

Personal Notes

Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Reading 082A, March 2, 2014

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Raymond J. Jirran, Ph.D.

This may be the only Sunday where Personal Notes directly engages racism. Roberto Italo Zanini, Bakhita: From Slave to Saint, catches the meaning of the responsorial antiphon for today, *Rest in God alone, my soul* (Psalm 62:6a). Despite the abusive turmoil both in her slave and migrant circumstances, Saint Bakhita (1869-1947) communicated an inner calm as she told her racial history. Slave traders captured Saint Bakhita about age eight. Viciously branded, she carried the scars hidden under her religious habit. She lived out fifty years as a Sister in the countryside of northern Italy. For this Black Saint, her home was with God, rather than any geographic area. This is an example for the Faithful to follow.

In her own words, Bakhita explains Black tokenism, as she

opened her heart and revealed all the vexation she felt at being in the limelight and how this popularity seemed to be taking a heavy toll on her usual confidence in her dialogue with God and her serenity with others: “No physical suffering, no, but everyone looks at me like a nice beast. I want to work, to pray for everybody, and not to look at people. And they also say, ‘Poor little thing, poor little thing.’ But I am not a poor little thing, because I belong to the *Paròn* [the Lord] and I am in his house. Anyone who is not with the Lord, they are the poor ones.”¹

To be excluded from human companionship, and even looked at like a nice beast, is something to which the Faithful can relate, whatever their racial circumstances.

Readings

First Reading	Isaiah 49:14-15
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 62:2-3, 6-7, 8-9 (6a)
Second Reading:	1 Corinthians 4:1-5
Alleluia:	Hebrews 4:12
Gospel:	Matthew 6:24-34

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.

Isaiah 49:14-15

¹ Roberto Italo Zanini, tr., Andrew Matt, Bakhita: From Slave to Saint (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2013) 109.

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Personal Notes cites members of the Protestant Revolt in the spirit of Gerald O'Collins, S.J., writing,²

In fact, by allowing the liturgy to be celebrated in the vernacular, by stressing “the table of God’s word” along with the importance of the homily (no. 52), and by granting to the laity—although restricted to certain circumstances—communion “under both kinds” (no. 55), Vatican II conceded the demands of Martin Luther and other 16th-century Protestant reformers, albeit in the 20th-century. In short, while SC [Sacrosanctum concilium [sic]] did not use explicitly the language of “reform” or “reformation,” what it enacted can and should be described in those terms.

Isaiah 49:15

Rudolf Gwalther (1519-1586), “Sermons on Galatians”³

Gwalther rhetorically asks, “How could he not take pity on us, when his love for us is far greater than the affection of parents, as Isaiah testifies?” The Lectionary has, *Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you.*

For context, John Calvin lived 1509-1564. Calvin was ten years older than Gwalther.

Psalm 62:2-3, 6-7, 8-9 (6a)

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

1 Cor 4:1-5

F. Gerald Downing, “Justification as Acquittal? A Critical Examination of Judicial Verdicts in Paul’s Literary and Actual Contexts”⁴

Personal Notes, as part of a larger quote, cited the following last Sunday for the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, February 23, 2014. “Procedure in jury trials is relevant as part of the context of our inquiry; however, the only “trial” that concerns Paul involves no jury, but God as sole judge (e.g. 1 Cor 4:1-5).”

² Theological Studies, Vol. 73, No. 4 (December 2012) 772.

³ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament X: Galatians, Ephesians, (ed.) Gerald L. Bray (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2011) 139.

⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 74, No. 2 (August 2012) 315.

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1 Cor 4:1-5

John K. Goodrich, “‘Standard of Faith’ or ‘Measure of a Trusteeship’? A Study in Romans 12:3”⁵

Personal Notes, as part of a larger quote, cited the following last Sunday for the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, February 23, 2014. “. . . loyalty will be met with great reward, but negligence, with great penalty.”

1 Cor 4:1-2

Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, Priests for the Third Millennium: The Year for Priests⁶
In light of the sexual cover-up, Dolan, without any sense of shame, offers the following,

They [the Faithful] look to us to be men of our word, whose promises can be trusted. “People must think of us as Christ’s servants,” as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “stewards **entrusted** with mysteries of God. [The Lectionary has, *Thus should one regard us: as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Now it is of course required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.* The Lectionary does not use the word *entrusted*.] What is expected of stewards is that each one should be found worthy of trust” (1 Corinthians 4:1-2).

1 Cor 4:1 Personal Notes gave up systematically examining the illiterate 2011 Missal November 25, 2012. On April 7, 2013, with Reading 045C 2nd Sunday of Easter_A Catholic Bible Study 130407, Personal Notes systematically began to incorporate material from 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). The hope is that this approach will help pray with the new Missal, despite itself.

1 Cor 4:1

Mary Collins and Edward Foley, “Mystagogy: Discerning the Mystery of Faith”⁷

Collins and Foley argue that *mystery* is the key word. They cite 1 Corinthians 4:1 as one of twenty-eight times in the NT that the word appears, mostly in Paul. The Missal refers to “the mystery of faith.”

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 74, No. 4 (October 2012) 772.

⁶ Huntington, IN 46750: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 2000, 102.

⁷ 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) 88 n 56.

