

## Commentary

Pope Benedict XVI, as Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, knew better than anyone else did, how John Paul II may be called the Father of the Sexual Abuse Cover-up. With that as the truth, how can it be honest for Benedict XVI to place John Paul II on the fast track to canonization? The integrity of Benedict XVI is quite beyond me. My prayer is that both Pope Benedict XVI and I heed the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of truth is what drives modern society. Because of political repercussions, the Spirit of truth is contentious. Contentiousness is something to overcome, but not with a pay-pray-and-obey religiosity. With a continuing search for truth to settle disputes, the Church can correct judgmental errors of the past.

In another venue, the Magisterium is currently ordering its priests and the rest of the Faithful to change the words they use at the Liturgy of the Eucharist, formerly the Canon of the Mass. Before giving such an order, why not authorize social scientists to examine unintended effects on the Faithful, particularly priests? Why not charge philologists and academic linguists to become involved? The reason appears as lack of courage in Faith in the Holy Spirit expressed as simple self-righteous arrogance.

These ruminations all too frequently comment on Vatican culture. Part of Vatican culture is to take in, but otherwise pretentiously ignore, what is said, especially about the Vatican. The manner is a carry-over from the Renaissance nobility of the late Middle Ages. For those at the Vatican, who may be reading these Notes on the internet, a little democratic American counter-cultural reflection in contrast to regal Vatican culture seems appropriate,

One way the United States of America explores unintended effects on policy is by dialogue in the Congress of the United States, by executive power held accountable by the press in the Presidency; and by judgments made in the Supreme Court by jurists immune from attacks by either the President or the Congress. When the Supreme Court rules that either or both the President and the Congress are wrong; that ruling stands and the nation abides by the judgment.

Without such measures of accountability, American bishops often miss the impact of Vatican politics on truth. The realization of the American Dream constitutes truth determining politics, especially when that resolves into a preference for the poor and those who, otherwise, have no other opportunities in life. An example of this is the victims of the sexual abuse cover-up.

Combined with courage, the spirit of honesty equates with the Spirit of truth, so that the Holy Spirit dominates. That ultimate expectation and hope, in turn, is the cause for joy and happiness, despite whatever else happens. As the Responsorial Antiphon puts it, *Let all the earth cry out to God with joy*, because the Faithful recognize that, through grace, Christ rises in their souls.

## Readings

First Reading:	Acts 8:5-8, 14-17
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 66:1-7, 16, 20 (1)
Second Reading:	1 Peter 3:15-18
Alleluia:	John 14:23
Gospel:	John 14:15-21

---

---

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

Acts 8:4-25

Scott Shauf, "Locating the Eunuch: Characterization and Narrative Context in Acts 8:26-40"<sup>1</sup>

Philip introduced Christianity to the Samaritans. This was nothing special, though Peter and John left Jerusalem as a follow-up to the Samaritan conversion. In contrast, extending Christianity from the House of Israel to the Gentiles was special. Here Philip led the way, as he headed down the road toward Gaza.

Acts 8:4-25

Mary Ann Beavis, review of Graham H. Twelftree, Exploring Luke's View of the Church<sup>2</sup>

Twelftree argues that Acts 8:4-25 is one of six mini-Pentecosts. Further, Twelftree argues that the purpose of Sacred Scripture is not to predict the future, but to explain the past. Beavis surmises that Twelftree has something to offer concerning the early Church; but that Twelftree goes on to imply "that the pursuit of social justice is peripheral to the scriptural mandate." That implication is not convincing.

---

<sup>1</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 4 (October 2009) 766.

<sup>2</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 73 No. 1 (January 2011) 176.

Acts 8:4-13

F. Scott Spencer, review of Richard A. Burrige, Imitating Jesus: An Inclusive Approach to New Testament Ethics<sup>3</sup>

Spencer reports that for Burrige, “In Acts, imitation of Jesus’ mission becomes evident everywhere (including outreach to Samaritans in 8:4-13 ...” Spencer goes on to explain, that “a critical factor in ending apartheid [in South Africa] was an ethic of *imitation* (of Jesus) and *inclusion* (of the marginalized),” among Christians.

## **Psalm 66:1-7, 16, 20 (1)**

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

1 Peter 3:15

Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, Priests for the Third Millennium: The Year for Priests<sup>4</sup>

Dolan quotes 1 Peter 3:15 to his seminarians in Rome, “Always be prepared to make a defense to any one [*sic*] who calls you to account for the *hope* that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15; emphasis added).” The Faithful will hear the same verse from the Sunday Lectionary as, “Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope ...” Dolan uses *prepared* for *ready*; *defense* for *explanation*; *account* for *a reason*. The use of *defense* for *explanation* helps account for needless defensiveness in Catholic Church circles.

