

Personal Notes
060625 Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time 95B
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Evaluating the new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17) is the purpose behind these Personal Notes. Evaluating the new creation accepts the invitation by Paul, as Hendrikus Boers words it, “to consider (v. 14b) the reasoning that follows in vv. 14c-16 as the foundation for his statement in v. 14a, ‘the love of Christ binds us.’”¹ The criteria for making the evaluation is the love of God as found in a love of truth, truth superseding a love of power and politics. Three topics are considered: the Teaching Magisterium of the Church; social mores; and theology.

The Magisterium has three subtopics: natural law, discernment, and clerical culture. The natural law draws from Saint Thomas Aquinas, discernment from earning a living, and clerical culture from “Deus Caritas Est” of Pope Benedict XVI. Unfortunately, in all three areas, politics is able to trump truth.

Deductive reason forms the basis of the natural law. The new creation takes into account inductive reasoning as a test. This means taking empirical science seriously, especially in matters of human sexuality; an issue causing the Magisterium much pause.

Discernment means prudence when challenging the Magisterium. Challenging one’s employer, one’s ability to earn a living, describes the temerity of such prudence. Such a challenge is not done lightly. Neither is challenging the Magisterium, but when the Magisterium imposes policies such as permitting pedophilia, the Faithful appropriately challenge the policy, as happened in Boston with Cardinal Bernard Law. Clerical culture at present causes nightmares for the clergy and the Faithful.

Finally, the Pope’s concept of love is confused and simplistic at best; wrong at worst. The Pope imposes an obligation upon the Faithful to be in accord with his hierarchy, without any corresponding obligation upon his hierarchy to cooperate with the good work of the Faithful. “The personnel of every Catholic charitable organization want to work with the Church and therefore with the Bishop ...”² What about the Bishop working with charitable organizations? The Pope is deafeningly silent.

Pope Benedict XVI, without realizing that the *Magna Carta* only granted minimalist authority to the king, proclaims that “This hymn [cf. 1 *Cor* 13:3] must be the Magna

¹ Hendrikus Boers, “2 Corinthians 5:4—6:2: A Fragment of Pauline Christology,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3 (July 2002) 545.

² Benedict XVI, “Encyclical Letter: *Deus Caritas Est* of the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Men and Women Religious and All the Lay Faithful on Christian Love,” http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclixals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_2..._1/30/2006 19-20/25.

Carta of all ecclesial service; it sums up all the reflections on love which I have offered through this Encyclical Letter.”³ The Magna Carta, for only one example states, “neither will we attack him [any free man] or send anyone to attack him, except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.”⁴ I only wish that the theologians Benedict attacked, as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, had “lawful judgment of their peers.” Just as the Magna Carta offered humility to the English king, so it might to the Roman Pontiff.

The Pope does not understand the virtue of humility as the only virtue based on truth. The Pope confuses humility with embarrassment, as when he writes, “if my gift is not to prove a source of humiliation ...”⁵ In paragraph 35, Benedict use of the word *humility* four times, has little if anything to do with truth. Benedict writes, “In all humility we will do what we can, and in all humility we will entrust the rest to the Lord.”⁶ Self-proclaimed humility is an oxymoron.

The Pope wrongly regards improving the world as incompatible with loving God.⁷

³ Benedict XVI, “Encyclical Letter: *Deus Caritas Est* of the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Men and Women Religious and All the Lay Faithful on Christian Love,”
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclixals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_2..._1/30/2006 20/25.

⁴ Mortimer Chambers, Barbara Hanawalt, David Herlihy, Theodore K. Rabb, Isser Woloch, and Raymond Grew, *The Western Experience: Seventh Edition* (Boston: McGraw-Hill College, 1999) 302.

⁵ Benedict XVI, “Encyclical Letter: *Deus Caritas Est* of the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Men and Women Religious and All the Lay Faithful on Christian Love,”
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclixals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_2..._1/30/2006 20/25.

⁶ Benedict XVI, “Encyclical Letter: *Deus Caritas Est* of the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Men and Women Religious and All the Lay Faithful on Christian Love,”
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclixals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_2..._1/30/2006 20/25.

