

Readings

First Testament:	Acts 10:34a, 37-43
Psalm:	Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23 (24)
Second Reading	Colossians 3:1-4
Alleluia Verse	cf. 1 Corinthians 5:7b-8a
Gospel:	John 20:1-9

Commentary

In his most recent book, Catholic Moral Theology in the United States: A History, Father Charles E. Curran writes that, in the Twentieth Century, before Vatican II, “Historical consciousness and critical thinking were allowed no room in the Church.”¹ Room or not, this is how I made my professional living as a Catholic historian. Critical thinking was part of every lesson that I taught and I taught history. Before Vatican II, however, Josephite professors taught the importance of historical consciousness. A few lines above the quotation, Curran also recognizes,

However, some people in the United States were involved in one way or another with some modernist approaches. In his book on the modernist impulse in America, Scott Appleby mentions John Zahm, the Holy Cross [read Notre Dame] priest who wrote on theological evolution; the Paulist William L. Sullivan; and the Josephite John R. Slattery [for seven years, I studied to be a Josephite priest, to work in the Black Apostolate]. The latter two ultimately left the Church.

Josephites generally understood Slattery to have gone beyond his spiritual depth and that was why he left the Church. With the current sexual cover-up scandal of the hierarchy, the Faithful are left with much the same scandal with which Slattery contended. We, therefore, continue to pick our way through the material, as best we are able.

The question is what to do with doubt. Interestingly, the Bishops use John 20:9, *he saw and believed* as if to say that the “other disciple” believed in the resurrection, rather than that the tomb was empty. This type of shenanigans by the hierarchy causes me to doubt the integrity required to teach. The fact that the administration of their university, The Catholic University of America is on the censured list of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) also challenges the ability of the hierarchy to teach.

¹ Charles E. Curran, Catholic Moral Theology in the United States: A History (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008) 37.

The administration has violated the moral principles required for professors to challenge those with political power, whether of the church or the state. In other words, the AAUP is asserting that the administration of The Catholic University of America, by not following procedural safeguards, is abusing its authority over the professors. In this case, such abuse undermines the authority of the Bishops.

Yet, we believe in the resurrection not only because the hierarchy teaches that Jesus rose from the dead, but also because the Faithful have handed down that teaching from generation to generation. With the Psalmist, we say, "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad." Regardless of the present nonsense from the hierarchy, the Faithful ignore what the Faithful do not hand down, from generation to generation. This explains why Raymond Arroyo said during the Encore Presentation on ETWN, "The World Over," Sunday, March 01, 2009, that fifty-two percent of Catholics voted for Obama, despite the hierarchy.

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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.

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23 (24)

Codex Sinaiticus²

This Psalm was difficult for me to identify.

From the web site:³

The Codex Sinaiticus Project is an international collaboration to reunite the entire manuscript in digital form and make it accessible to a global audience for the first time. Drawing on the expertise of

² <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=26&chapter=118&inputControl=420&lid=en&side=r&zoomSlider=0> 090301. Psalm 118 in the Lectionary is Psalm 117 in the Codex Sinaiticus. And <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=26&chapter=118&inputControl=420&lid=en&side=r&zoomSlider=0> 090301. Psalm 118 in the Lectionary is Psalm 117 in the Codex Sinaiticus.

³ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/> 090301.

leading scholars, conservators and curators, the Project gives everyone the opportunity to connect directly with this famous manuscript. [[Find out more about the Codex Sinaiticus Project.](#)]

Colossians 3:1-4

There is a difficulty with the Greek at 3,4. I am unsure what “3,4” means. While I am sure there is a difficulty, I am unsure what the difficulty is. The difficulty may be whether *Christ your life and then you too will appear* might be *Christ our life and then we too will appear*

cf. 1 Corinthians 5:7b-8a

John 20:1-9

John 20:1, 8

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults⁴

The Bishops use John 20:1 to assert, “For two thousand years, Christian time has been measured by the memory of that ‘first day of the week’ (Mk 16:2, 9; Lk 24:1; Jn 20:1), when the Risen Christ gave the Apostles the gift of peace and of the Spirit (cf. Jn 20:19-23).” I do not know to what extent Scripture Scholars would agree. See the Reading 44B Personal Notes for 030427. The Bishops, however, are using this sentence under “Meditation,” in Chapter 14, “The Celebration of the Paschal Mystery of Christ.” In that prayer-provoking context, agreement among scholars is not a requirement.

The Bishops write,

While the empty tomb of itself does not prove the Resurrection, since the absence of Christ’s body could have other explanations, it is an essential part of the proclamation of the Resurrection because it demonstrates the fact of what God has done in raising his Son from the dead in his own body. When St. John entered the empty tomb, “He saw and believed” (Jn 20:8).

The Bishops misrepresent that verse. In the Catechism it looks as if the Beloved Disciple believed in God, that Jesus had risen from the dead; but in the Lectionary it looks as if the Beloved Disciple believed the women, that the tomb was empty. That lengthy quotation offers the context for what the Bishops are saying. The Bishops leave the same misimpression, when they write, “The empty tomb helped the disciples accept the fact of the Resurrection. When St. John entered the tomb, ‘he saw and believed’ (Jn

⁴ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006, 94, 99, 178.

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20:8).” The above quotations are in Chapter 8, “The Saving Death and Resurrection of Christ.”

John 20:8-9

Jane S. Webster, review of Richard Bauckham, The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple: Narrative, History, and Theology in the Gospel of John⁵
Bauckham uses shaky scholarship. Webster reports,

In chap. 3, B. argues for a seamless document written by one person, the ‘ideal author,’ who did not need to be identified by name because the church knew who he was. ... a perceptive witness, especially when set beside Peter (see 20:8-9), who received the role of shepherd of “Jesus’ sheep.” Because B. does not identify competition between Peter and the beloved disciple here, he suggests that the Gospel arises not from a sectarian community but from the “whole church” (p. 87). A note of caution: as did Brown before him (*The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York: Paulist, 1979)), B. conflated the “beloved disciple” and the Gospel’s other unnamed disciples.

John 20:8

David J. Norman, O.F.M., “Doubt and the Resurrection of Jesus”⁶

In his Conclusion, Norman writes, “No one circumvents the hurdle that is Jesus’ death (not even the Beloved Disciple of John 20:8); no one removes the impediment that it poses. Only God can provide the evidence necessary to believe in Jesus as the risen Lord.” Deo Gratias, Thanks be to God.

For more on sources see the Appendix file. Personal Notes are on the web site at www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 4 (October 2008) 819.

⁶ Theological Studies, Vol. 69, No. 4 (December 2008) 809.