

Personal Notes
060212 Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time 77B
© 2014
Raymond J. Jirran

The theme for this Sunday is participation in the Communion of Saints. The following topics are included. Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46, which explains the context for the leper who asked Jesus for a miracle. Leviticus explains the social role of lepers at the time of Jesus. Psalm 32:1-2, 5, 11 explains how God, through the High Priest, who ultimately is Jesus, comes to the aid of those in distress.

1 Corinthians 10:31—11:1, the main concentration for this theme, is about modeling the Christian life through the Saints, beginning with Saint Paul. This section digs into the Greek for a fuller exploration of the meaning of the original text. This section also digs into the theology of both the modeling role and the intercessory role of the Saints. This section on Corinthians is also about scandal. Finally, Mark 1:40-45 illustrates the theme through an example from the life of Jesus, whereby Jesus cures the leper. How Mark relates Jesus to those in the Communion of Saints who are excluded from the power structures of life is also developed a little.

The Communion of Saints is all of the Faithful, both living and dead, including Jesus. The first reading from Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46, sets up the miracle Jesus works healing the leper.¹ The leper invokes Jesus to intercede for a miracle that Jesus does. The Communion of Saints is also about interceding with the Saints who model how to live.

Psalm 32 is about the High Priest, ultimately Jesus, taking unto himself the sins of the people. For the Faithful, Jesus modeled how to do that in the Christian dispensation. By eating the flesh of the sacrifice, the ancient Jewish High Priest became one with the sacrifice and, then, cleansed the sacrifice because of his own being.² Through the Eucharist, the Faithful do much the same with Jesus.

Psalm 32:5 mentions cleansing faults, without distinguishing between voluntary and involuntary faults, within the Communion of Saints. Involuntary faults arise out of the unconscious either to become voluntary sins or turn into virtue. That is what Psalm 32:5 means by confessing sins so that the admission can take away guilt.³

1 Corinthians 10:31-11:11 is about modeling Jesus. Sacred Scripture does not say whether Jesus ever had an occasion to eat meat sacrificed to idols. The problem is

¹ 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) 282.

² Margaret Barker, The Great high Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy (London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003) 48-49.

³ Margaret Barker, The Great high Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy (London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003) 48-49.

Personal Notes
060212 Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time 77B
© 2014
Raymond J. Jirran

that Saint Paul sometimes does and at other times does not eat meat sacrificed to idols. The Corinthians are accusing him of duplicitous scandal.⁴ Taking advantage of the allegation, the Corinthians feel free not to care what others may think. Paul rejects this approach to life.

The original Greek text of the Epistle causes me a time problem. The side margins of the Greek text call attention to duplicate and parallel passages. There are sixteen references for 1 Corinthians 10:31—11:1. Eight of these references are to other Lectionary readings.⁵ The New Jerusalem Bible only has five such references.⁶ I would like to correlate these Greek readings from now on, as I continue, but do not have the research time. When I finish reading the Greek Epistles in three years, God willing, I will then have the time to develop the correlations to other places in the Lectionary. If someone else (ability to read Greek is not necessary) wants to do the work, I will furnish the Greek text. The first purpose of these Personal Notes is annotating the index to the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, not sharing my musings about either the Greek or the spiritual life.

The critical apparatus for the Greek only has two divergent manuscripts, with apparently insignificant discrepancies. The most interesting Greek is the imperative verb for *be*: whether *blameless*, 1 Corinthians 10:32, or *imitators of Christ*, 1 Corinthians 11:1. The Greek middle imperative tense carries for me the sense of wanting to be blameless or imitators or both.

⁴ Calvin J. Roetzel, review of Frank J. Matera, *II Corinthians: A Commentary in the Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No 4 (October 2004) 661.

⁵ All of the readings for 1 Corinthians 10:31—11:1 are on page 571 of 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 Saints (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1998). Verse 31 refers to page **580**, Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time A, 1 Corinthians 3:17. Verse 32 refers to page **31**, Second Sunday of Advent C, Philippians 1:10. Verse 33 refers to pages **553**, Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time B, 1 Corinthians 9:20-22; **168**, Second Sunday of Lent C; Philippians 3:17; **872**, Philippians 4:9 Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time A; **918**, Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary time A, 1 Thessalonians 1:6; and **790**, 2 Thessalonians 3:7 and 9.

⁶ The NJB references are: 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; 1 Corinthians 1:2a; Romans 15:2; 2 Corinthians 10:24+ and 2 Thessalonians 3:7b. Three of the five NJB references match the five Greek references. Because the NJB does not go into detail about its differences with the Greek, my intention is to stay with the Greek, when I get there.

The key to the verses is intentionality, as Karl Rahner might put it.⁷ Patricia A. Sullivan defines intentionality theologically “as the cognitive, affective, and volitional orientation of the human being to God such that all of our activity, implicitly or explicitly, positively or negatively, responds to Being [God] itself.⁸ If God is to be pleased, so is the Church in the Communion of Saints.