⁷ Benedict XVI, “Encyclical Letter: *Deus Caritas Est* of the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Men and Women Religious and All the Lay Faithful on Christian Love,”
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclixals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_2..._1/30/2006 19/25.

With regard to the personnel who carry out the church's charitable activity on the practical level ... they must not be inspired by ideologies aimed at improving the world, but should rather be guided by the faith which works through love (cf. *Gal* 5:6).

I think the Faithful can do both: accept ideologies aimed at improving the world and be guided by the faith that works through love. Ideologies, such as neo-Marxism, that aim at improving the world, also aim at disintegrating the politics of capitalism with the truth of caring. Benedict misses the point that while capitalism works in practice, capitalism is bad in theory; all the while socialism does not work in practice, though it is good in theory. The Pope would do better not pontificating about the relative merits of each, especially when he does not use a sophisticated understanding of either. Accepting the new creation envisioned by Saint Paul would help Benedict XVI become the leader he envisions himself.

The second major topic for the new creation, social mores, points toward racism and sexism. The new creation of 2 Corinthians 5:17 means a new organization of society, more in accord with the principles of Christian love. Saint Paul recognizes a new place for women. Along these same lines of thought, groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People can, in turn, recognize a new place for minorities within the social structure.

The new creation of Paul suits my thoughts about the relationship between truth, politics, race, and feminism. In his essay, "The Bible and Models of Liberation in the African American Experience," Demetrius K. Williams of Tulane University appeals to *new creation*, seven times in three pages.⁸

Theology is the science of the study of God, God as God and God in relation to his creation. The above has been mostly about God in relation to his creation. The focus now changes slightly from the Faithful in relation to creation, to God in relation to creation .

Theology is the last of the three major areas of concern. The theology in the Lectionary begins with the majesty of God as found in the sea. (Job 38:1, 8-11). About the only thing humans know about God is that his ways are not their ways; who he is and what he does are incomprehensible. Many academics, however, like

⁸ Demetrius K. Williams, "The Bible and Models of Liberation in the African American Experience," 33-60 in Yet with a Steady Beat: Contemporary U.S. Afrocentric Biblical Interpretation, Randall C. Bailey, ed., (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003) 43-45.

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Margaret Barker, enjoy focusing on this mystery of Divine majesty. Barker writes, “The archangel Uriel questioned Ezra, just as the LORD had questioned Job (Job 38—41): how could a human understand the ways of God if he could not understand the secrets of the creation?”⁹ This lack of understanding creation, including the violence of the sea, parallels the question in Mark 4:41, “Who is this that even the wind and the sea obey him?”¹⁰ Humans remain mystified when exposed to the power of God. While the Lectionary readings do reveal something about God, they also reveal more about what and who God is not.

Job describes a storm at sea beyond human understanding. In the words of J. J. M. Roberts, “the same cosmogonic creation traditions on which Yahweh’s kingship rests, lie behind the celebration of nondomesticated nature in the speeches of Yahweh in Job (Job 38—40).”¹¹ The Lectionary is making way for the new creation.

Psalm 107 extends the incomprehensibility of the power of God at sea, a power but under the control of God, who loves humanity after all. 2 Corinthians 5:17 invokes the new creation, “So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold new things have come.”

The Lectionary points toward a new creation, when Psalm 107:31 reads, “his wondrous deeds to the children of men.” The Vulgate has “et mirabilia eius in filios hominum.” *Filios* may easily be translated *sons*, rather than *children*. The Dead Sea Scrolls find a poetic repetition of consonants, called palindrome, in Psalm 107:23a.¹² Psalm 107 is lost in wondering admiration at creation as it already exists. Psalm 107:30, *haven* derives from the Hebrew for *harbor*. *Harbortown* is another name for Ugarit¹³ on the mainland, opposite the northwestern tip of Cyprus.¹⁴ Harbortown,

⁹ Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy (London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003) 161.

¹⁰ Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy (London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003) 355, fn. 57.