On the more positive side, Dolan is encouraging his seminarians and faculty to think. What Dolan means, however, is thinking within the boxes set up by the Magisterium. By definition, however, thinking within pre-defined parameters is not thinking, except in a limited sense.

Real thinking, guided by the Holy Spirit of Love and Compassion, is a cause for hope even in these depressing times when the teaching Magisterium is about to canonize Pope John Paul II, the Father of the Sexual-abuse Cover-up. Hope in the context of that forthcoming canonization does require an explanation, without overt defensiveness. My hope rests with Faith in my soul that the Holy Spirit will work things out for the glory of the Father. It never seems to occur to Dolan that there is a need to examine and reexamine how he and his ilk may be the very cause for lack of hope among the Faithful in his Church.

My problem with Dolan goes beyond what he wrote to whom he represents. Dolan, the elected leader of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, does not seem to go in the direction of the option for the poor recommended by Gustavo Gutiérrez immediately below. The concern of Dolan, rather is, “I hear that from young

---

<sup>3</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71 No. 1 (January 2009) 159.

<sup>4</sup> Huntington, IN 46750: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 2000, 38.

Personal Notes  
Sixth Sunday of Easter, 55A, May 29, 2011  
© 2017  
Raymond J. Jirran, Ph.D.

priests a lot—`My pastor never tells me I'm doing a good job.'"<sup>5</sup> Were the Church more outward than inward looking, as is the case in the option for the poor, the Faithful might have more reason for hope. There is a continuing need to link honesty with truth, with more concern for the poor than self-gratification.

1 Pet 3:15

Gustavo Gutiérrez (tr. Robert Lassalle-Klein with James Nickoloff and Susan Sullivan), "The Option for the Poor Arises from Faith in Christ"<sup>6</sup>

The option for the poor is the reason for hope that Gutiérrez proclaims. The hope of the poor is in Christ. The option for the poor requires forgetting oneself.

1 Pet 3:18-22

John H. Elliott, review of Joel B. Green, 1 Peter<sup>7</sup>

Elliott has little use for Green, writing, for example, "Nor can I find any reference in 1 Pet 3:18-22 to Christ's `conquering of Death and Hades,' which G. claims to see (p. 213.)"

1 Pet 3:18-20

Jeremy Holmes, review of Joel B. Green, Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible<sup>8</sup>

Holmes does not think much of Green, either. Holmes writes, "Since modern science itself developed within a Cartesian worldview, one [namely Green] who uses it to escape the Cartesian viewpoint may find it to be a Trojan horse." In the spirit of Descartes ("I think, therefore, I am"), Green argues that humans are wholly material, without immaterial souls.

---

<sup>5</sup> Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, Priests for the Third Millennium: The Year for Priests (Huntington, IN 46750: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 2000) 35.

<sup>6</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 2009) 326.

<sup>7</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 4 (April 2008) 832.

<sup>8</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 4 (October 2010) 827.

1 Pet 3:18-20

Michael L. Cook, .S.J., "The African Experience of Jesus"<sup>9</sup>

Cook argues that African ancestor worship becomes more vibrant in a Christian context. In a Christian context, the deceased are not only powerful, but are also alive and living. Jesus brings a new hope and expectation for the future.

## **John 14:23**

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

John 14:16-47

Bettye Collier-Thomas, Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850-1979<sup>10</sup>

Both Rosa A. Horn (1880-1976) and Pauli Murray (1910-1985) preached on John 14:16-17. Horn titled her sermon, "What is Holiness? A Complete Life in Christ." Horne, a Pentecostal, emphasized sanctification.

Murray titled her sermon, "The Gift of the Holy Spirit." Murray was an ordained priest in the Protestant Episcopal Church. Murray preached:

In retrospect, I think the Holy Spirit was very much in evidence on that day in August 1963 when 240,000 people of all colors, ages and religions came together in Washington for a common ennobling purpose, marched to the Lincoln Memorial and heard the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., among others, burst into what was essentially a Spirit-filled utterance—I have a Dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough place will be made plain [sic] and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."

Murray offers the following translation for John 14:16-17. "And I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you."

Her translation uses *pray* where the Lectionary uses *ask*; *Counselor* for *Advocate*; *forever* for *always*; *receive* for *accept*; *remains* for *dwells*; along with some other minor differences. The terms, together, seem to bring out the original Greek meaning. The Lectionary is less stiff and formal than Murray. Murray delivered "The Gift of the Holy Spirit" in 1977, twenty years before the 1998 Lectionary copyright. My

---

<sup>9</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 3 (September 2009) 685.