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1 Cor 4:6b

Andrew Gregory, review of Richard I. Pervo, The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity⁸

Gregory reports that

He [Pervo] also identifies some passages as interpolations only because they appear to be in tension with other texts that he accepts (as do other scholars) as authentically Pauline, or because he considers (as do other scholars) it more plausible that they derive from a post-Pauline context (e.g., 1 Thess 2:13/14-16; Rom 6:17b; 1 Cor 4:6b [not used here]).

The Lectionary does not use 1 Cor 4:6b, *so that none of you will be inflated with pride in favor of one person over against another.*

1 Corinthians 4:5

Daniel B. Wallace, With Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes: Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament⁹

Wallace explains,

*Then **the** praise will come to each one from God.* [The Lectionary has, *Then **everyone** will receive praise from God,* without **the**.]

A smoother translation would be, "*then praise will come to **each one** from God,*" [This is still not what the Lectionary has.] but this would miss the point of the article: each individual believer is to receive specific praise. The idea is "each one will receive his or her praise from God."

1 Corinthians 4:6

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 translations¹⁰

Comfort explains,

⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 74, No. 2 (April 2012) 394-395.

⁹ Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 1996, 125, 217 (source of the quote), 433, 480.

¹⁰ Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2008, 491.

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The Greek expression μη υπεωρα γεγραπται (literally, “not to go above (or beyond) the things written”) appears in all extant Greek manuscripts (with some manuscripts reading the singular ο instead of the plural α). NJBmg says that this was “perhaps a gloss deprecating some insertion by a scribe.” Though this is an interesting conjecture, there is no documentation to substantiate it (see Fee 1987, 167-169). The expression, though obscure, means something like “do not live apart from the Scriptures” or “do not deviate from the Scriptures (I quoted above)” (see NLT [New Living Translation]).

Hebrews 4:12

Matthew 6:24-34

Matt 6:28

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 translations¹¹

Comfort explains,

. . . how easy it would be for ου ξαινουσιν (“they do not card”) to become αυξανουσιν (“they grow”) in the copying process—especially since there was no space between letters. If the second variant reflects the original, the statement indicates that there are three things lilies do not do; they do not card (i.e. comb wool), spin, or labor (with no mention of growth per se). This pattern mirrors the triple verbal description about the birds: “they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns” (6:26). (See note on Luke 12:27 concerning a similar variant.)

In that case, the reading would be, *consider how the lilies of the field do not card or spin or labor*. This possibility arises after examining an early manuscript with ultraviolet light to determine what was originally on the parchment.

Matthew 6:24-34

Frank J. Matera, The Sermon on the Mount: The Perfect Measure of the Christian Life¹²

Matera explains,

¹¹ Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2008, 18.

¹² Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2013, viii, 6, 20, 80 (source of the quote), 87, 88, 92, 93, 96.

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If their heavenly Father provides for the birds of the air, he will surely provide for them (Matt 6:25-26). While this ethical interpretation is the one that is most familiar to contemporary believers, the eschatological [ultimate destiny] interpretation should not be overlooked, given the role that the kingdom of God plays in Jesus' prayer and in the sermon.

Matt 6:24

Richard Sibbes (1577-1635), "Comment on Philippians 3:7"¹³

Alluding to Mt 6:24 [used here] and Lk 16:9, 11, 13, the Protestant revolutionary, Sibbes, notes, "An outward, civil and conformable life are, by our too high esteem, stops (hindrances) [sic], staying many from heaven. For while they tell themselves they live honestly, justly, doing no wrong, they suppose themselves to be very saints [sic] and look no further." The Lectionary reads, *No one can serve two masters . . .*

Matt 6:26

Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), "Notes on Paul's Letter to the Colossians 2:8"¹⁴

The Protestant revolutionary, Melanchthon includes Mt 6:26 [*Look at the birds in the sky . . .*] to support writing, "They [the Scriptures] show that God nourishes and preserves us, that he saves some and punishes others; that he has not gone away like the shipwright, but that he rules reality as the helmsman rules the ship."

Matt 6:33

Paul Elbert, "Acts 2:38 in Light of the Syntax of Imperative-Future Passive and Imperative-Present Participle Combinations"¹⁵

Ebert explains,

. . . it is clear that the intent of the promised divine action in the future passive is not automatically simultaneous with the verbal idea in the protasis but rather is in the indefinite

¹³ 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) 76.

¹⁴ 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) 182.

¹⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 1 (January 2013) 102.

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future time of a sovereign God. Similarly, again from Q, ζυτειτε...προστεθησεται υμιν (“seek . . . it will be added to you”) (Luke 12:31 = Matt 6:33 [used here]).

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 *Rest in God alone, my soul* (Psalm 62:6a).¹⁶

In the gobbledygook prayer at Sunday Mass immediately following the Gloria, the Faithful hearing the 2011 Roman Missal can listen for “that your Church may rejoice, untroubled in her devotion.”¹⁷

This is a call for grace that some Black Baptists bring to mind with *And thine house and the kingdom shall be established for ever before thee* (2 Samuel 7:16).¹⁸

¹⁶ 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) 594. Personal Notes refers to this book as the Lectionary.

¹⁷ 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) 468. Personal Notes refers to this book as the Missal.

¹⁸ 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) 308-309.