

Personal Notes

Fifth Sunday of Lent_A Catholic Bible Study Reading 34A, April 6, 2014

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Raymond J. Jirran, Ph.D.

By and large, plant, animal, and human DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) is interchangeable.¹ Recombining DNA enables humans to “play God” by creating new living organisms. The need is for the institutional Church to move away from pelvic issues and toward what to do with the rest of the life we have. For those paying attention, Pope John Paul II stopped condemning stem-cell research when the possibility that such research could cure his Parkinson’s Disease became apparent.

The take-away from this Sunday is that Jesus wept when he came face-to-face with someone neither he nor medicine of the time had cured, Lazarus. Today, new recombinant DNA organisms have unimaginable health potential, from feeding the hungry to curing the sick. Passive acceptance of things as they are is not particularly holy.

Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. It seems reasonable to suppose some DNA research should move ahead to improve the quality of life for all. It also seems reasonable to be prudent. Just because something can be done, does not necessarily mean someone should do it.

The average age of community college students is twenty-eight, meaning my students were in their prime childbearing years. I asked them about their attitudes toward genetic manipulation of their potential children. They opposed that. When I asked, however, if others used genetic engineering to enhance their children’s chances for a better life, for example with a higher IQ, students said, in that case, they would opt for genetic engineering. There is no simple solution for handling technologies as they develop.

I will open your graves (Ezekiel 37:12b) had new meaning with DNA research. With the risks involved manipulating DNA biological codes to life, the Faithful need to remember the Responsorial Antiphon, *With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption* (Psalm 130:7). With Romans 8:11, the Faithful can remember that *the One who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit dwelling in you.*

Readings

First Reading:

Ezekiel 37:12-14

¹ James J. Walter, Chapter 7, Perspectives on Medical Ethics: Biotechnology and Genetic Medicine,” in A Call to Fidelity: On the Moral Theology of Charles E. Curran, James J. Walter, Timothy E. O’Connell, Thomas A. Shannon, eds., (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002) 136.

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Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 (7[b])
Second Reading: Romans 8:8-11
Verse before the Gospel: John 11:25a, 26
Gospel: John 11:1-45

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.

Ezekiel 37:12-14

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Karl William Weyde, MF, review of Anja Klein, Schriftauslegung im Ezechielbuch: Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Ez 34-39²

Chapter 34 is the Good Shepherd Chapter, reflected here in Chapter 37.

Psalm 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 (7[b])

Funerals uses Psalm 130 in three places,³ Pastoral Care of the Sick in one.⁴

Psalm 130:2

Hellen Mardaga, "The Repetitive Use of $\psi\omega\omega$ in the Fourth Gospel"⁵

² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 73, No. 1 (January 2011) 123.

³ 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) 228, 291, 319.

⁴ 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) 187.

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 74, No. 1 (January 2012) 106.

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I am unable to find any notion of “lifting up” (υψοω) in this verse.

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.

I intend to repeat the above one more time, before relegating it to the Appendix.

Psalm 130:3

Menno Simons (c. 1496-1561), “A Fundamental and Clear Confession of the Poor, Afflicted Christians”⁷

Simons writes of involuntary transgressions and failings from which only the grace of God saves the Faithful. *If you, O LORD, mark iniquities, LORD, who can stand?* (Psalm 130:3).

Psalm 130:3

Andrew Willet (1562-1621), Commentary on Genesis 6:10⁸

Willet has a little different translation. *If you, O Lord, should mark what is done amiss, who shall be able to abide?*

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

⁷ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament XI: Philippians, Colossians, Graham Tomlin (ed.) in collaboration with Gregory B. Graybill, general Illinois: IVP Academic: An imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2013) 85.

⁸ 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) 244.

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Psalm 130:8

Boris Repschinski, "For He Will Save His People from Their Sins" (Matthew 1:21): A Christology for Christian Jews⁹

Matthew 1:21, which the Lectionary uses at Reading 13 ABC, Christmas, quotes Psalm 130:8, but changes *he will redeem Israel* to *he will save his people*. Repschinski argues, Matthew had no problem changing quotes to fit his purposes.

Romans 8:8-11

Romans 8:1-17

Brendan Byrne, S.J., review of Craig S. Keener, Romans: A New Covenant Commentary¹⁰

This is an evangelical approach to Romans. I do not know what Byrne means by "binary culture," when he writes.

K., rightly, brings out Paul's intention, in line with the binary tendency of his culture, to set this passage [Romans 7:14-25] in contrast to the moral capacity created by the gift of the Spirit (8:1-17 [used here]) in fulfillment of the "new covenant" pledge in Jer 31:32-33 (and also Ezek 36:27).

Romans 8:1-11

Elsa Tamez, "A Latin American Rereading of Romans 7"¹¹

Tamez argues that the main thesis for Romans 5:1-8:39 is the Spirit gives life, seen here, *will give life to your mortal bodies also*.

Romans 8:11

Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563), "Commentary on Ephesians"¹²

Musculus translates, *But if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies, because of the Spirit dwelling in you*. The Lectionary has, *If the Spirit of the*

⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 2 (April 2006) 255.

¹⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 73, No. 2 (April 2011) 396.

¹¹ in Translating the New Testament: Text, Translation, Theology, Stanley E. Porter and Mark J. Boda (eds.) (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009) 294.