Since Vatican II, prayer to the Saints has become problematic, especially intercessory prayer. This is particularly tricky for me, because I like to pray for miraculous healing through the intercession of Mother Mary Lange. As the founder of the Sisters of Providence, a Black order of Catholic sisters, Mother Mary Lange is a spiritual neighbor who exemplifies the intention of loving God. Serving as a model, she is a source of grace.

Sullivan defines prayer as being “in the presence of God in Christ.”⁹ In another place, she writes, “The value of any prayer is simply that we consciously turn ourselves to God, responding to him by adopting a disposition that allows him to work with us.”¹⁰ Her point is that the Communion of Saints is a communion of neighbors from which modeling and intercession are appropriate. Sullivan feels that Vatican II resulted in ignoring the intercessory value of the Saints in favor of their role modeling of holiness.

1 Corinthians 10:32 is about *fitting in* as to what the people expect and need. The Lectionary uses the word *please*. Saint Jerome also uses the Latin for *please*, *placeo*. The position of Paul with regard to freedom of conscience makes the structure and substance of the criterion of ethics to be the effect of behavior on others, such as the Communion of Saints.¹¹ Pleasing and fitting in is important. To the Corinthian argument that the Church is better off socially by members eating

⁷ Patricia A. Sullivan, “A Reinterpretation of Invocation and Intercession of the Saints,” Theological Studies, Vol. 66, No. 2 (June 2005) 383-387.

⁸ Patricia A. Sullivan, “A Reinterpretation of Invocation and Intercession of the Saints,” Theological Studies, Vol. 66, No. 2 (June 2005) 387.

⁹ Patricia A. Sullivan, “A Reinterpretation of Invocation and Intercession of the Saints,” Theological Studies, Vol. 66, No. 2 (June 2005) 397.

¹⁰ Patricia A. Sullivan, “A Reinterpretation of Invocation and Intercession of the Saints,” Theological Studies, Vol. 66, No. 2 (June 2005) 393.

¹¹ Richard A. Horsley, *Consciousness and Freedom among the Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 8—10*, the Catholic Biblical Quarterly Vol. 40, No. 4 (October 1978) 586.

food offered to idols and worse off by abstaining, Paul replies that they may only eat such sacrificial food at private meals hosted by pagans, as long as they show concern for avoiding scandal.¹²

This concern for avoiding scandal is a source for the current cover-up scandal of the hierarchy. In covering up clerical crimes for fear of scandalizing the Faithful, the hierarchy committed an even greater scandal. Not hesitating to accuse his disciples of such crimes as denying him, Jesus models how to live in the midst of scandal. Karl Olav Sandnes in Belly and Body in the Pauline Epistles carefully treats matters of sexual scandal.¹³

Jeremy Corley cites I Corinthians 10:33 as particularly Pauline. Seven Epistles are indisputably Pauline: Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon. 1 Corinthians, then, is a model of Pauline writing. That being the case, it makes some sense that others should try to write in a similar sense and manner, which scholars are now trying to unscramble.¹⁴ In another, similar case of unscrambling, scholars tend to regard Mark as one of two basic sources for the Gospels. Scholars know the other as "Q," probably a list of sayings. Matthew seems rearrange Mark 10:46-52.¹⁵

In Mark, Jesus shows how to live both free from evil and for God. Jesus is free from the evil of despising lepers and is free to touch and heal them. Jesus demonstrates that God loves everybody.¹⁶ Where Jesus tells the lepers, with a snort, to tell no one, Mark 1:44, he accepts the general command to tell the priests, without contradicting telling no one. Similarly Richard Bauckham argues, the women in

¹² John Fotopoulos, "Arguments Concerning Food Offered to Idols: Corinthian Quotations and Pauline Refutations in a Rhetorical *Partitio* (1 Corinthians 8:1-9)," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 4 (October 2005) 619.

¹³ Jeffrey R. Asher, review of Karl Olav Sandnes, Belly and Body in the Pauline Epistles in the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 3 (July 2003) 480-481.

¹⁴ Jeremy Corley, "The Pauline Authorship of 1 Corinthians 13," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 2 (April 2004) 259-260.

¹⁵ Jack Dean Kingsbury, "Observations on the "Miracle Chapters" of Matthew 8-9," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 4 (October 1978) 560.

¹⁶ Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan, "Let My People Go! Threads of Exodus in African American Narratives," in Yet with a Steady Beat: Contemporary U.S. Afrocentric Biblical Interpretation, Randall C. Bailey, ed., (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003) 125-126.

Personal Notes
060212 Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time 77B
© 2014
Raymond J. Jirran

Mark 16:8 “say nothing to anyone,” all the while they do tell the disciples that Jesus has risen from the dead.¹⁷ Bauckham, thereby, frees Mark of misogyny.

The readings for the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B are about the Communion of Saints as found in the Church. The Church furnishes Saints as models of Christian life. Through her liturgy, the Church herself sometimes invokes the Saints for the graces of life. Saint Paul encourages the modeling effort. Psalm 32 models for the expiation of sin, expiation required for the Christian life. Mark shows the compassion of Jesus for the outcast, whom God loves.

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

¹⁷ Richard Bauckham, Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels (Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) 289.