¹¹ J. J. M. Roberts, “The Enthronement of Yhwh and David: The Abiding Theological Significance of the Kingship Language of the Psalms,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 4 (October 2002) 681-682.

¹² Aelred Cody, O.S.B., “A Palindrome in Isaiah 40:4b: Allowing Restoration of an Original Reading,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No 4 (October 2004) 551, 557.

¹³ Michael L. Barré, S.S., “A Rhetorical-Critical Study of Isaiah 2:12-17,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 4 (October 2003) 529.

then, is a type of new creation. Boers argues that Baptism is included in the new creation asserted by Paul.¹⁵

All in all, Psalm 107:23-31, about the sea, is set opposite verses 17-22, looking northward. The opposition is not between points on the compass, which is not yet invented, but between the heights in the north and the depths in the sea. Verses 4-9 follow the path of the sun beginning in the land of the morning in the east, ending in the land of the evening in the west, with verses 10-16. As John Jarick words it, "Psalm 107 is a robust hymn of thanksgiving, exhorting sundry members of the worshipping community to thank the Lord for his steadfast love."¹⁶ Psalm 107 celebrates divine presence in worship.¹⁷ This is the attitude that I find at daily Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.

In this era of trying to get the translation correct, the Faithful do well to remember that the earliest complete Hebrew Bible dates from 1008 A.D., in Leningrad. Heidi M. Szpek concludes that the Hebrew for Job 38:1, used by the Lectionary, was not influenced by the Septuagint Greek.¹⁸ Again, considering the ancient manuscripts, this time within the context of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Psalm 107 belongs with the genuine Biblical, rather than the pseudo Apocryphal Psalms.¹⁹

Turning from Job and the Psalm to the heart of the matter, 2 Corinthians 5:14-17 presents Christ as the Crucified One in whom God reveals himself to the world, not

¹⁴ *Standard Bible Atlas*, 2nd edition (Cincinnati, Ohio: Standard Publishing, 1997) 4.

¹⁵ Hendrikus Boers, "The Structure and meaning of Romans 6:1-14," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 63, No. 4 (October 2001) 668.

¹⁶ John Jarick, "The Four Corners of Psalm 107," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 59, No. 2 (April 1997) 270.

¹⁷ Joel S. Burnett, "The Question of Divine Absence in Israelite and West Semitic Religion," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 2 (April 2005) 229.

¹⁸ Heidi M. Szpek, "On the Influence of the Septuagint on the Peshitta," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 60, No. 2 (April 1998) 251-252, 258

¹⁹ Patrick W. Skehan+, Eugene Ulrich, Peter W. Flint, *A Scroll Containing "Biblical" and "Apocryphal" Psalms: A Preliminary Edition of 4QPs^f (4Q88)*, the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 60, No. 2 (April 1998) 269.

to condemn, but to save.²⁰ The divine presence is safeguarded by sacrifices.²¹ 2 Corinthians 5 is part of Chapters 1—7, in which Paul argues against “super-apostles” interfering with his presentation.²²

One Greek scholar regards 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 “as among the `theologically most important [verses]’ in 2 Corinthians (and perhaps in all the NT).”²³ The emphasis in these Notes on the “new Creation” of 2 Corinthians 5:17 is, therefore supported. The Lectionary reading is Christological, about the meaning of Christ.²⁴

Hendrikus Boers offers a translation of the Lectionary readings, offered interlineally below:

[Lectionary] The love of Christ **impels** us, once we have come to the conviction
[Boers] Because the love of Christ **binds** us, consider this

[Lectionary] that one died for **all**; therefore **all** have died.
[Boers] that one died for the sake of **all**, therefore **all** have died

[Lectionary] He indeed died for **all**, so that those who live might no longer live for
[Boers] And for the sake of **all**, he died, in order that those who are alive no longer live for

[Lectionary] themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.
[Boers] themselves, but for him who died and was raised for their sakes.

²⁰ Frank J. Matera, “Christ in the Theologies of Paul and John: A Study in the Diverse Unity of new Testament Theology,” Theological Studies, Vol. 67, No. 2 (June 2006) 251, 253.

