

Personal Notes
060507 Fourth Sunday of Easter 50B
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This is one of the Good Shepherd Sundays. The Gospel of John portrays Jesus as laying down his life and taking it up again for the benefit of the Faithful, whom he loves. Psalm 118 is about the Second Temple, rededicating itself and all creation to God, the source of all order. 1 John is about the unimaginable rewards of the next life, where the Good Shepherd of the Gospel is leading the Faithful.

The Lectionary begins with the Acts of the Apostles 4:8-12, where Saint Peter bluntly lays out a kerygmatic statement that preachers have used ever since.¹ Kerygmatic means the apostolic proclamation of salvation through Jesus Christ. Salvation only comes through Jesus Christ, whom the fellow Jews of Peter had killed. The salvation of the healed crippled man was analogous to the salvation available to his crippled Jewish leaders, elders, and people of Israel. Jesus, the cornerstone, whom the builders rejected, is the only way for any salvation. The Church uses this reading in Pastoral Care of the Sick.² What God has prepared for the Faithful, through Jesus, is beyond imagination.

The Church also uses Psalm 118 at Funerals.³ The Church uses 1 John 3:1-2 in Funerals three times⁴ and in Care of the Sick once.⁵ The Church uses the Gospel,

¹ John Kloppenborg, "An Analysis of the Pre-Pauline Formula 1 Cor 15:3b-5 In Light of Some Recent Literature," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 3 (July 1978) 361.

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ 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

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John 10:11-18 in Care of the Sick.⁶ The Church is an Easter Church, enveloped in the love of God.

At the time of the Second Temple ceremonies, at the time of Jesus, Psalm 118 brought in the New Year. The Faithful sang the Psalm about the stone rejected by the builders becoming the corner stone.⁷ The Faithful probably had themselves in mind, as a Faithful remnant, suffering Roman occupation. Jesus angled the verse at the clerical leaders.⁸ The Lectionary may have in mind laying a new foundation for a new temple in the Christian dispensation.⁹

My Greek focus for this Sunday is on the last line of 1 John 3:2, "...for we shall see him as he is." The Greek for *for* derives from a pronoun meaning *that*. The meaning from the Greek is not that seeing God as he is, is the end or sequential purpose of life. The meaning is that the Faithful shall recognize God in his own being. The

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) 40, 142, 221.

⁵ 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) 279.

⁶ 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) 318.

⁷ Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy (London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003) 84-85.

⁸ Daniel C. Olson, "Matthew 22:1-14 as Midrash," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No 3 (July 2005) 436-437.

⁹ Craig A. Evans, "Jesus' Action in the Temple: Cleansing or Portent of Destruction?" the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 51, No. 2 (April 1989) 240, 244.

Greek is about recognizing God, rather than finding God. 1 John is saying that what God has in store for the Faithful is unimaginable.

Turning to the Gospel, John Wyclif (1330-1384) used John 10:15b,¹⁰ “I will lay down my life for the sheep,” to think about pre-emptive strikes in the matter of a just war. Theoretically, Wyclif thought there was such a thing as a just war. He was upset because of the Hundred Years War (1350-1475) and the wars of the Avignon Papacy (1309-1408), neither of which would Wyclif approve. Wyclif hated to see Christian fighting Christian.

There are four reasons for mentioning Wyclif. First, is that both church and state politics have kept these thoughts of Wyclif from receiving much attention, up to the present time. In other words, politics has determined which of the thoughts of Wyclif receive public attention. Second, is that the current political situation, under George W. Bush, is in striking parallel to the political situation at the time of Wyclif. What it means to be Christian calls for reexamination by both individuals and the commonality. I, for one, think the War in Iraq is not justifiable.

The third reason for bringing in Wyclif is segue into the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**. I have a difficult time passively accepting abuse of any kind. The **NAACP** fights such abuse, not with military power, such as that thrown at the Muslims of Iraq, but with the power of persuasion associated with both the civil laws of the state and the religious laws of love. The **NAACP** will clarify issues for the benefit of everyone. That clarification suits spiritual growth, both of individuals and of communities.

Fourth, is to mention that John 9:1—10:21 is part of a journey of faith, whereby the Beloved Disciple (John) moves from understanding to understanding in the meaning of the life of grace.¹¹ That movement continues through the ages. The efforts of Wyclif to understand still resonate. While what God has prepared is beyond human imagination, human imagination is quite capable of translating Christian love into Christian action.

¹⁰ Ian Christopher Levy, “John Wyclif: Christian Patience in a Time of War,” Theological Studies, Vol. 66, No. 2 (June 2005) 351.

¹¹ Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., “The Gospel of John as Scripture,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 3 (July 2005) 465.

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Another interesting aspect of this Gospel is John 10:16, voice recognition. Voice recognition is how Mary Magdalene first recognized the resurrected Jesus.¹² To think that one can recognize the voice of God stretches the imagination. The recognition was very personal. Saving one's soul is also very personal.

On the personal side, Mary L. Coloe, P.B.V.M. finds a parallel between Jesus laying aside and taking up his life in John 10:18 and laying aside and taking up his garments in the foot-washing episode of John 13. The foot washing was not simply an act of humility, but was also a prophetic act about the death and resurrection of Jesus.¹³ Analogously, the faithful also lay aside their lives in this life in order to take them up again in unimaginable glory in the next life.

The Lectionary invites the Faithful to contemplate the brash Peter proclaiming that the miracles he is working to be the work of the Resurrected Jesus. Psalm 118 is about beginning all over again after sinful digressions, like the ones that caused the Babylonian Exile. 1 John is about the inestimable love of God for the Faithful, a love that is personable to the point of voice recognition in the Gospel, and otherwise, well beyond the power of human imagination.

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

¹² Richard Bauckham, Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels (Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) 284.

¹³ Mary L. Coloe, P.B.V.M., "Welcome into the Household of God: The Foot Washing in John 13," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No 3 (July 2004) 407.