

Personal Notes

Sixth Sunday of Easter A Catholic Bible Study Reading 055A, May 25, 2014

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Background for these Sunday readings helps understanding love. Ordinarily The Faithful think of love either as wishing to benefit oneself or something or someone outside of oneself. A different way to think of love is wishing to benefit a relationship with another.¹ This sounds like sixth grade girls saying they are in love with the latest rock star. Love is much more complicated, as the documentation in the footnote attests and as is assumed, perhaps wrongly, here in Personal Notes.

If love develops through dialogue, as the wedding ceremony says, “for better and for worse,” then, maintaining the relationship constitutes love. In this way, love need not be returned, at least not immediately. In our relationship with God, as we go through the ravages of old age, the thought that a hundred million years is not much in astronomical terms, balances suffering in this life with the promise of eternal life, later.

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

Musings above the solid line draw from material below. Those uninterested in scholarly and tangential details should stop reading here. If they do, however, they may miss some interesting details.

Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

Acts 8:1-6, 17-24, 5-40, 9-25

Jeff Cavins, Tim Gray, and Sarah Christmyer, The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation²

¹ Edward Collins Vacek, S.J., “Discernment Within a Mutual Love Relationship with God: A New Theological Foundation,” Theological Studies, Vol. 74, No. 3 (September 2013) 697, 707.

² West Chester, Pennsylvania: Ascension Press, 2004, 2011, Session 22, page 155, 3.

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With an eye to Opus Dei pay-pray-and-obey influence, Personal Notes observes that Cavins writes, *The apostles sent representatives . . .* although that is not what is in Acts. Philip went, without “being sent.” Acts 8:14, about sending Peter and John to Samaria is after the fact. The Samaritans had already *accepted the word of God*. Evangelization is about sharing a relationship, rather than taking orders.

Acts 8:4-25

Christopher R. Matthews, review of Patrick Fabien, Philippe “l’évangéliste” au tournant de la mission dans les Actes des apôtres: Philippe, Simon le magicien et l’eunuque éthiopien³

Fabien devotes seven chapters to Acts 8:4-25. Fabien pays attention to the relationship between Philip and the Twelve and Stephen; Peter and John. He notes where Philip travelled. The study is academically sound.

Acts 8:4-8, 14-25⁴

Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536), “Paraphrase of Acts 8:4-8”

Erasmus was Roman Catholic. Erasmus used *Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed . . .* to argue that Philip went from being a Deacon to being an apostle.

Peter Walpot [sic] (d. 1578), “The Great Article Book: On the Sword”

Walpot argues that the death penalty belongs to the state and excommunication to the church and that the two are incompatible with one another, “they go opposite ways and never meet.” Walpot seems to deny it to be licit for the church to hand over anyone to the state for punishment, e.g. burning John Hus at the stake.

John Calvin (1509-1564), “Commentary on Acts 8:24”

Calvin argues that the safest course is having nothing to do with uncertain opinions. Would that the Teaching Magisterium followed such a course concerning pelvic matters.

³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 74, No. 1 (January 2012) 151.

⁴ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament VI: Acts, Esther Chung-Kim and Todd R. Hains (eds.), general editor, Timothy George, associate General editor, Scott M. Manetsch, (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic: An imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2014) 106, 109-112. Acts includes so many individuals, that Personal Notes only cites those most impressive.

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Acts 8:5-40

Martin C. Albl, review of Simon David Buttica, L'identité de l'église dans les Acts des Apôtres: De la restauration d'Israël à la conquête universelle⁵

The overall thrust of this study is misleading. Tension between centralization and decentralization does not characterize the early Church. This is a lightly revised doctoral dissertation that makes some good exegetical points.

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

Psalm 66:4

Erik M. Heen, review of James P. Ware, Paul and the Mission of the Church: Philippians in Ancient Jewish Context⁶

Psalm 66:4, *Let all on earth worship . . .*, is part of the evidence Ware uses to argue that Jews at the time of Jesus welcomed but did not seek converts.

1 Peter 3:15-18

1 Pet 3:15

Richard Lennan, "Hope and the Church: A Trilogy: The Church as a Sacrament of Hope"⁷

From 1 Peter 3:15, *a reason for your hope*, Lennan argues that hope is fundamental to the mission of the Church. Lennan argues that metaphors help place the Church in the unfathomable mystery of God and in the very real fathomable misery of much of historical reality. Lennan never gets around to the difference between presenting the history of scandal as Church history and presenting the history of grace as Church history.

1 Pet 3:17-18

Benjamin J. Lappenga, "Zealots for Good Works': The Polemical Repercussions of the Word $\zeta\eta\lambda\omega\tau\eta\varsigma$ in Titus 2:14"⁸

1 Peter 3:17-18 is not as concerned about doing good works as Titus. 1 Peter is more concerned about suffering for doing good works, *it is better to suffer for doing good*.

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 4 (October 2013) 790.

⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 2 (April 2013) 383.

⁷ Theological Studies, Vol. 72, No. 2 (June 2011) 248.

⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 4 (October 2013) 709.

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1 Peter 3:18-22

David G. Horrell, review of Daniel Keating, First and Second Peter, Jude⁹
Horrell disagrees with Keating that 1 Peter is about Christians finding their identity in suffering. Horrell argues 1 Peter is about tolerating suffering for a greater good.

1 Pet 3:18

J. Harold Ellens, review of John J. Pilch, Flights of the Soul: Visions, Heavenly Journeys, and Peak Experiences in the Biblical World¹⁰

While Pilch brings modern science to bear on paranormal and mystical experiences, he fails to do so in a useful and convincing manner.

