

Personal Notes
Fifth Sunday of Easter, 54C, May 2, 2010
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First Reading: Acts 14:21-27
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 145:8-9, 10-11, 12-13 (cf. 1)
Second Reading: Revelation 21:1-5a
Alleluia: John 13:34
Gospel: John 13:31-33a, 34-35

Commentary

Week after week, as I watch EWTN “The World Over with Raymond Arroyo,” I grit my teeth. To quote Monsignor Renato Fisichella in defense of the physicians who aborted the twin fetuses of a nine-year-old child who was raped by her stepfather that the quick and public proclamation of excommunication by the Brazilian bishops “unfortunately hurts the credibility of our teaching, which appears in the eyes of many as insensitive, incomprehensible and lacking mercy.”¹

Especially in light of the sexual cover-up, hurting credibility is the problem. At least young victimized boys never became pregnant, so never could have an abortion. Neither were they excommunicated for having an abortion; all the while the hierarchy covered up its own scandal.

The Republican agenda to which Arroyo adheres lines up with the agenda of the monarchies of Europe at the time of the French Revolution. The hierarchical Church has never gotten over the French Revolution. Just as the long-gone nobility ignored the poor and the weak, so too much of the hierarchical Church continues. The political agenda of the monarchies continues to hurt Church credibility. Arroyo and his institutional Church seem on the wrong side of the transparency required of the relatively new democracies now governing the world.

The Responsorial Antiphon has it right, with the prayer, “Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.” The Lectionary readings for this Sunday, in many ways, are about Secretary of Health and Human Services, Kathleen Sibelius, “keeping your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned [especially by your Bishop], those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame.” Putting the hierarchy to shame is what the Faithful are doing in the current sexual cover-up scandal, which grows worldwide, from week to week.

I cringe for the Church as the Archbishop of Kansas City, Kansas, Joseph Nauman, appears on national EWTN television to denounce Sibelius for saying that her Catholic conscience bothers her when she is forced to make the legislative decisions required of her position. Nauman feels that her conscience does not bother her enough on the abortion issue. Nauman fails to recognize that his self-righteous approach to abortion is not the only reasonable approach available in the current writing by Catholic moral theologians.

The hierarchy likes to think that the censure of the American Association of University Professors against the administration of The Catholic University of America is relatively meaningless. I think a better approach is to recognize that the hierarchy lost its credibility when it dismissed the moral theologian, Charles Curran, without following what the professors call “due process.” In other words, Curran never received the courtesy of hearing him out, before relieving him of his professorship and attempting to destroy his reputation. That lack of transparency and concern for the most vulnerable among us (including Curran) is what is hurting the credibility of the current hierarchy. Jesus has the order correct when he says, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” He is

¹ “Religion in the News: Vatican bioethics official dismisses calls for resignation,” Associated Press (?), Vatican City, Daily Press, Sunday, February 28, 2010, page 6, column 1.

not saying, if you keep my commandments, you will love me. Neither is he equating the commandments of the hierarchy with his commandments of love.

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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 material.

Acts 14:21-27

Different languages see reality differently. The ancient Greeks used pronouns for emphasis. Translating this emphasis from the original Greek into English is an object of the highlighting on the last pages of the hard copy, not found on the web site. The purpose of the highlighting is to transfer the Greek emphasis on personal pronouns into the English translation. Pronouns highlighted in blue have greater emphasis than in English, but are not as intense as the words marked in red.

Trying to think through how to use the markings, the following process may help. First, read the material emphasizing the marked words. Second, reread the material as it is usually read during the liturgy. Third, merge the two readings to heighten the meaning.

Anyone else wanting a copy of the marked Lectionary readings, please ask me at Jirran@verizon.net. Thank you.

The Greek manuscripts have difficulties at verses 21 and 25. Verse 21 looks like a spelling problem. In verse 25, the Greek seems to fiddle-faddle between *at* and *in* Perga.

Acts 14:27

Paul Lawrence, The IVP Atlas of Bible History²

The Atlas has a map showing Perga off Cyprus, in the modern Turkish city of Antalya.

Psalm 145:8-9, 10-11, 12-13 (cf. 1)

Pastoral Care of the Sick, Part II: Pastoral Care of the Dying, Chapter Eight: Rites for Exceptional Circumstances, Continuous Rite of Penance, Anointing, and Viaticum, Responsorial Psalms E, uses Psalm 145.³

² Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity Press, 2006 153.

³ 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 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 (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1983) 328.

