

Personal Notes  
0300511 Fourth Sunday of Easter 50B  
© 2015  
Raymond J. Jirran

The word for this Sunday is **rejected**, in the sense that being creatures, we, in our pride, may feel **rejected**; but that Jesus himself was **rejected** and in that very **rejection** we can find not only the cross, but also a certain sense of divinity.

The Personal Notes for Easter note that Carroll Stuhlmueller, C.P. observes that both Eastern and Western Christianity celebrate with Psalm 118:24,<sup>1</sup> that is the Easter Responsorial, *This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.* Verse 24 is not used in these readings for the Fourth Sunday of Easter. The 118<sup>th</sup> Psalm is a major psalm of thanksgiving and praise.<sup>2</sup>

In Paragraph 33, Pope John Paul II's, Apostolic Letter, *Rosarium Virginiae Mariae* does mention cf. **Acts 4:12**. The context is Chapter III, "*For me, to live is Christ.*" In Paragraph 33, "The ten `Hail Marys," "The Pontiff writes:

...

The centre of gravity in the *Hail Mary*, the hinge as it were which joins its two parts, is *the name of Jesus*. Sometimes, in hurried recitation, this centre of gravity can be overlooked and with it the connection to the mystery of Christ being contemplated. Yet it is precisely the emphasis given to the name of Jesus and to his mystery that is a sign of a meaningful and fruitful recitation of the Rosary. Pope Paul VI drew attention, in his apostolic Exhortation *Marialis Cultus*, to the custom in certain regions of highlighting the name of Christ by the addition of a clause referring to the mystery being contemplated. This is a praiseworthy custom, especially during public recitation. It gives forceful expression to our faith in Christ, directed to the different moments of the Redeemer's life. It is at once *a profession of faith* and an aid in concentrating our meditation, since it facilitates the process of assimilation to the mystery of Christ inherent in the repetition of the *Hail Mary*. When we repeat the name of Jesus—the only name given to us by which we may hope for salvation (cf. **Acts 4:12**)—in close association with the name of his Blessed Mother, almost as if it were done at her suggestion, we set out on a path of assimilation meant to help us enter more deeply into the life of Christ.

From Mary's uniquely privileged relationship with Christ, which makes her the Mother of God, Theotókos, derives the forcefulness of the appeal we make to her in the second half of the prayer, as we entrust to her maternal intercession our lives and the hour of our death.

---

<sup>1</sup> Carroll Stuhlmueller, C.P., The Spirituality of the Psalms (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2002) ISBN 0-8146-2599, page 202.

<sup>2</sup> Also see Sue Gillingham, "From Liturgy to Prophecy: The Use of Psalmody in Second Temple Judaism," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3 (July 2002) 471-472.

The Rosary mystery is the Last Supper.

## **Acts 4:8-12**

verse 11<sup>3</sup> He is *the stone rejected* by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.

## **Psalm 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28, 29**

This is one of the twelve Psalms using Halleluiah in the Masoretic or Hebrew text.<sup>4</sup> Psalm 118 is also one of the six Psalms of the Hallel, 113-118.<sup>5</sup> Psalm 118 is one of the Psalms that the Jewish and Christian traditions deeply incorporate into their liturgies. Being so embedded causes interpretive difficulties. Does the purpose of the liturgists and the purpose of the Psalmists differ? So far, I have been having no problems, though the scholars do. This Psalm also looks to the Exodus as a balm for the trials and errors of this life.

The Antiphon:

verse 22 The stone **rejected** by the builders has become the cornerstone.

verse 1 Alleluia  
Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,  
for his *mercy* endures forever.

Verse 28 is strange.

---

<sup>3</sup> All indented verses are taken from 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 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 Saints (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> Lloyd M. Barré, "Halelu yah: A Broken Inclusion," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 45, No. 2 (April 1983) 195-200.

<sup>5</sup> Mark Kiley, "'Lord, Save my Life' (Psalm 116:4) as Generative Text for Jesus' Gethsemane Prayer (Mark 14:36a)," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 48, No. 4 (October 1986) 655.

Personal Notes  
0300511 Fourth Sunday of Easter 50B  
© 2015  
Raymond J. Jirran

verse 28 I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me and have been my savior.

The Vulgate<sup>6</sup> has:

Deus meus es tu, et confitebor tibi,  
Deus meus, et exaltabo te.

that I would translate:

I will proclaim, you are my God  
I will exalt you, my God.

The New Jerusalem<sup>7</sup> has:

You are my God, I thank you,  
all praise to you, my God  
I thank you for hearing me,  
and making yourself my Saviour.

