

Personal Notes  
050501 Sixth Sunday of Easter 55A  
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How diligent are the Faithful seeking the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17)? The world cannot grasp the Spirit of Truth but the Faithful can.<sup>1</sup> The reason is that the Faithful, especially those out of power, can prioritize truth over politics.

A study of the use of the word *God* during the Eighteenth Century, the century of the Enlightenment, shows a decline in the use of the word. I wonder if the reason is that, the Enlightenment is an objection to the Church prioritizing Church politics over truth. I wonder what a comparable study of words such as *Galileo*, *Newton*, *natural rights*, and *John Locke* would bring. I wonder what took the place of *God* in the literature.

I took part the discussion at the Omohundro Institute Colloquium Tuesday, March 29, in the Swem Library at The College of William and Mary on this topic. Eric Slauter, a University of Chicago professor and author of the paper discussed and dismissed the idea, under the rubric of lack of rigor. The title of his study was “The Godless 1780s and the Belief in Quantitative Intellectual History.” To be fair, I had not juxtaposed the Enlightenment with the Church, thinking, perhaps mistakenly, that he would be even less receptive to that idea.

The truth of Christianity is that death is no more, either physical death through the resurrection of the body or spiritual death through the forgiveness of sins. Sometimes the Magisterium can confuse these truths with other truths, independently available to the Faithful. When that happens, Jesus warns that the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, will not defend the Magisterium “because it neither sees nor knows him” (John 14:17). The Holy Spirit, the Advocate (John 14:16), will defend the Faithful, including the Magisterium, prioritizing truth over human politics, whether those politics belong either to the church or the state.

My friend, Tom Honoré, wrote an autobiographical book he titled Grace at Every Turn: The Journey of an African Creole Into and Out of the Priesthood.<sup>2</sup> Tom followed truth as best he understood it to become laicized. He left the priesthood, but not the Church, leaving for among other reasons, because he felt the Church, particularly the Josephite Fathers and Brothers were insufficiently active in civil rights. The Josephites then published a restatement of purpose and policies titled

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<sup>1</sup> Stanley B. Marrow, “*Κοσμος* in John,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 2002) 98.

<sup>2</sup> Tom Honoré, Grace at Every Turn: The Journey of an African Creole Into and Out of the Priesthood (Philadelphia, Pa. Xlibris Corporation

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The Josephites and Leadership Development in the African-American Community.<sup>3</sup>  
I only became aware of both books this year, first Grace, then Leadership. The Spirit of Truth is no easy person to follow.

As I participated in the Easter Vigil services at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, in Newport News, Virginia, March 26 two troubling sensations entered my soul. The first was the sense that those participating in the liturgy had little idea of what they were doing. What I thought we were doing is expressed in my recent Notes for the Vigil of Easter.

The second troubling sensation was that this sense of the Faithful not knowing what they were doing must have been how Mary, the Mother of God, felt, first for herself as she taught her child, Jesus, then as she was taught by the Magisterium. The Holy Saturday worshippers exhibited little idea of the relationship between the Exodus from Egypt and the Exodus from both spiritual and physical death. They exhibited little idea of the relationship between Jesus Christ, the light of the world, and the Exodus experience. The Faithful were enthusiastic, but I prayed that their enthusiasm was not a defense mechanism against having to think about the world in which we live.

After the service, I approached a Black man, finally baptized as a senior citizen, after some parish had refused him baptism as an infant. As it turned out, his mother looked White, so she got into the church, but when his color was seen, he was refused. I introduced myself as a former Josephite and remarked both how glad I was to see the Monsignor put his arm around him before the Faithful at the liturgy and proclaim him a brother. I said that that was nice, but that there was still plenty of racism.

The Monsignor had proclaimed at the service that this baptism late in life made up for the wrong originally committed. In that context, the Black man observed that the hurt could never be overcome completely. When the Black female with the man insisted that the Monsignor insisted that the parish was open to everyone, I then told of the Monsignor celebrating the annual anniversary of the dead, losing Confederate General, Robert E. Lee with Mass for the People of the South.

The spirit of the Easter occasion is reflected in the Responsorial antiphon for today; "Let all the earth cry out to God with joy" (Psalm 66:1). Another translation of the same verse, also used at Mass, "Shout joyfully to God, all the earth." Where is the truth in all of this? To be sought.

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<sup>3</sup> The Josephites and Leadership Development in the African-American Catholic Community Matthew O'Rourke, S.S.J., ed., (n.p.: n.p., n.d. (purchased 2005)) 344 pages.

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Acts 8:5-17 tells of the conversion of a Samaritan city. Samaritans were the people who thought God was to be worshipped in Mount Gerizim rather than Mount Zion. Jesus was so biased against the Samaritan woman that he refused to do her a favor, saying it was inappropriate to give food for the children of God to dogs. The Samaritan woman then successfully begged for scraps from the table.

