

Readings

First Reading:	Acts 3:13-15, 17-19
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9 (7a)
Second Reading	1 John 2:1-5a
Alleluia	cf. Luke 24:32
Gospel:	Luke 24:35-48

Commentary

A Moral Dilemma: The Problem

Generally, humans must live with human dilemmas. For some a problem arrives with the increasing sensitivity to abortion by the hierarchy in the United States and Raymond Arroyo on EWTN television. The problem is that there is no other way than theirs to solve the abortion dilemmas.

Abortion can be a moral problem for which there are no good choices. Richard A. McCormick, S.J. observes,

... how does one establish that those who choose to end the life of an unborn baby by abortion always “set themselves against life”? If abortion is the only life-saving, life-serving option available (as in the classical case: allow both to die vs. save the one (mother) that can be saved), one would think that the intervention is just the opposite of “setting oneself against life.” Certainly, this is what the Belgian bishops implied when they said that “the moral principle which ought to govern the intervention can be formulated as follows: since two lives are at stake, one will, while doing everything possible to save both, attempt to save one rather than allow two to perish.”¹

That dilemma or problem is why *Lord, let your face shine on us* (Psalm 4:7a) is the theme for this Sunday. In the Gospel, an exasperated Jesus mutters, “And why do questions arise in your hearts?” (Luke 24:38). In Acts 3:17, Peter accepts, “Now I know, brothers, that you acted out of ignorance.”

With this theme, I confront what I call “the systematic attack on Catholic and Democratic elected officeholders on EWTN,” and which Raymond Arroyo calls “... no systematic

¹ Richard A. McCormick, S.J., *The Critical Calling: Reflections on Moral Dilemmas Since Vatican II* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1989, 2006), 229.

attack against anything. We are merely pointing out the inconsistencies of those who claim the Catholic mantle, but endorse public policies at odds with the assertion.”² At issue is willingness to confront the facts about what it means to be Catholic. With Raymond Arroyo we agree, “Catholics have an obligation ... to support the dignity of every human being and basic human rights.” We object, however, to assuming, what needs to be proved, namely what life is human life. More importantly, we object to a Ku Klux Klan type of unwarranted fear mongering based on authoritarian proclamations, not backed by both hard and soft science. By hard science, I include biology and medicine. By soft science, I include moral theology and philosophy.

There is more to human life than abortion. There is also the ambience in which abortions happen. We watch and listen in vain for the attitude that the Catholic World Over loves everyone and everyone is welcome, including those who do not see things their way. The legislators in question are not even our enemies. They are our co-religionists. The program approaches these legislators and administrators with unwitting contempt and disdain; something far different from the gentle love Jesus has for everyone, including acknowledged sinners.

Raymond Arroyo cannot realize his boorish and less than gracious sarcasm appears as a dilemma to at least some in his audience. At times, he seems to imitate Rush Limbaugh. Unlike Limbaugh vis a vis President Obama, we wish Arroyo success. Although we think Arroyo is acting as politically inept as Limbaugh, we wish Arroyo better. We want to see more love and graciousness in his presentations of those who see the abortion dilemmas from a different perspective.

There is much more to looking for light in the matter of abortion. We intend to continue this prayerful attitude toward abortion in two more segments: A Religious Solution and A Secular Solution. For now, we take a respite.

Let your face shine upon us is the theme for today. With Pope Benedict XVI and Saint Augustine (354-430) we pray, *Dilige et fac quod vis—Love and do what you will.*³

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Annotated Bibliography

² E-mail exchange Saturday, March 6 and Sunday, March 8.

³ “The Holy Father analyzes the meaning of freedom for creatures of a loving creator: True freedom from the flesh to `love and do what you will,’” L’Osservatore Romano: Weekly Edition in English, Vol. 42, No. 8 (Wednesday, 25 February 2009, Vatican City) 3.

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 3:13-15, 17-19

The Church makes these verses available for visits to the sick.⁴

Acts 3:13 and 19

The eclectic Greek has two difficulties: (1) the number of times *God of* is repeated in *The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*; (2) *be converted*. While I am sure there is a difficulty with *be converted*, I am unsure of what the problem is. The difficulty looks like a technical aspect of Greek, beyond my present comprehension.

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.⁵

There is a Fifth Century manuscript for these verses in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow.

The continuing point of the exercise reaching into the original manuscripts is to shake confidence in which words belong in Sacred Scripture, thereby, bringing some humility into the self-righteousness required to lead a Christian life.

Acts 3:1-26

Gregory E. Sterling, "Jesus as Exorcist: An Analysis of Matthew 17:14-20; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-3a"⁶

Acts 2:1-26 is one of the early Christian texts that Sterling uses to argue, "Christians used miracles for missionary purposes." The Lectionary omits such miracles from the readings for today.

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) 263.

⁵ Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 126.

⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 55, No. 3 (July 1993) 487.

Acts 3:15

Joseph Plevnik, "The Eleven and Those with Them' According to Luke"⁷

The key word in Acts 3:15 is *witnesses*. Plevnik argues that the key meaning is that witnesses included women, even at the Last Supper.