The New American<sup>8</sup> has:

---

<sup>6</sup> *The Vulgate, Saint Jerome, and the Latin* all refer to Nova Vulgata: Bibliorum Sacrorum Editio: Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II ratione habita iussu Pauli PP, VI Recognita Auctoritate Joannis Pauli PP, II Promulgata Editio Typica Altera (00120 Citta Del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1979, 1986, 1998) ISBN 88-2209-2163-4

<sup>7</sup> Henry Wansbrough, General Editor, The New Jerusalem Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1985).

<sup>8</sup> 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).

Personal Notes  
0300511 Fourth Sunday of Easter 50B  
© 2015  
Raymond J. Jirran

You are my God, I give you thanks;  
my God, I offer you praise.

Jerusalem<sup>9</sup> has:

You are my God, I give you thanks,  
I extol you, my God;  
I give you thanks for having heard me,  
you have been my savior.

Douay-Rheims,<sup>10</sup> numbering this Psalm 117, has:

Thou are my God, and I will praise thee: thou are my God, and I will exalt thee.  
I will praise thee, because thou has heard me, and art become my salvation.

King James<sup>11</sup> has:

Thou are my God, and I will praise thee: thou are my God, I will exalt thee.

Stuhlmüller<sup>12</sup> has:

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;  
you are my God, I will extol you.

---

<sup>9</sup> Alexander Jones, General Editor, The Jerusalem Bible: Reader's Edition (Garden City, New York: Double Day & Company, Inc., 1968).

<sup>10</sup> The Holy Bible: Translated from the Latin Vulgate with Annotations, References, and an Historical and Chronological Table: The Douay Version of The Old Testament, First published by the English College at Douay, A.D. 1609: The Confraternity Edition of The New Testament: A Revision of the Challoner-Rheims Version Edited by Catholic Scholars under the Patronage of the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (New York: P. J. Kennedy & Sons, 1950).

<sup>11</sup> General Editor, The Reverend Cain Hope Felder, Ph.D., The Original African Heritage Study Bible: King James Version (Nashville: The James C. Winston Publishing Company, 1993).

<sup>12</sup> Carroll Stuhlmüller, C.P., The Spirituality of the Psalms (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2002) ISBN 0-8146-2599, page 201.

For the Jewish liturgy, this verse would be sung by an individual and the following verse by the entire congregation as well.

verse 29 Give thanks to the LORD for he is good;  
for his kindness endures forever.

## 1 John 3:1-2

verse 1c The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.  
verse 2a Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed.

Worldliness is tricky. God did so love the world that he came into the world. John, however, presents a dichotomy. We are either children of God or children of the Devil. One or the other, not in between. Religious life can make the Faithful very proud, in that the Faithful "are not like the rest of men." The Faithful can take pride in their **rejection**. The knack is to work at being like Jesus, who accepted his **rejection** not as something about which to gloat, but as something imposed by the Father for future glorification.<sup>13</sup>

Feminists have objected to presenting God as an abusive Father. Hope and faith in the future, even especially the cosmic future, is how to deal with the abusive Father syndrome. Hope is an expectation fundamentally religious, seriously not secular.

A scholar depicts the dichotomy as follows:<sup>14</sup>

In its ineradicable opposition to the light that shines within it (John 1:5), the world is darkness, in all polymorphous manifestations of its falsehood, sin, and death. By clinging to the manifest untruth of its autonomous existence, by adhering to the pride of its independence and the blind power of its egotism, the *κοσμος* [world] is securely locked up in the prison of its falsehood; "you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:32).

---

<sup>13</sup> Urban C. Von Wahlde, "The Stereotyped Structure and the Puzzling Pronouns of 1 John 2:28—3:10," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 2 (April 2002) 336.

<sup>14</sup> Stanley B. Marrow, "Κοσμος in John," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 2002), 100.

## John 10:11-18

verse 14 I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my sheep, and mine know me.

Probably when I was an infant, Mom placed a copy of the painting of Jesus knocking at the door in my room. When I finally noticed that there was no handle on the door, Mom had two reactions. 1) What took me so long to notice and 2) more importantly, Jesus knocks, but the door can only be opened from the inside. I do not know whether I noticed this before I went to school or not.

That sense of possible **rejection** is there for the Good Shepherd.

The Latin for shepherd is *pastor*. Frighteningly, since there are no longer *irremovable pastors*, the thought occurs that present arrangements leave local parish pastors in the position of hired men, professionals assigned to run parishes. This *hired professional* aspect of the current Richmond diocesan priesthood expresses itself in “off campus” housing; housing that enables priests to serve several parishes from one locale. Since bishops who are ordinaries are not transferred every six to twelve years and do live at their cathedrals, ordinaries have a better claim to *pastor*, but even they are expected to resign at age seventy-five. Monastics and monasteries, however, do have the *amimam suam, their very souls* to pick up and lay down for their Faithful. What we have today is irremovable parishioners and removable pastors, a scary situation in the Divine order of things.