²¹ Richard Clifford, S.J., and Khaled Anatolios, “Christian Salvation: Biblical and Theological Perspectives,” Theological Studies, Vol. 66, No. 4 (December 2005) 739, 758.

²² Calvin J. Roetzel, review of Frank J. Matera, II Corinthians: A Commentary in the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No 4 (October 2004) 661.

²³ Kevin P. Sullivan, review of Murray J. Harris, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greet Text, the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 4 (October 2005) 713. The quotation is of Sullivan describing Harris.

²⁴ Hendrikus Boers, “2 Corinthians 5:4—6:2: A Fragment of Pauline Christology,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3 (July 2002) 531.

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[Lectionary] Consequently, from now on we regard no one according to the flesh;
[Boers] So that from now on we know no one according to the flesh.

[Lectionary] even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him so no longer
[Boers] we no longer know [him in that way].

[Lectionary] him so no longer. So whoever is in Christ is a **new creation**: the old
[Boers] So that if someone is in Christ, [such a one] is a **new creation**: the old

[Lectionary] things have passed away; behold, new things have come.
[Boers] has passed away; behold the new has arrived.

The difference between **bind** and **impelled** in the first interlinear line turns on the meaning of the pronoun *us*. Boers takes *us* to mean the relationship between Paul and his readers. The Lectionary takes *us* to mean the relationship between Paul and the Corinthians.

Boers finds six levels of Christology in these verses from (1) the fact of the death of Christ to (2) impelling Paul to come to the conviction of (3) the fact that Christ died for **all** to (4) the conviction that, therefore, **all** the Faithful have died in Christ to (5) **all** live for Christ in a “new creation” to (6) regard no one according to the flesh, something particularly pertinent to African Americans. Paul uses *all* three times as he moves from the universal to the particular.²⁵

Mark 4:35-41 returns to the incomprehensibility of the power of God over the sea. This Gospel is used by the Church in pastoral care of the sick.²⁶ Matthew rearranges Mark 35—5:43, without the persistent, antagonistic questioning.²⁷ In one of the few questions in Mark not designed by his enemies, the disciples ask, “Teacher, do you

²⁵ Hendrikus Boers, “2 Corinthians 5:4—6:2: A Fragment of Pauline Christology,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3 (July 2002) 535.

²⁶ The Roman Ritual: Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI: Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum: Approved for use in the dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See: Prepared by International Commission on English in the Liturgy: a Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops’ Conferences (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co. 1983) 307.

²⁷ Jack Dean Kingsbury, “Observations on the ‘Miracle Chapters’ of Matthew 8-9,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 4 (October 1978) 560-561.

not care that we are perishing?” (Mark 4:38)²⁸ Jesus says, to the sea, “Quiet! Be still!” (Mark 4:39)

Jesus wonders about his disciples, “Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?” (Mark 4:40) As Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., words it, “The disciples have had a moment of weakness on the stormy sea...”²⁹ The disciples do not understand,³⁰ saying, “Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?” (Mark 4:41)

In verse 40, terror is due to lack of Faith, but in verse 41 terror is due to Faith and wonderment at the divine identity of Jesus.³¹ According to recent commentators, this fear is like the fear of the woman whose flow of blood was stopped when she surreptitiously touched Jesus.³² A new creation is at hand.

Theology points the way. Job and Psalm 107 point to the magnificence and munificence of God. Paul and Mark point to the impact of God entering history. Comments on the social order of Church and state point to the impact of divine love on every day life, a part of the new creation of Christ.

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

²⁸ Jerome H. Neyrey, S.J., “Questions, *Chreiai*, and Challenges to Honor: The Interface of Rhetoric and Culture in Mark’s Gospel,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 60, No. 4 (October 1998) 671, 680.

²⁹ Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., “Mark 6:6b-30: Mission, the Baptist, and Failure,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 63, No. 4 (October 2001) 660.

³⁰ Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., “Mark 6:6b-30: Mission, the Baptist, and Failure,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 63, No. 4 (October 2001) 662.

³¹ Richard Bauckham, Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels (Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) 290.

³² Richard Bauckham, Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels (Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) 292.