendix.

Personal Notes gave up systematically examining the illiterate 2011 Missal November 25, 2012. On April 7, 2013, with Reading 045C 2nd Sunday of Easter_A Catholic Bible Study 130407, Personal Notes systematically began to incorporate material from A Commentary on the Order of Mass of *The Roman Missal: A New English Translation: Developed under the Auspices of the Catholic Academy of Liturgy*, Edward Foley (ed.) (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011). The hope is that this approach will help pray with the new Missal, despite itself.

Catherine Vincie, "The Mystagogical Implications"¹⁹

Looking at the various prayers at Mass, Vincie argues that the Church puts words into the mouths of the Faithful, so that those words eventually become not only the words of the Church, but also the words of the Faithful. I wish the Church hierarchy were not so high-handed and began with the domestic church to find the words of the Faithful.

For more on sources see the Appendix file. A complete set of Personal Notes, dating from the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, July 14, 2002 to the present, is on the web site at www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes.

The Responsorial Antiphon for this Sunday is *Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you* (Psalm 33:22).²⁰

¹⁹ in A Commentary on the Order of Mass of *The Roman Missal: A New English Translation: Developed under the Auspices of the Catholic Academy of Liturgy*, Edward Foley (ed.) (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011) 149.

²⁰ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, The Roman Missal Restored by Decree of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican and Promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI: Lectionary for Mass: For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America: Second Typical Edition: Volume I: Sundays, Solemnities, Feasts of the Lord and the Saints (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1988) 159. Personal Notes refers to this book as the Lectionary.

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In the gobbledygook prayer at Sunday Mass immediately following the forgiveness of sins, the Faithful hearing the 2011 Roman Missal can listen for “nourish us inwardly by your word.”²¹

This is a call for grace that some Black Baptists bring to mind with *He* [David] *seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption* (Acts 2:31).²² As David had hope then, so do the Faithful now.

²¹ n.a., The Roman Missal: Renewed by Decree of the Most Holy Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI and Revised at the Direction of Pope John Paul II: English Translation According to the Third Typical Edition: For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America: Approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See (Washington, DC, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011) 226. Personal Notes refers to this book as the Missal.

²² UMI Annual Sunday School Lesson Commentary: Precepts for Living ®: 2013-2014: International Sunday School Lessons: Volume 165: UMI (Urban Ministries, Inc.), a. Okechuku Ogbonnaya, Ph.D., (ed.) (Chicago, IL 60643: UMI (Urban Ministries, Inc.), 2013) 329-330.