<sup>10</sup> San Francisco, CA 94103-1741: A Wiley Imprint: 1998, 189, 253-254.

Personal Notes  
Sixth Sunday of Easter, 55A, May 29, 2011  
© 2017  
Raymond J. Jirran, Ph.D.

point is to accept both translations, with an understanding that the Lectionary clarified the stilted language of Murray.

John 14:17

Clint Tibbs, "The Spirit (World) and the (Holy) Spirits among the Earliest Christians: 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 as a Test Case"<sup>11</sup>

Tibbs argues that the earliest Christians believed in a world of spirits, such as the *Spirit of truth*, mentioned in John 14:17. *Spirit* in the original Greek is not capitalized. This means that the English does not exactly follow the original Greek words. This does not mean that I am arguing with the translation. I do not want to get overly self-righteous over which English text is accepted.

John 14:17

Tobias Hägerland, "The Power of Prophecy: A Septuagintal Echo in John 20:19-23"<sup>12</sup>

Hägerland argues that the *Spirit of truth* is the Spirit of prophecy. My take is that, since the truth is everlasting, truth is basic to all forecasting, thus, to all prophecy.

John 14:18-24

Andreas J. Köstenberger, review of Hans-Ulrich Weidemann, Der Tod Jesu in Johannevangelium: Die erste Abschiedsrede als Schlusstext für den Passions- und Osterbericht<sup>13</sup>

Köstenberger reports that Weidemann argues that John transforms the visible return of Jesus at Easter into a promise for the coming of the Holy Spirit and God the Father, to those with Faith. Köstenberger regards Weidemann as offering a beginning to a dialogue about the visible return of Jesus, but not as a definitive statement.

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

### Themes

For recurring themes in Sacred Scripture, see the following. The exclamation point (!) indicates where a principal reference list of passages related by a common theme or expression is found. The abbreviation for *following* is f. With this material, I am trying to

---

<sup>11</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 2 (April 2008) 321.

<sup>12</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 1 (January 2009) 96.

<sup>13</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 1 (April 2010) 168.

Personal Notes  
Sixth Sunday of Easter, 55A, May 29, 2011  
© 2017  
Raymond J. Jirran, Ph.D.

lay a foundation for developing Biblical themes the next time through the Cycles, when I intend to add in which Lectionary readings the relevant passages are found.

Sacred Scripture develops themes for the following readings in Acts 8:5-8, 14-17:

Verse 5      Acts 6:5! 1:8, 17:3, 18:5, 28.  
Verse 6      Acts 10 f., 16:14; Hebrews 2:1; Mark 16:17.  
Verse 7      Acts 5:16; Luke 6:18; Mark 1:26 parallel, 5:7 parallel, 9:33; Luke 5:18, 24.  
Verse 8  
Verse 14     Acts 11:1, 22, 8:1! 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 1:6, 2:13; James 1:21.  
Verse 15     Acts 3:1! 17:19, 2:38, 10:47, 19:2-7.  
Verse 16     Acts 2:38!  
Verse 17     Acts 6:1!

Sacred Scripture develops themes for the following readings in 1 Peter 3:15-18:

Verse 15     1 Corinthians 9:3; Luke 16:2! Colossians 4:6; 1 Peter 1:3.  
Verse 16     Acts 23:1! 1Peter 2:12.  
Verse 17     1 Peter 2:20!  
Verse 18     1 Peter 2:21-24; Hebrews 9:26! 28! Galatians 1:4; Acts 3:14! Ephesians 3:12! 1 Peter 4:1; John 6:63; 1 Corinthians 15:44. Verses 17 and 18 are written in the format of a hymn. There is considerable difficulty, which I cannot decipher, with the Greek manuscripts at the words *suffered for sins once*.

Sacred Scripture develops themes for the following readings in John 14:15-21:

Verse 15     John 21:23, 15:10; 1 John 2:5, 5:3; Wisdom 6:18.  
Verse 16     John 26:15, 26, 16:7, 7:39; 1 John 2:1; Luke 24:49. The Greek manuscripts are difficult at the words *to be with you always*.  
Verse 17     John 15:26, 16:13; 1 John 4:6, 5:6; 1 Corinthians 2:11, 14.  
Verse 18     John 14:3, 20:19, 26.  
Verse 19     John 7:33!  
Verse 20     John 16:23! 10:38! 6:56!  
Verse 21     John 14:15! (Why I am not finding verse 15 referring to this verse 21, escapes me.) John 14:23, 16:27, 17:23.

Anyone wanting a copy of these Personal Notes, please contact me at [jirran@verizon.net](mailto:jirran@verizon.net)