Revelation 21:1-5a

In a similar vein to “I will praise your name forever, my king and my God,” Pastoral Care of the Sick, Part III: Readings, Responses, and verses from Sacred Scripture, holds up verses 1-7⁴ for New Testament Readings: Easter Season, V. Part II: Pastoral Care of the Dying, Chapter Six, Commendation of the Dying holds up verses 1-5a, 6-7⁵ as Reading D. Funerals uses verses 1-5a, 6b-7⁶ in Part III: Texts of Sacred Scripture: Funerals for Adults, New Testament Readings 19. The Faithful regularly use these readings. Funerals also uses Verses 1a, 3-5a⁷ in 14. Funerals for Baptized Children, New Testament Readings 253.

Rev 21:1—22:5

Chris Frilingos, review of Philip L. Mayo, “Those Who Call Themselves Jews”: The Church and Judaism in the Apocalypse of John⁸

Frilingos reports, “The vision of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:1-252:5) realizes the prophetic promise of an ‘ingathering of the nations,’ making Jews and Gentiles equal participants in a pneumatic covenant.”

Rev 21:1-4

Daniel G. Goody, C.S.C., “Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees”⁹

Goody brings out the following.

As valuable as social science contributions have been in understanding migration, its own disciplinary limitations prevent its making an explicit theological affirmation about migrants and refugees. Theology takes the discourse to a deeper level. “The Judeo-Christian tradition,” as the U.S. Catholic bishops have noted, “is steeped in images of migration,” from the migration of Adam and Eve out of the garden

⁴ Pastoral Care, page 280.

⁵ Pastoral Care, page 173.

⁶ 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) 222-223.

⁷ Funerals, page 253.

⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (April 2007) 584.

⁹ Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 3 (September 2009) 644.

of Eden (Gen 3:23-24), to the vision of the New Jerusalem in the final pages of the New Testament (Rev. 21:1-4).

The ultimate migration is from this life into the next.

John 13:34

John 13:31-33a, 34-35

At John 13:35 *all* has intense emphasis, *how all will know that you are my disciples*.

Because I am unsure both that all of the pronouns I am marking in Nestle-Aland are pronouns and that I am recognizing all of the pronouns, I went to an esteemed Biblical scholar at The Catholic University of America who recommended a more complete intermediate grammar, more complete than the classic Machen¹⁰ I have been using for more than fifty years. I intend to refer to my new grammar book as Exegetical Syntax, at least until I get used to the idea of exegetical syntax.¹¹

Exegetical Syntax uses a fancy Greek letter mu, which I have grown used to with the Alands, to refer to "Majority of Greek witnesses, most of which are of the Byzantine texttype." Up to this point, I have been paying more attention to the symbol for the most important correctors of the great uncials (Byzantine texttype). Time may tell me what the significance of the difference is.

Wallace refers to "my childhood friend, Bill Mounce"¹² with whom readers of these Personal Notes are already familiar.¹³ At a rate of ten pages per week, it will take me two years to complete reading Exegetical Syntax. I like the length because it seems similar to the length of the lectures I prepared for my students in Western Civilization, lectures now on my web site at www.western-civilization.com.

Where Exegetical Syntax goes on for 800 pages, my lectures amounted to 500 pages per semester. Both books expected students to use varying degrees of intensity going over the material. Both books included so much because much is involved. The difference is that no one has offered to

¹⁰ J. Gresham Machen, D.D., Litt.D., New Testament Greek for Beginners (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954).

¹¹ Daniel B. Wallace, With Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes: Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 1996) ix-xvii.

¹² Daniel B. Wallace, With Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes: Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 1996) xxi.

¹³ William D. Mounce, Zondervan Greek Reference Series: The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House: A Division of HarperCollins Publishers, 1993).

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publish my lectures, which are now at least ten years behind current research, but still get interest from all over the world.

John 13:31-32

Jeffrey L. Staley, review, Benjamin E. Reynolds, The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John¹⁴

Staley puts down Reynolds with faint praise. "Notwithstanding these criticisms, R. proves that he is up to the task of biblical scholarship, updating research on the Son of Man and organizing and synthesizing the Son of Man material in a helpful manner."

John 13:34

Bettye Collier-Thomas, Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1580-1979¹⁵

Sometime before 1892, the preaching Daughter of Thunder, Harriet A. Baker (1829-1913) presented her sermon, "Jesus Weeping over Jerusalem." In that sermon, she referenced John 13:34 to proclaim, "No wonder that he who believeth in Jesus and sees anything of the fullness of his grace and mercy seek [sic] no other Saviors, desires no other intercessor but Christ alone."

Born free, at the age of sixteen (in 1845) she married William Baker, a fugitive slave. After settling in Columbia, Pennsylvania, in 1851 her husband became the first slave captured and sent back to slavery under the Fugitive Slave Bill of 1850. The evangelist purchased her husband back out of slavery for \$750.

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

¹⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 1 (January 2010) 160.

¹⁵ San Francisco, CA 94103-1741: A Wiley Imprint: 1998 69, 90.