The reading is about the Spirit of Truth resting upon the Samaritans, but I doubt the Faithful will hear much preaching about racial prejudice as an element gleaned from this reading. This reading includes miracles that went with preaching in the primitive Church.<sup>4</sup> What the scholars at the Omohundro Institute are about is discovering how to look for the Spirit of Truth among people with little or no interest sustaining whatever holds politics may have on truth. In the United States, the Black experience still is the touchstone of that truth.

Psalm 66 proclaims the wondrous deeds of God who “changed the sea into dry land” (Psalm 66:6). The reference is to the Exodus out of Egypt which also leads to the exodus out of politics determining truth through studying what those out of power regard as true. In this way, Jesus is the light of the world, “Say to God, ‘How tremendous are your deeds!’” (Psalm 66:3).

1 Peter 3:15 admonishes the Faithful to “sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts,” as if this is something the Faithful can do unconcerned about the Spirit of Truth. The same verse gets closer to the Spirit of Truth, when it proclaims, “always be ready to give an explanation to anyone ...” The next verse covers unrequited self-righteousness, with the admonition, “but do it with gentleness and reverence.”

John 14:21 proclaims that Jesus will “... reveal myself to him.” In the original Greek, the word for *reveal* means *to manifest, intimate plainly*. The Greek word phonetically sounds like *emphasis*. The manifestation of God to the Faithful finds emphasis through the imprint of the soul of Jesus upon the souls of the Faithful. 1 Peter 3:18 is an original apostolic proclamation of salvation through Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup>

These readings are about finding the Spirit of Truth in the midst of ignorance, ignorance including but not limited to racism. Acts focuses on the Judaic outcast Samaritans. Psalm 66 is about not only an Exodus from Egypt, but also an exodus

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<sup>4</sup> For a list of such miracles see Gregory E. Sterling, “Jesus as Exorcist: An Analysis of Matthew 17:14-20; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43a,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No 1 (January 2005) 487, footnote 87.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

from ignorance. 1 Peter is about encouragement for seeking an explanation for the hope that is in the Faithful. John concludes the readings with its focus on the Spirit of Truth as the antidote for a spirit of ignorance.

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Scriptural references to the Lectionary follow. Since the main purpose of these Notes is annotating the scriptural references in the index at [www.western-civilization.com](http://www.western-civilization.com), references pertinent, but not fitting the flow imposed above, are included below.

I do not assume that the reader is following the readings cited either in the Lectionary or in the Bible. Like the footnotes, the citations are for reference purposes for anyone interested. The large, bold letters facilitate locating exactly what the Lectionary presents for these Notes.

## **Acts 8:5-8, 14-17**

Verse 5

<u>Lectionary</u> (1998):	the city of Samaria
<u>The Vulgate</u> (circa 410):	in civitatem Samariae
<u>Douay-Rheims</u> (1582-1610):	the city of Samaria
<u>King James</u> (1611):	the city of Samaria
<u>Jerusalem</u> (1966):	a Samaritan town
<u>New American</u> (1970):	(the) city of Samaria
<u>New Jerusalem</u> (1985):	a Samaritan town

Dennis Hamm, S.J. seems to translate the phrase as a city.<sup>6</sup> New Jerusalem offers a footnote explanation for a city. Following the Spirit of Truth is no easy matter.

Verse 16

<u>Lectionary</u> (1998):	fallen
<u>The Vulgate</u> (circa 410):	venerat
<u>Douay-Rheims</u> (1582-1610):	come upon
<u>King James</u> (1611):	fallen
<u>Jerusalem</u> (1966):	come down
<u>New American</u> (1970):	fallen
<u>New Jerusalem</u> (1985):	come down

*Venerat* carries the notion of *come*. I am not getting into the Greek here. Three of the other translations carry the notion of *come*.

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<sup>6</sup> Dennis Hamm, S.J., "What the Samaritan Leper Sees: The Narrative Christology of Luke 17:11-19," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 56, No. 2 (April 1994) 281.

## **Psalm 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20 (1)**

E:\Microsoft Office\Word\Letters\OLMC\Bible Study1 2004\Bible Study040704\_Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time\_102C.doc also treats this reading.

## **1 Peter 3:15-18**

## **John 14:23**

## **John 14:15-21**

In 1983, Douglas K. Clark identified the Book of Glory as John 13—20[21].<sup>7</sup> In 2003, Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B. identified the Book of Glory as John 13:1—20:31 and as different from Raymond E. Brown, S.S. John 13:1—17:26.<sup>8</sup> I leave for another occasion any attempt to understand the differences.

For more on sources see the Appendix file.

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<sup>7</sup> Douglas K. Clark, "Signs in Wisdom and John," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 45, No. 2 (April 1983) 205 and 205.

<sup>8</sup> Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., "Raymond Brown's New Introduction to the Gospel of John: A Presentation—And Some Questions," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 1 (January 2003) 11, 12.