Saint Augustine (354-430), one of the Four Great Western Doctors of the Church, writes, “Nor is he called a hireling unless he receives payment from the one who hires him. Sons patiently wait for the eternal inheritance of the Father.”<sup>15</sup>

verse 12 A hired man, who is not a shepherd  
and whose sheep are not his own,  
sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away,  
and the wolf catches and scatters them.

This is a difficult because I have an important, powerful friend who attacks me when I offer fraternal correction. The temptation to silence is strong. The words of the Saint

---

<sup>15</sup> Augustine, *Tr. 47* in “Exposition from the Catena Aurea” edited by Saint Thomas Aquinas, in The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers: Volume Two: From the First Sunday in Lent to the Sunday after the Ascension, tr. and ed. M. F. Toal, D.D. (P.O. Box 612, Swedesboro, NJ 08085: Preservation Press, 1996) 293.

Personal Notes  
0300511 Fourth Sunday of Easter 50B  
© 2015  
Raymond J. Jirran

Gregory the Great (540-430), Pope, Confessor, and another of the Four Great Western Doctors of the Church, then, have special meaning for me. Saint Gregory cites the following Scripture: "...*You have not gone up to face the enemy, nor have you set up a wall for the house of Israel, to stand in battle on the day of the Lord* (Ezech. xiii. 5)."<sup>16</sup>

The Great Father, himself, however, needs some correction where he writes, "...the holy women who triumphed over both the world and their sex..."<sup>17</sup> The Pope equates the female sex with the world that may have been the case for him personally, but would not have been the case for females themselves. The residue of such papal thought throughout the Church lingers as part of current spiritual struggles.

verse 15      and I know mine and mine know me,  
                  just as the Father knows me and I know the Father

The implication is that the Faithful in knowing Jesus receive the protection of the Father.

This is the key verse, enabling the Faithful to **reject** God. Saint Cyril of Alexandria (+444), one of the Four Great Eastern Doctors of the Church, explains,<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> St. Gregory, Pope and Doctor, "Given to the People in the Basilica of Blessed Peter the Apostle on the Second Sunday after Easter: The Unfading Pastures: the Christian Hope," in The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers: Volume Two: From the First Sunday in Lent to the Sunday after the Ascension, tr. and ed. M. F. Toal, D.D. (P.O. Box 612, Swedesboro, NJ 08085: Preservation Press, 1996), page 317.

<sup>17</sup> St. Gregory, Pope and Doctor, "Given to the People in the Basilica of Blessed Peter the Apostle on the Second Sunday after Easter: The Unfading Pastures: the Christian Hope," in The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers: Volume Two: From the First Sunday in Lent to the Sunday after the Ascension, tr. and ed. M. F. Toal, D.D. (P.O. Box 612, Swedesboro, NJ 08085: Preservation Press, 1996) 318.

<sup>18</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop and Doctor. PG 73, Book VI, as found in The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers: Volume Two: From the First Sunday in Lent to the Sunday after the Ascension, tr. and ed. M. F. Toal, D.D. (P.O. Box 612, Swedesboro, NJ 08085: Preservation Press, 1996), pages 312-314 and 320. PG is an abbreviation for Minge's Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca. Edition Paris 1886. Vols. 161; Series Latina. Edition Paris 1844-66 Vols. 221. The reference I am using is footnote 5, though I did not find footnote 5, the number anywhere in the text, but particularly not on page 307, where I think it ought to be. I assume the omission is a typographical error.

Personal Notes  
0300511 Fourth Sunday of Easter 50B  
© 2015  
Raymond J. Jirran

For though the Word of God is divine by nature, even in our flesh, and though He remains God by nature, we are His kindred because He has taken our flesh....out of compassion for our whole fallen nature....we did not know of Him first; He first knew us...He Who is by nature God *took hold of the seed of Abraham*, as Paul says (Heb. ii. 16).

verse 17      This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.

Such love is not unconditional. Neither is laying down one's Christian life expected to be unconditional.

verse 18a      No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own.

This is a proclamation of free will, something relatively not secular and not academic.

verse 18b-c    I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again.  
                    This command I have received from my Father."

The idea in 1 John is that the Faithful receive the same command.

The mystery of God's love is found in **rejection**. Plainly people do **reject** God, but God turns that very **rejection** into an aspect of his love for the Faithful and he expects the Faithful to turn their own **rejection** into an aspect of their love for the Father.