

Personal Notes  
070415 Second Sunday of Easter 45C  
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The Gospel of John enables the Faithful to experience growth in Faith through various levels of uncertainty. As a college history professor, I shared my degree of certainty with my students. To my amazement and delight, such sharing enhanced, rather than damaged, my credibility. John is doing the same thing. Only God as the certainty of knowing what is absolutely correct. The rest of the Faithful seek truth and, thus, find God.

**First Reading: Acts 5:12-16**

Acts 5:12

Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., "Raymond Brown's New *Introduction to the Gospel of John* A Presentation—And Some Questions"

*Signs and wonders* is key to the Book of Glory in the Gospel of John 13:1—20:31.<sup>1</sup>

Acts 5:13

Joseph Plevnik, "'The Eleven and Those with Them' According to Luke"<sup>2</sup>

In *none of the others, of the others*, is *hoi polloi* in English. This means that there were the Eleven apostles and the *hoi polloi*, the rest of us.

**Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24 (1)**

The Church makes this psalm available for funerals.<sup>3</sup>

Psalm 118:14

Sue Gillingham, "From Liturgy to Prophecy: The Use of Psalmody in Second Temple Judaism"<sup>4</sup>

Isaiah 12:2 imitates Psalm 118:14 in thanksgiving for deliverance from Exile. The Lectionary does not use Isaiah 12:2. Deliverance from all evil is that for which the Faithful can be grateful.

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<sup>1</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 1 (January 2003) 11.

<sup>2</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 2 (April 1978) 208.

<sup>3</sup> N.a., 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) 275.

<sup>4</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3 (July 2002) 471 and 472.

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Psalm 118:22

Daniel C. Olson, "Matthew 22:1-14 as Midrash"<sup>5</sup>

Psalm 118:22, *the stone, which the builders rejected, has become the corner stone* shows confusion, distraction, and lack of certainty in the Faithful. John shows the Faithful how to deal with such confusion, distraction, and lack of certainty. Contrary to the rules of standard grammar, the Lectionary omits a comma before *which*,

Matthew uses this verse to explain the parable of the Vineyard Workers who refused to pay the owner his due.

**Second Reading: Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19**

Rev 1:9—11:19

John J. Pilch, review of Stephen S. Smalley, The Revelation to John: A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Apocalypse<sup>6</sup>

Scholars say that the way to read Revelation is as a series of stage productions or acts. The reader should draw up pictures fitting the words, as each scene changes.

Revelation 1:9a

*I, John, your brother, who share with you* contains two important meanings. John is sharing as a brother, as a co-equal, as someone in a horizontal rather than hierarchal relationship with the Faithful. The second important meaning is sharing. When I look at the Greek, I want to translate the meaning with *as a fellow traveler*, but, since the Communists co-opted that phrase, *fellow traveler* does not work, except, perhaps, for those less than seventy years of age, who may never have heard of "fellow-travelers."

Revelation 1:9b

The distress, the kingdom, and the endurance in the Greek only has one the. The Greek means that distress, kingdom, and endurance are the three themes of the Gospel, rolled into one outlook.

Revelation 1:10

*I was caught up in the spirit* means that John was in ecstasy. When, in verse 12, John turns to see a voice, John sounds as if he is having an experience like someone high on drugs. That notwithstanding, the better translation is that John turned to see whose voice it was.

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<sup>5</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 3 (July 2005) 437.

<sup>6</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 67, No. 4 (December 2006) 924.

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Revelation 1:13 and 17

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy<sup>7</sup>  
Margaret Barker makes most sense here. Barker points out that the lampstands refer to the Holy of Holies, which the Second Temple High Priests were to keep secret. These lampstands were hidden behind the Temple veil.

Jesus is portrayed as an angel and as someone appropriate to worship. Portraying Jesus as an angel lends some credence to the use Barker makes of angels in their hidden efforts. Much of the faith experience is a matter of uncovering what the angels or ambiguities of life reveal about God.

Rev. 1:18

Bernardin Schneider, O.F.M., "The Corporate Meaning and Background of 1 Cor 15,45b—*Ὁ Ἐσχάτος Ἀδάμ εἰς Πνεῦμα Ζωοποιούν*"<sup>8</sup>

*I am alive forever and ever*, means that the risen Christ is the source of life, the God almighty.

