

Personal Notes
080309 Fifth Sunday of Lent 34A
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“Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; LORD hear my voice!” is the focus for this Sunday. The first question is depths of what? Exile was the Sixth Century BC historical origin for this Psalm. The human king of the Jews could rule no more. In the Psalm, God promised to be their king and savior.

Scholars offer four options for *depths*. The first option is chaos associated with depths of water. Another option is the depths of sin. *Depths* can also mean *sincerity*; in the sense that there are no atheists in a foxhole. The coming demise of earthly life, with no return to earth, is a desperate situation to which the New Testament offers new hope. In the third option, these readings are about faith in this new hope in resurrection from the dead. The fourth option is from the depths of an inability to pray.

Within the immediate context of hope in the resurrection expressed in the narrative about Lazarus in the Gospel, the Catechism has almost two pages on “Christian Funerals” in Chapter 13, “Our Eternal Destiny.” The Catechism explains an option for those who cremate, rather than bury their dead. “The diocesan bishop can permit the practice in his diocese of allowing cremated remains to be brought into the Church for the funeral rites,”¹ as is the case in the Diocese of Richmond. Quoting the Papal Catechism, the U.S. Bishops write, “The Church permits cremation, provided that it does not demonstrate a denial of faith in the resurrection of the body.”

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

Scriptural references to the Lectionary follow. Since the main purpose of these Notes is annotating the scriptural references in the index at www.western-civilization.com, references pertinent, but not fitting the flow imposed above, are included below. I do not assume that the reader is following the readings cited either in the Lectionary or in the Bible. Like the footnotes, the citations are for reference purposes for anyone interested. The large, bold letters facilitate locating exactly what the Lectionary presents for these Notes. After three more inclusions, I intend to move the above two paragraphs to the Appendix.

¹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006) 259-260.

Ezekiel 37:12-14

Ezek 37:1-14

Dale Launderville, O.S.B., "Ezekiel's Throne-Chariot Vision: Spiritualizing the Model of Divine Royal Rule"²

Launderville writes,

After the flesh and sinews come back upon the bones, perhaps echoing the story in Genesis of Adam being formed from clay, the reestablished exiles still lack breath; so Yhwh commands Ezekiel to prophesy once again to the breath, to the four winds (v. 9), indicating the universal reach of Yhwh's sovereign word.

In other words, the Faithful should look for the resurrection from the dead.

Ezek 37:14

Bernardin Schneider, O.F.M., "The Corporate Meaning and Background of 1 Cor 15,45b—`O *Eschatos Adam eis Pneuma Zoiopoioun*"³

Launderville, above, seems unaware of this work by Schneider. Schneider uses the same theme of resurrection of the body. Material above the double line draws from Schneider.

Psalms 130: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 (7)

Psalms 130:1

Stephen D. Ryan, O.P., review of The Idea of Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel, Hindy Najman and Judith H. Newman, eds.⁴

This is the review pointing toward four meanings for *depths* described above the double line.

² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 3 (July 2004) 375.

³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 3 (July 1967) 463 ff., as found at http://63.136.1.22/pls/eli/ashow?ishid=n0008-7912_029_03&lcookie=2792486&npage=450-467 070115.

⁴ Theological Studies, Vol. 67, No. 1 (March 2006) 178-178.

Psalm 130:8

Boris Repschinski, "For He Will Save His People from Their Sins' (Matthew 1:21): A Christology for Christian Jews"⁵

Repschinski argues that Matthew gives new meaning to *Israel* in *he will redeem Israel from all their iniquities*. Matthew, throughout, changes the First Testament phraseology from *Israel* to *people*, meaning to include the Gentiles. The documentation Repschinski offers for his argument is in his footnotes.

Romans 8:8-11

Since Sacred Scripture does not have a word for the English *please*, as in *please do this*, I have a special curiosity whenever the word *please* appears in translations. Romans 8:8 has *flesh cannot please God*. The Greek connotes *acceptable* and *to seek favor with*.⁶ The way the Lectionary reads, one might infer that it would be possible to *displease* God, in the sense of without repercussions. That is not the meaning of the Greek here.

Rom 8:9b-11

Bernardin Schneider, O.F.M., "The Corporate Meaning and Background of 1 Cor 15,45b—Ὁ Ἐσχάτος Ἀδὰμ εἰς Πνεῦμα Ζωοποιῶν"⁷

Schneider writes, "if Paul had searched the Scriptures for an answer to his question ... as to the *how* of the resurrection, he could have found no more dramatic or explicit text than that in Ezek 37:1-14." Schneider then goes on to elaborate.

Romans 8:10

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy⁸

Barker argues that this verse means the resurrection of the body, because the life of Christ in the Faithful includes a life of his resurrection from the dead.

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 2 (July 2006) 255.

⁶ William D. Mounce, Zondervan Greek Reference Series: The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House: A Division of HarperCollins Publishers, 1993) 97.

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 3 (July, 1967) 459, as found at http://63.136.1.22/pls/eli/ashow?ishid=n0008-7912_029_03&lcookie=2792486&npage=450-467 070115.

⁸ London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003, 157.