¹² 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) 282.

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One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the **One** who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies **also, through his** Spirit dwelling in you. The Lectionary avoided the masculine pronoun by using **One**, rather than *him* and *he*. I do not understand why the Lectionary did not use **the Spirit dwelling in you**, rather than **his Spirit dwelling in you**. While Jesus is not gender-free, the Holy Spirit is. They are one and the same, but express a little different sensitivity toward civil rights.

John 11:25a, 26

John 11:1-45

Funerals uses this reading in four places,¹³ Pastoral Care of the Sick in one.¹⁴

John 11:25

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 translations¹⁵

I am the resurrection and the life only has *I am the resurrection* in one of the important papyri. The sense requires both terms and the longer reading. Without resurrection, life ends and is not life.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2008,

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John 11:9

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

Wallace explains.

εαν τις περιπατη εν τν νμερα ου προσκοπτει

If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble.

This is an example of the present general condition. There is no hint of uncertainty about this event occurring, nor is it something presented as an eventuality. This is a principle, a proverb. The subjunctive is used because the subject is undefined, not because the time is future.

John 11:5

Mary Ann Beavis, "Mary of Bethany and the Hermeneutics of Remembrance"¹⁷

This is the neglected Mary of Bethany, not Mary Magdalen, with whom commentators often conflate her.

John 11:15, 33

Sigurd Grindheim, review of Stephen Voorwinde, Jesus' Emotions in the Gospels¹⁸

Grindheim reports that Voorwinde has an evangelical, Reformed bent. Voorwinde is not entirely convincing when he distinguishes one evangelist from another as Voorwinde relates the human emotions of Jesus to his Divine pre-knowledge. In John, Jesus approaches life as a human sacrifice. Jesus is glad that Lazarus died, because Jesus knows Jesus will raise him from the dead. On the other hand, Jesus is angry that Lazarus died as a precursor of his own coming death.

¹⁶ Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 1996, 124, 697, 698 (source of the quote).

¹⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 4 (October 2013) 740, 741, 751, 752.

¹⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 3 (July 2013) 599.

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John 11:17-44

Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499-1562), "Letter to Bucer's Widow"¹⁹

Vermigli argues that it is all right to mourn death and dying, even when believing in the resurrection. Death and dying is a consequence of sin, the real source of legitimate mourning.

John 11:25-26

Thomas Becon (1511/1512-1567), "The Catechism"²⁰

Becon writes about changing "this vile body" through the promised resurrection from the dead.

John 11:35

Fr. Yozeфу – B. Ssemakula, The Healing of Families: How To Pray Effectively for Those Stubborn Personal and Familial Problems²¹

Ssemakula offers a reason for why Jesus wept, despite knowing he would raise Lazarus from the dead. The answer is because Lazarus would die again. Everyone dies, because of sin. Sin, then, is the reason to weep.

John 11:45-57

Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., "*Constructing Jesus and the Son of Man*"²²

The Synoptic Gospels have Jesus going to Jerusalem only once, for his death and resurrection. John is more historically accurate, showing Jesus interacting with the Jews in Jerusalem. Moloney argues that Jesus uses the phrase *Son of Man*, because his followers would understand that in relationship to his forthcoming death. The point of it all is that Jesus acquiesced in his own forthcoming death.

John 11:40, 45

"Encyclical Letter Lumen Fidei of the Supreme Pontiff Francis to the Bishops, Priests, and deacons [sic] and lay Faithful on Faith"²³

¹⁹ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament XI: Philippians, Colossians, Graham Tomlin (ed.) in collaboration with Gregory B. Graybill, general Illinois: IVP Academic: An imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2013) 96.

²⁰ 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) 68.

²¹ [no publisher or place of publication is listed] www.healingoffamilies.com, 2012, 65.

²² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 4 (October 2013) 737.

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Francis quotes John 11:40, *Did I not tell you that if you **believed**, you would see the glory of God?* The Lectionary has *Did I not tell you that if you **believe** you will see the glory of God?* The difference between *believed* and *believe* is the difference between something the Faithful can do, *believe*, and something the Faithful cannot do, *believed*.

Francis quotes John 11:40 a second time as *If you **believe** you will see the glory of God*. So which is it? This looks like another example of arrogant Vatican sloppy scholarship.

John 13:25-26

Wolfgang Musculus, "Commentary on Galatians"²⁴

What Musculus translates as *Whoever **believes** in me has eternal life*, the Lectionary translates as *whoever **believes** in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die*. I suspect Musculus was paraphrasing.

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.

I intend to repeat the above one more time, before relegating it to the Appendix.

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 *With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption* (Psalm 130:7).²⁵

²³ L'Osservatore Romano: Weekly Edition in English, Vol. 46, No. 28 (2304), Vatican City Wednesday, 10 July, paragraphs 1, 30, pages 11 and 16.

²⁴ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament X: Galatians, Ephesians, (ed.) Gerald L. Br Press, 2011) 215.

²⁵ 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

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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 “By your help.”²⁶

This is a call for grace that some Black Baptists bring to mind with *Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD* (Jeremiah 7:11).²⁷

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) 214. Personal Notes refers to this book as the Lectionary.

²⁶ 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) 256. Personal Notes refers to this book as the Missal.

²⁷ 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) 359-360.