1 Peter 3:15-16¹¹

Thomas Cartwright (1535-1606), "Commentary on Colossians 4:5"

Alluding to 1 Peter 3:16, *That, when you are maligned, those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame*, Cartwright urges the Faithful to stay clear of anything close to scandalous behavior.

1 Peter 3:15

Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, Priests for the Third Millennium: The Year for Priests¹²

Just as Lennan, above, never got around to the difference between presenting the history of scandal as Church history and presenting the history of grace as Church history, neither does Dolan. Dolan does say, however, that hope ought to be bolstered by reason.

⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 4 (October 2013) 803.

¹⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 2 (April 2013) 371.

¹¹ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament XI: Philipians, Colossians, Graham Tomlin (ed.) in collaboration with Gregory B. Graybill, general editor, Timothy George, associate General editor, Scott M. Manetsch, (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic: An imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2013) 229, 241.

¹² Huntington, IN 46750: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 2000, 38.

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1 Peter 3:16

John Calvin, "Commentaries on Daniel"¹³

Calvin uses a *conscience clear* as a basis for integrity, for being willing to accept the outcomes of whatever integrity demands.

1 Peter 3:18

Maurice A. Robinson, "Rule 9, Isolated Variants, and the 'Test-Tube' Nature of the NA²⁷/UBS⁴ Text: A Byzantine-Priority Perspective"¹⁴

Robinson demonstrates that *suffered for sins* has no support in the Greek manuscripts.

1 Peter 3:18

Philip W. Comfort, New Testament Text and Translation Commentary: Commentary on the variant readings of the ancient New Testament manuscripts and how they relate to the major English translations¹⁵

Comfort seems to indicate a plethora of manuscripts, where Robinson indicates none. Nestle-Aland²⁷ may be indicating support from papyrus manuscripts. I probably need help understanding what is meant.

John 14:23

John 14:15-21

John 14:15-31

Mary Collins and Edward Foley, "Mystagogy: Discerning the Mystery of Faith"¹⁶

Collins and Foley utilize the *Spirit of Truth* joined with the gathered assembly to guide the Faithful.

¹³ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament XII: Ezekiel, Daniel, (ed.) Carl L. Beckwith (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2012) 312.

¹⁴ in Translating the New Testament: Text, Translation, Theology, Stanley E. Porter and Mark J. Boda (eds.) (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009) 40.

¹⁵ Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2008, 746-747.

¹⁶ in A Commentary on the Order of Mass of The Roman Missal: A New English Translation: Developed under the Auspices of the Catholic Academy of Liturgy, Edward Foley (ed.) (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011) 77.

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John 14:16-17

Fr. Yozefu – B. Ssemakula, The Healing of Families: How To Pray Effectively for Those Stubborn Personal and Familial Problems¹⁷

Ssemakula advocates calling in the Holy Spirit to fill the void left by driving out evil and Satan.

John 14:14-18¹⁸

John 14:15

The First Helvetic Confession (1536)

The First Helvetic Confession attempted to draw Lutheran and Reformed communions together, but Luther would not. Thirty years later, in 1566, Reformed churches in Scotland Hungary, France, and Poland accepted the Second Helvetic Confession as their standard. “Our salvation [*keep my commandments*] is from God, but from ourselves there is nothing but sin and damnation.”

John 14:16-18

Bohemian Confession of 1535

I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you, “namely through this Spirit of truth.”

John 14:18

Pilgrim Marpeck (c. 1495-1556), “A Clear and Useful Instruction”

I will not leave you orphans, means that Christ is with the Faithful. Marpeck is calling for a balance between excessive and inadequate ceremonies.

John 14:16, 18

Richard Rohr, Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life¹⁹

The phrase, *I will not leave you orphans* probably accounts for why the Faithful have considered the Holy Spirit feminine. The Faithful, therefore, have a feminine *Advocate*.

¹⁷ [no publisher or place of publication is listed] www.healingoffamilies.com, 2012, 336.

¹⁸ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament XI: Philippians, Colossians, Graham Tomlin (ed.) in collaboration with Gregory B. Graybill, general editor, Timothy George, associate General editor, Scott M. Manetsch, (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic: An imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2013) 185, 199, 216.

¹⁹ San Francisco: Jossey-Bass: A Wiley Imprint, 2011, 91, 92.

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For more on sources see the Appendix file. A complete set of Personal Notes, dating from the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, July 14, 2002 to the present, is on the web site at www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes.

The Responsorial Antiphon for this Sunday is *Let all the earth cry out to God with joy* (Psalm 66:1).²⁰

In the gobbledygook prayer at Sunday Mass immediately following the forgiveness of sins, the Faithful hearing the 2011 Roman Missal can listen for “always hold”.²¹

This is a call for grace that some Black Baptists bring to mind with *and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like [sic], namely this, Thou [sic] shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these* (Matthew 12:30-31).²² Maintaining a relationship with God is like maintaining a relationship with neighbors.

²⁰ 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 the Saints (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1988) 418. Personal Notes refers to this book as the Lectionary.

²¹ n.a., The Roman Missal: Renewed by Decree of the Most Holy Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI and Revised at the Direction of Pope John Paul II: English Translation According to the Third Typical Edition: For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America: Approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See (Washington, DC, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011) 425. Personal Notes refers to this book as the Missal.

²² UMI Annual Sunday School Lesson Commentary: Precepts for Living @: 2013-2014: International Sunday School Lessons: Volume 165: UMI (Urban Ministries, Inc.), a. Okechuku Ogbonnaya, Ph.D., (ed.) (Chicago, IL 60643: UMI (Urban Ministries, Inc.), 2013) 431-432.