

Personal Notes  
040321 Fourth Sunday of Lent 33C  
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Reconciliation with God is the theme of these Notes. Joshua portrays God as handing over land flowing with milk and honey as a harbinger of eternal life in heaven. The Promised Land is symbolic of divine grace enabling the reconciliation. Both grace and the Promised Land enable the Faithful to reconcile themselves with the Father. The father of the Prodigal Son does give a gift to enable the reconciliation to take place.

Reconciliation requires effort, like that required for forty years of nomadic life in the desert. According to Saint Paul, the Faithful can refuse the effort required for reconciliation. He worries about the Corinthians.<sup>1</sup> The Church worries about the Faithful through Lenten penance.

The psalm is an intellectual acrostic,<sup>2</sup> deliberately working its way through how God provides the means for reconciliation and that the Faithful require accepting reconciliation. Paul is dumbfounded at the enormity of what has happened in grace. Paul regards Jesus as the rock upon which God builds reconciliation. Paul cannot get over the graciousness of God or that Paul is a vehicle for the riches of grace. Reconciliation requires cooperation with the Divine by the Faithful.

The Gospel about the Prodigal Son is fundamentally about reconciliation. The division of the inheritance implies a division of land with the Prodigal. This parable separates riches from the Father. The Prodigal then sells his land inheritance, leaving the agrarian economy, to spend his newfound riches on wanton women and loose living.

Luke softens the point Paul makes so blatantly that the Faithful can reject reconciliation. Luke gently guides the Faithful away from feeling jealous of what sinners like the Prodigal apparently get away with. Luke reassures the Faithful that the Father recognizes their lives in Christ, even when others more rambunctiously sinful receive more attention.

Most Reverend Arthur J. Serratelli, S.T.D., S.S.L, D.D.: the reference, Joshua 5:12, seems inaccurate, as shown below. Contents in Care of the Sick<sup>3</sup> is difficult. *Part III: Readings, Responses, and Verses from Sacred Scripture*: lacks a subentry before *Responsorial*

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<sup>1</sup> Hendrikus Boers, "2 Corinthians 5:4—6:2: A Fragment of Pauline Christology," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3 (July 2002) 543.

<sup>2</sup> Hanan Eshel and John Strugnell, "Alphabetical Acrostics in Pre-Tannaitic Hebrew," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 62, No. 3 (July 2000) 443.

<sup>3</sup> International Commission on English in the Liturgy: A Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops' Conferences, 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 (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1983).

*Psalms E, God is the salvation of those who trust in him*, page 286 in parallel with *Mass for Viaticum: Responsorial Psalms B*, page 324. In other words, there is no indication for *Mass for Viaticum* in Contents.

## Joshua 5:9a, 10-12

Entrance into the Promised Land is a forerunner into entrance into heaven and everlasting life.

Verse 12 the citation for verse 12, “ ... on that same day after the Passover ... ,” seems inaccurate.

|                                  |                     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Lectionary</u> (1998):        | ...                 |
| <u>The Vulgate</u> (circa 410):  | hoc ipso die        |
| <u>Douay-Rheims</u> (1582-1610): | of the same year    |
| <u>King James</u> (1611):        | in the selfsame day |
| <u>Jerusalem</u> (1966):         | that same day       |
| <u>New American</u> (1970):      | ...                 |
| <u>New Jerusalem</u> (1985):     | ...                 |

## Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7

This Psalm 34 is also used according to the following chart.

| <u>Reading</u> | <u>Page</u> | <u>verses</u>            |      |                       |
|----------------|-------------|--------------------------|------|-----------------------|
| 33C            | 208         | 2-3, 4-5, 6-7            | (9a) | Lent 4 (Today)        |
| 116B           | 759         | 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9       | (9a) | Ordinary 19           |
| 119B           | 776         | 2-3, 4-5, 6-7            | (9a) | Ordinary 20           |
| 122B           | 789         | 2-3, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21 | (9a) | Ordinary 21           |
| 150C           | 925         | 2-3, 17-18, 19, 23       | (7a) | Ordinary 30           |
| #591           | 1158        | 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9       | (8)  | Saints Peter and Paul |

Reading 119B, for the Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, August 17, 2003, already has some comments on this psalm that I will be happy to send to anyone wanting them. These comments are also available at <http://www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes/Personal%20Notes.htm>

