

Readings

First Reading:	Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm:	Psalm 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9 (4a)
Second Reading	1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Alleluia	Mark 1:15
Gospel:	Mark 1:14-20

Commentary

This is the story of Jonah, angry with God for not destroying Nineveh, as Jonah had prophesied. God did not destroy Nineveh because the people repented and God relented. If God is perfect, then how can God relent? I do not know the answer to that, except if God is going to deal with humans, God must deal in a human way. When I was in the seminary, I asked the philosophy professor if God, who is pure act, had potency. The professor responded that because potency is a positive good, somehow, God must have potency, but he did not understand how, either.

Which gets us to this business of God's Natural Law, which the hierarchy promotes. What if the hierarchy is wrong about biological laws, in a manner similar to the way in which the hierarchy was wrong about physical laws in the case of Galileo? The hierarchy, like the rest of the Faithful, need to leave room for repentance. If God can repent, so can the rest of us.

That the prophet Jonah is scandalized, because God repents, does not stop God from repenting. That some of the Faithful clergy might be scandalized because the hierarchy repents, should not stop the hierarchy from repenting, either. I am not setting my authority over the authority of the clergy; but am suggesting that we all have made errors and need to leave room for repentance.

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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 scholarly details.

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Jonah 3:10

“God ... repented.”

Jonah 3:4

Michael W. Duggan, review of Alviero Niccacci, OFM, and Roberto Tadiello, OFM CAPP, Il libro di Giona: Analisi del testo ebraico e del racconto¹
Duggan comments,

This study makes a fine contribution to fields of research on the book of Jonah and narrative analysis. The authors consistently encourage a close reading of the text. They resist attempts to tamper with the present order of the MT e.g., transposing 4:5 to follow 3:4).

Jonah 3:4

Paul Lawrence, The IVP Atlas of Bible History²

Nineveh, which I expected to find on the Mediterranean coast, is on the Tigris River, at a latitude north of Damascus and approximately the same as Cyprus.

Jonah 3:10

Zev Garber, review of T. A. Perry, The Honeymoon Is Over: Jonah's Argument with God³

Perry argues that the love of God embraces a broad universalism, contrary to what Jonah expected. The power of repentance is demonstrated by deed. The people of Nineveh repented and so did God. Garber describes The Honeymoon is Over as “an erudite and pedantic narrative.”

Psalm 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9 (4a)

Psalm 25:4a

“Teach me your ways, O Lord.”

See below.

¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 1 (July 2007) 127.

² Downers Grove, Illinois, *InterVarsity Press*, 2006 105.

³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (July 2007) 558.

The Codex Sinaiticus manuscript⁴

While the Hebrew may be an acrostic poem, beginning each line with the next letter of the alphabet, the Greek is not.

In the Lectio, verse 5 is incomplete, though the documentation indicates a complete verse. The same sloppy scholarship appears in Reading 23B, the First Sunday of Lent and Reading 136A, the Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time. Where this verse is used in Reading 3C, the First Sunday of Advent, the verse, documented the same way, is complete. If the hierarchy is not credible documenting the verses in the Lectio, it cannot expect credibility for an encyclical like either the 1930 or 2008 *Casti Connubii*.

The Codex Sinaiticus seems to present apparatus indicating omission of *the sins of my youth and my frailties remember not*, which does appear in Reading 136A, the Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, but not here. The Bishops seem to have no idea whether that explains the difference.

The Codex Sinaiticus offers an English translation, which I am not examining.

In working my way through the Codex Sinaiticus, I am impressed with the use of *the way*, which term the early Christians used to express their new religion.

Psalm 25

Anthony R. Ceresko, O.S.F.S., "Endings and Beginnings: Alphabetic Thinking and the Shaping of Psalms 106 and 150"⁵

Ceresko points out that Psalm 25 goes through the Hebrew alphabet, that is, the Masoretic text (MT).

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

1 Corinthians 7:31

"For the world in its present form is passing away."

1 Cor 7:29-31

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.⁶

The Egyptian Museum in Cairo has a papyrus manuscript with these verses dating from the Third Century.

⁴ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=26&chapter=24&inputControl=420&lid=en&side=r&zoomSlider=0> 081214.

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 1 (July 2006) 33, 34.

⁶ Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989.

1 Cor 7:29-31

K. K. (Khiok-khng) Yeo, review of S. Sobanaraj, Diversity in Paul's Eschatology: Paul's View on the Parousia and Bodily Resurrection⁷

Sobanaraj identifies 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 as one of the major biblical pericopes in the writings of Paul. Yeo thinks Sobanaraj leaves something to be desired. Yeo writes, "The hermeneutical studies in this [final] chapter would be strengthened if Sobanaraj were to see the modern meaning of the biblical texts not as 'relevance' or application but as the scriptural extension of Paul's eschatology throughout history and today." Too many sermons are about relevance and application, rather than the theology involved, for example the theology of repentance.