Psalm 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9 (7a)

Codex Sinaiticus⁸

There is an interesting difference between the Lectionary and the Codex translations.

Psalm 4:9

Lectionary: As soon as I lie down, I fall peacefully asleep, for you alone, O LORD

Codex In peace altogether, I will lie down and sleep, because you alone, O Lord

Lectionary: bring security to my dwelling.

Codex: settled me in hope.

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 2 (April 1978) 209.

⁸ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=26&chapter=4&inputControl=420&lid=en&side=r&verse=6&zoomSlider=0> 0909108. Psalm 4 in the Lectionary is Psalm 4 in the Codex Sinaiticus. There is an English translation. <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=26&inputControl=420&lid=en&side=r&zoomSlider=0> 090308. Psalm 4 in the Lectionary is Psalm 4 in the Codex Sinaiticus. There is an English translation.

Personal Notes
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In 2003, I wrote, "In what follows, parentheses indicate what is omitted in the Lectionary. Where the Lectionary got its translation, I do not know. The translation below is from the New American Bible,⁹ often used in the Lectionary."

Verse 7a (Many say, "May we see better times!) LORD,
show us the light of your face!"

Verse 8a But you have given my heart (more) joy (than they
have when grain and wine abound).

At the time, I did not have access to the Codex, which reads

Verse 7 Many are saying, "Who will show us good things? The light
of your face was made a sign upon us, O Lord!"

I offer the whole of verse seven, because I do not know how to unscramble the
Lectionary.

Verse 8 You have gladness in my heart; from their harvest of grain
and wine and oil they multiplied.

Similarly, for the same reason, I offer the whole of verse seven from the Codex.

As best I can tell, the Psalms are a veritable mess when it comes to reasonable,
generally accepted original Hebrew and Greek and the resulting English translations.

⁹ Saint Joseph Edition of The New American Bible: Translated from the Original Languages with Critical Use of All the Ancient Sources: Including The Revised New Testament and the Revised Psalms Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine and Approved by the Administrative Committee/Board of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the United States Catholic Conference: with many helps for Bible reading: Vatican II Constitution on Divine Revelation, How to Read the Bible, Historical Survey of the Lands of the Bible, Bible Dictionary, Liturgical Index of Sunday Readings, Doctrinal Bible Index, and over 50 Photographs and Maps of the Holy Land (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1992).

Psalm 4:7

Scott C. Jones, "Qohelet's Courtly Wisdom: Ecclesiastes 8:1-9"¹⁰

Jones waxes strong about the meaning of the shining face. Jones argues that for Qohelet, the face shines because it can foresee the future. My sense of the future is my sense of happiness through all dilemmas, such as those above the double line, associated with Raymond Arroyo.

1 John 2:1-5a

1 John 2:1-5a

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.¹¹

A Seventh Century papyrus manuscript has these verses in the Bibliotheca Bodmeriana in Coligny.

cf. Luke 24:32

Luke 24:35-48

The Church makes these verses available for Funerals.¹²

Luke 24:13-35

Jane S. Webster, review of Robert J. Karris, O.F.M., Eating Your Way through Luke's Gospel¹³

Webster reports that this is a fun book, written with a light touch, solid and useful for Bible study and the Lectionary. Karris observes that Luke frequently groups Jesus, food, and sinners together. In this case, Jesus makes himself known to the disciples *in the breaking of the bread*.

¹⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 2 (April 2006) 215.

¹¹ Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 101.

¹² 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) 238, 239.

¹³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 1 (January 2008) 151.

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Luke 24:38

David J. Norman, O.F.M., "Doubt and the Resurrection of Jesus"¹⁴

Incredibly, Norman goes on to show how unwilling the disciples were to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead, meant that Jesus is God. As Jesus put it, *why do questions arise in your hearts?*

Luke 24:39-40

Paul Lawrence, The IVP Atlas of Bible History¹⁵

This is the same reference to the crucifixion developed last Sunday at reading 44B for the Second Sunday of Easter, April 19, 2006.

Luke 24:45-47

Richard J. Dillon, "The Benedictus in Micro- and Macrocontext"¹⁶

Because we did so much with the Sacrament of Reconciliation last Sunday, the following excerpt seems appropriate from Dillon.

... deemphasizing John's activity of baptizing and stressing his preaching, Luke "demotes" John to the mere herald's role and restricts the actual "forgiveness of sins" to Jesus. For him, the preposition εἰς in the formula εἰς ἀφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν expresses the "pointing-forward" effect of John's proclamation—"toward the forgiveness of sins"—rather than any saving effect of what John was doing. Accordingly, all subsequent occurrences of the phrase "forgive(ness of) sins" in Luke and Acts refer to the activity of Jesus (Luke 5:20-24 (=Mark 2:5-10); 7:48-50) and, most especially, to the dispensation of the risen Christ (Luke 24:45-47; Acts 2:37-39; 3:19 [used here, *that your sins may be forgiven*]; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 2:17-18).

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

¹⁴ Theological Studies, Vol. 69, No. 4 (December 2008) 803.

¹⁵ Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity Press, 2006, 146.

¹⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 478.