Care for the Sick uses Psalm 34, *Part III: Readings, Responses, and Verses from Sacred Scripture: Responsorial Psalms E God is the salvation of those who trust in him*, page 286 and *Mass for Viaticum: Responsorial Psalms B*, page 324.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> International Commission on English in the Liturgy: A Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops' Conferences, 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:

Psalm 34 is a boast, a witness, and a message that God has saved the psalmsinger from his suffering. A change of life occurred. The goal of Psalm 34 is praise reconciling all with God. The Responsorial, *taste and see* carries the sense of *sample* the goodness of the Lord.<sup>5</sup>

## 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

From Sunday, February 15, through Wednesday, February 18, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church hosted a Catholic Revival by the Paulist, Father Bruce Nieli, CSP. Father Nieli's approach was the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the very indwelling that is central to the theology of Saint Paul and reconciliation with God. The coming of Jesus offers a new life in Christ, full of joy in the Spirit, a joy meant for sharing.<sup>6</sup>

In verse 19, God reconciles the world to himself,<sup>7</sup> meaning that the Faithful need to be careful about counter-culture. God does love the world and the Faithful would do well to love the world as well, without being worldly.

Verse 18, the word *and* may be better translated by *but*. There is something of an opposition between life in Christ as *new* and the ancient creative power of God.

|                                  |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Lectionary</u> (1998):        | And all this is from God  |
| <u>The Vulgate</u> (circa 410):  | Omnia autem ex Deo        |
| <u>Douay-Rheims</u> (1582-1610): | But all things are of God |
| <u>King James</u> (1611):        | And all things are of God |
| <u>Jerusalem</u> (1966):         | It is all God's work.     |
| <u>New American</u> (1970):      | And all this is from God  |
| <u>New Jerusalem</u> (1985):     | It is all God's work.     |

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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 (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1983) 296.

<sup>5</sup> Hans-Joachim Kraus, Psalm 60-150: A Continental Commentary, translated by Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Fortress Press: 1961/1978, 1989, 1993) 383-385.

<sup>6</sup> Joseph Plevnik, S.J., "The Understanding of God at the Basis of Pauline Theology," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 4 (October 2003) 563.

<sup>7</sup> Stanley B. Marrow, "Κοσμος in John," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 2002) 95.

The new life in Christ is reconciled with the ancient creative power of the Father through the parable of the Prodigal Son, a parable about love and forgiveness, about coming to one's senses after getting lost in sin.

## **Luke 15:18**

Anticipates the Gospel.

## **Luke 15:1-3, 11-32**

Verse 13, the Greek implies the Prodigal collects his things, not to carry them away, but to sell before taking the proceeds away. Landowning was common at the time of Jesus.<sup>8</sup> In this parable, Jesus is describing squandering grace, then reconciling.

Verse 15, the Greek means pigs.

|                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <u>Lectionary</u> (1998):        | swine                               |
| <u>The Vulgate</u> (circa 410):  | porcos (root for pork) <sup>9</sup> |
| <u>Douay-Rheims</u> (1582-1610): | swine                               |
| <u>King James</u> (1611):        | swine                               |
| <u>Jerusalem</u> (1966):         | pigs                                |
| <u>New American</u> (1970):      | swine                               |
| <u>New Jerusalem</u> (1985):     | pigs                                |

Justification is a gift of grace, but reconciliation is an acceptance of that grace. Joshua is about accepting the Promised Land as a forerunner of eternal life. Psalm 34 is about rejoicing in the Lord who is prepared to reconcile everybody, taste and see, from suffering. The Second Reading is about an awe-struck Paul trying to explain himself to the Corinthians, passionately trying to get them to understand what has happened in their lives through his ministry. The Prodigal Son is about the same thing, more concrete and easily understood. The Prodigal must make something of an effort to get back in the good graces of his father, as must the Faithful with their heavenly Father. In that effort, the Church observes Lent.

For more on sources, besides the footnotes, see the Appendix file.

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<sup>8</sup> Robert H. Gundry, "Mark 10:29: Order in the List," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 59, No. 3 (July 1997) 468.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate ® Dictionary: Eleventh Edition (Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2003).