**Alleluia: John 20:29**

**Gospel: John 20:19-31**

John 18—20

Douglas K. Clark, "Signs in Wisdom and John"<sup>9</sup>

John 18—20 is the seventh sign, the Exodus from Egypt corresponding to the exodus from this into the next life with God.

John 20:19-31

Kelli S. O'Brien, "Written That You May Believe: John 20 and Narrative Rhetoric"<sup>10</sup>

Thomas is obtuse, not willing to believe. The Faithful also go through difficulties similar to Thomas, which the Gospel of John is designed to help. John shows lack of certainty in order to show the Faithful how to accept that same lack as a means of growth into a better and more certain Faith.

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<sup>7</sup> London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003 22, 24115, 126, 213, 335, fn 88.

<sup>8</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 3 (April 1967) 461 as found at [http://63.136.1.22/pls/eli/ashow?ishid=n0008-7912\\_029\\_03&lcookie=2792486&npage=450-467](http://63.136.1.22/pls/eli/ashow?ishid=n0008-7912_029_03&lcookie=2792486&npage=450-467) 070115.

<sup>9</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 45, No. 2 (April 1983) 205 ff.

<sup>10</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 2 (April 2005) 284-302. The quotation is on page 302.

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O'Brien writes,

The Fourth Gospel conceives of this sort of recognition as something that comes through the witness of the Holy Spirit and a spiritual encounter with the risen Lord. But the author also helps to recreate the experience of encountering Jesus and the journey of faith for readers by subjecting them to the initial confusion experienced by the first disciples and continually bringing them to new ways of seeing, new methods of interpretation so that they might gain a clearer understanding of what is not of this world. The author does so by creating interpretive difficulties, deliberately setting up misunderstandings, so that readers might learn how to correct them in light of the truth presented in Jesus, and by creating characters whose interpretive errors and corrections not only show the way but bring readers along with them. Through their own errors and weaknesses along with their persistence and subsequent correction, Mary Magdalene, Thomas, and the Beloved Disciple all contribute to this scheme and further the author's purpose that readers may believe that Jesus is the Christ and that by believing they may have life in his name.

John 20:19

John M. Perry, "The Three Days in the Synoptic Passion Predictions"<sup>11</sup>

The Gospels differ over when the Resurrection occurred, on the first day of the week, or on the third day. *That first day of the week* is a formula preferred by the Aramaic-speaking Church, in contrast to the Greek-speaking Church, which preferred *on the third day*.

John 20:23

Joel Marcus, "The Gates of Hades and the Keys of the Kingdom (Matt 16:18-19)"<sup>12</sup>

In contrast to how some read Matthew, John is unambiguous about the power to forgive sins.

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<sup>11</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 48, No. 4 (October 1986) 645.

<sup>12</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 50, No. 3 (July 1988) 450.

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John 20:30

Douglas K. Clark, "Signs in Wisdom and John"<sup>13</sup>

Uses the word *signs* to indicate this section of the Gospel is the Book of Signs. This means that John is organizing his Gospel according to the Book of Wisdom. Signs reflect who God is.

John 20:31

Debbie Hunn, "Who Are 'They' in John 8:33?"<sup>14</sup>

The purpose of the Gospel of John is to enable the Faithful to believe that Jesus is the Christ so that they might have life in his name both in this life and in the next. John refers to the supernatural life of grace humans can share with God.

John 20:30-31

John F. O'Grady, review of Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., The Gospel According to John: *Sacra Pagina* and Andrew T. Lincoln, The Gospel According to Saint John: Black's New Testament Commentary<sup>15</sup>

O'Grady quotes Moloney to write, "He [John] hopes 'to create a space where a satisfied Christian reader is born' (20), and he especially focuses on how the author of the Gospel attempts to bring the listener or reader to a decision (20:31-31)."

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

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<sup>13</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 45, No. 2 (April 1983) 205 ff.

<sup>14</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 3 (July 2004) 394.

<sup>15</sup> Theological Studies, 67, No. 3 (September 2006) 671.