1 Cor 7:29-31

André Ménard, O.F.M. Cap., "The Spirituality of Transitus in the Writings of St. Bonaventure"⁸

Ménard uses *this world as we know it is passing away* to argue for a complete abandonment that I see turned into a passive "pay, pray, and obey" mentality; as distinct from an active demand mentality. While *demand* seems too strong, *demand* is what it took to get the civil rights movement away from dead center.

1 Cor 7:31

Charles H. Cosgrove, "Did Paul Value Ethnicity?"⁹

While Cosgrove seems correct, I do not like his implications in support of ethnocentrism and racism. Cosgrove explains,

Most important, to the extent that this modern way of valuing diversity is utopian (a projection of an ultimate ideal), it clashes with Paul's own utopian vision, the ultimate eschatological future, when all this-worldly diversity will come to an end in the full realization of the new creation (Gal 3:28; 6:15; 1 Cor 7:31 [used here]).

Mark 1:15

Mark 1:15

"... Repent and believe in the Gospel"

This alleluia verse emphasizes the appropriateness of repentance.

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 2 (July 2008) 394.

⁸ Greyfriars Review, Vol. 18, No. 1 (2004) 32.

⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 2 (July 2006) 290.

Mark 1:14-20

Mark 1:15

“... Repent and believe in the gospel.”

I do not understand why the Alleluia verse quotes Mark to capitalize *Gospel*, but the Second Reading of Mark does not. It looks like one more instance of questionable scholarship.

Mark 1:14

There is a difficulty with the first word in verse 14. The Codex Sinaiticus and the eclectic Greek both have Μετα δε, but the Codex Sinaiticus does not use a capital letter.

Mark 1:16

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.¹⁰

The Alands use Mark 1:16 about *the brother of Simon* to demonstrate an insignificant, harmless copying error for the further purpose of demonstrating that resolving inconsistencies among manuscripts does not necessarily relate to any political correctness of the time.

Mark 1:1-15

Alicia Batten, review of Jean Delorme, Parole et récit évangéliques: Études sur l'évangile de Marc¹¹

Delorme argues that *repent and believe* reflects “the orientation of the Gospel as a whole.” We might watch for this theme throughout this liturgical cycle of readings. The problem is remembering to do it.

Mark 1:1-15

Elliott C. Maloney, O.S.B., review of Salvador Villota Herrero, Palabras sin ocaso: Función interpretiva de Mc 13,28-37 en el discurso escatológica de Marcos¹²

Villota Herrero argues that *heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away* is the center of the Gospel of Mark. Maloney agrees.

¹⁰ Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989 293, 294.

¹¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 4 (July 2007) 820.

¹² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 1 (July 2008) 175.

Mark 1:15

Dino Dozzi, "'Thus Says the Lord' The Gospel in the Writings of Saint Francis"¹³
Dozzi argues that "faith and penance is a form of hendiadys [the expression of an idea by two nouns connected by *and* instead of by a noun and an adjective] that harks back to, and expresses, the single-minded response called for by Jesus, 'Repent (*poenitemini*), and believe in the gospel" (Mk 1:15)."

Mark 1:16-20

Deirdre Good, review of Halvor Moxnes, Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom¹⁴

Moxnes identifies Mark 1:16-20 as a key text related to conflicts within households "from the very earliest parts of the Jesus tradition (p. 17)." Good explains,

Yet Jesus placed himself outside traditional household structures. Consequently, according to Moxnes, he had no recognition or honor in his household or village. Accusations that he was a eunuch, a drunkard, and a glutton fit this picture. Jesus' identification of God as the father of a new household within a community of brothers creates a new household in place of ones he and his followers left.

Mark 1:16-20

Mary Ann Beavis, review of Ira Brent Driggers, Following God through Mark: Theological Tension in the Second Gospel¹⁵

Mark 1:16-20 [used here] is the second of five sections into which Driggers divided Mark. Driggers is relating God to discipleship. Beavis concludes her review, "Like the Gospel, this work is open-ended in that it demands further action on the part of its audience."

Mark 1:19

Émile Puech, review of Jean-Marie Van Cangh and Alphonse Toumpsin, L'Evangile de Mark: Un original hébreu?¹⁶

Van Cangh and Toumpsin argue that Mark translated Hebrew into Greek. Puech shows that it is more likely that Mark translated from Aramaic, because, among other things, Hebrew was not spoken at the time of Jesus. Hebrew then was like Latin now; no longer spoken.

¹³ Greyfriars Review, Vol. 18, Supplement (2004) 98.

¹⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 1 (July 2006) 156.

¹⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 597.

¹⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 557.