Romans 8:11

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults⁹

The bishops use this verse about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit twice in Chapter 13, "Our Eternal Destiny."

John 11:25a, 26

John 11:1-45

Funerals uses this reading in four places,¹⁰ Pastoral Care of the Sick in one.¹¹

John 11:2

Kelli S. O'Brien, "Written That You May Believe: John 20 and Narrative Rhetoric"¹²

At 11:2, John mentions Mary anointing Jesus, before relating the full narrative of how that happened. John assumes his readers know the narrative. This means that John is writing for an intended audience of Christians.

⁹ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006 155.

¹⁰ 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 IV: Order of Christian Funerals: Including Appendix 2: Cremation: 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 Jersey: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1998) 51, 242, 243. 259.

¹¹ 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) 243.

¹² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 2 (April 2005) 289, 291.

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John 11:4

Richard Clifford, S.J. and Khaled Anatolois, "Christian Salvation: Biblical and Theological Perspectives" ¹³

Clifford and Anatolois write, "so Jesus as the manifestation of the Father's glory reveals God to humans and brings them out of darkness (John 1:4; 8:50; 11:4 [used in the Lectionary]; 17:5, 22, 24.)." The point is that resurrection from the dead is part of Christian hope.

John 11:8, 44, 45

Debbie Hunn, "Who Are 'They' in John 8:33?"¹⁴

Hunn writes, "Jesus does not immediately test ... the mourners' [of Lazarus] faith. These figures are simply said to believe, and their faith is unchallenged." To the contrary, it seems to me that one of the points of the narrative is to test the faith of the mourners.

John 11:25

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

The bishops use this verse about Lazarus in Chapter 13, "Our Eternal destiny."

John 11:25

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy¹⁶

Barker writes, "Most of the 'I am' sayings of the Fourth Gospel are Wisdom Imagery: ... the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25) ..." In other words, Wisdom accepts the resurrection.

¹³ Theological Studies, Vol. 66, No. 4 (December 2005) 762.

¹⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 3 (July 2004) 391, 392, 394.

¹⁵ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006 155.

¹⁶ London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003 257.

John 11:25

Jean-Francois Racine, review of Larry W. Hurtado, The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins¹⁷

Hurtado makes the point that Christians preserved their documents in codex, rather than the more popular scroll form. *Codex* means “a usually ancient book or unbound manuscript sheets in manuscript, especially of Scripture ...”¹⁸ Racine shows that Hurtado asserts, “in early Christian views, Jesus could be thought of as the embodiment of resurrection life, even the life-giving Lord.” The Greek letters, *tau-rho*, used to represent Jesus around 175-225 AD can be understood “as a pictogram [that] forces one to revise the common assumption according to which Jesus’ crucifixion was not represented during the pre-Constantinian period.” In other words, the resurrection explained the firm hope of early Christians.

John 11:33

Craig E. Morrison, O.Carm., “The ‘Hour of Distress’ in Targum Neofiti and the ‘Hour’ in the Gospel of John”¹⁹

Jesus is *troubled* three times in John. Once when he sees Mary in the context of Lazarus, once when he announces he will be betrayed, and once during his agony in the garden. *Trouble* accompanies Christians through death unto eternal life.

John 11:42

Frank J. Matera, “Christ in the Theologies of Paul and John: A Study in the Diverse Unity of New Testament Theology”²⁰

Matera writes, “The ultimate goal of Jesus’ revelation ... is that the world should believe that the Father sent him (11:42).” The Lectionary reads, “... I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me.”

¹⁷ Theological Studies, Vol. 68, No. 4 (December 2007) 925.

¹⁸ <http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/unabridged?va=codex&x=32&y=6> 080219.

¹⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 4 (October 2005) 602.

²⁰ Theological Studies, Vol. 67, No. 2 (June 2006) 250.

John 11:43

Jerome H. Neyrey, S.J., "'I Am the Door' (John 10:7, 9): Jesus the Broker in the Fourth Gospel"²¹

Neyrey postulates that brokerage requires four assets: Power, Commitment, Inducement, and Influence." Raising Lazarus from the dead is a sign of the Power asset list Neyrey associates with brokerage.

John 11:45-57

Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., "The Gospel of John as Scripture,"²²

The Lazarus narrative is part of a change in direction from the public ministry of Jesus to his passion and death. In the liturgy, next Sunday, Palm Sunday turns to the cross very specifically.

For more on sources see the Appendix file.

After-action Report

This is a general comment to associate with Reading 22A, February 10, 2008. While the material above the double line is personal to me, the material above the double line does draw from the citations below the double line. That statement may be too weak. *Is based upon* may be more accurate language. Were I simply drawing from my limited personal devotion, I would soon run out of ideas and my prayer-life would stop. What happens from week to week is that, generally, I have saved pertinent scholarly articles from the Catholic Biblical Quarterly to engage God in prayer. What appears, after personal prayer, above the double line, is a reflection of that original prayer. I intend to repeat this paragraph for the next two Sundays, before adding it to the red cover sheet where I write about dreaming to do this.

²¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 2 (April 2007) 287.

²² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 3 (July 2005) 458, 465.