

Bravery and courage to face the unknown is the point of the following Lectionary readings. Wisdom is about the mystery of death; Psalm 30 is about the mystery of the magnificence of God; 2 Corinthians is about the mystery that is Saint Paul; and the Gospel is about the mystery of healing. In the final analysis, life is a mystery, an unknown, requiring bravery and courage to face God.

The reading from the Book of Wisdom makes the philosophical point that God permits, but does not directly cause death, sickness, or the devil. Why evil exists is a mystery. How that evil is translated into English is also something of a mystery. Wisdom 1:14 proclaims, “there is not a destructive drug among them,” the creatures of the world. There are other translations

Wisdom 1:14

<u>Lectionary</u> (1998):	there is not a destructive drug among them
<u>The Vulgate</u> (circa 410):	et non est in illis medicamentum exterminii
<u>Douay-Rheims</u> (1582-1610):	no poison of destruction
<u>King James</u> (1611):	does not include the Book of Wisdom
<u>Jerusalem</u> (1966):	in them no fatal poison
<u>New American</u> (1970):	there is not a destructive drug among them
<u>New Jerusalem</u> (1985):	in them is no fatal poison

A transliteration of the Latin looks like *medicine*. *Drug* strikes me as having too many contemporary implications, unintended in the original manuscript. I like *poison*.

The Lectionary seems afraid of the mysteries of life, when it omits Psalm 30:10 that death separates the deceased not only from the living, but also from God.<sup>1</sup> The point of the Psalm, however, is not to worry, because God is mighty and does all things well. Psalm 30 and 107 are the two Psalms offering declarative praise or thanksgiving.<sup>2</sup>

Saint Paul was a mystic and trying to figure out his writings is a mystery in itself. Mystery or not, Bible study requires examining Paul. Paul writes, “Whoever had much did not have more, and whoever had little did not have less,” whatever that may mean. Crotchety Saint Paul is trying to get the Corinthians to let go and accept the fact that “our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9).

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<sup>1</sup> Saul M. Olyan, “*We Are utterly Cut Off*”: of \*\*\* in Ezek 37:11,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 1 (January 2003) 47.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

The reading encourages the Faithful to have courage and be brave in the mysteries of poverty. There is no mystery about being poor. Poverty is real, overlarge, and all encompassing. Very, very fearful. The mystery is how God chose poverty for himself in the spirit of 2 Corinthians.

The Gospel is about two people brought low by sickness and death. Mark 5:21-43 is in a difficult style, sandwiching the story of the hemorrhaging woman inside the story of Jairus. Scott G. Brown uses *intercalating* rather than *sandwiching*.<sup>3</sup> Who was Jairus? Again, there are different translations.

Mark 5:22, 35, 36

Lectionary (1998):

synagogue officials...synagogue  
official's...synagogue official

The Vulgate (circa 410):

archisynagogis...archisynagogo...archisynagogo

Douay-Rheims (1582-1610):

rulers of the synagogue...ruler of the  
synagogue's...ruler of the synagogue

King James (1611):

rulers of the synagogue...ruler of the  
synagogue's...ruler of the synagogue

Jerusalem (1966):

synagogue officials...synagogue official...the  
official

New American (1970):

synagogue officials...synagogue  
official's...synagogue official

New Jerusalem (1985):

president of the synagogue...president of the  
synagogue

Because of the democratic implications, I like the thought that Jairus was the president of the synagogue. For lack of time, later, but not now, I may look at the original Greek. This is the first time I am contemplating the Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time in Cycle B. I have already done Cycles A and C for the Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The mystery is why Jesus should pay attention to either the marginalized hemorrhaging woman or the affluent synagogue official.<sup>4</sup> The further mystery is why Jesus should "give strict orders that on one should know this" (Mark 43). God likes to show off his power, so why does Jesus want to keep it a secret?

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<sup>3</sup> Scott G. Brown, "Mark 11:1—12:12: A Triple Intercalation?" the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 2002) 78.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Bauckham, Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels (Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) 116.

Richard Bauckham considers whether Luke has more regard for women, than the other evangelists do. This story of the hemorrhaging woman is one of those Bauckham counts to demonstrate that Mark has more stories about women than Luke does.<sup>5</sup> The meaning of the exercise counting stories is that Jesus cared about marginalized people, such as women.

Scholars focus on two other mysteries: first, of what was the woman afraid; second, why does the Gospel of Mark show the bad side of Peter. Males tend to think that the woman may have been afraid of God. That, however, seems unlikely, because the woman would have been healed and no longer afraid of dying. It seems more likely that she was afraid of having offended Jesus.

Bauckham wonders whether to evaluate the fear of the woman positively or negatively. Bauckham is not sure whether the woman had a legitimate reason to fear.<sup>6</sup> Jesus reacts by putting the woman at ease, admiring her faith (Mark 5:42-34).<sup>7</sup> This mystery I leave as a mystery.

E. Best wonders whether Mark may have had it in for Peter. Best, therefore, carefully examines the Gospel and concludes that Mark was counteracting negativity already present from, perhaps, the disciples of Paul or James of Jerusalem, or, even of Peter berating himself. Mark 5:37 is the only place in Mark, where Mark has not added the names James and John to what was originally simply Peter. The addition elsewhere was probably to soften the impact of naming Peter.<sup>8</sup>

Mark 5:37, where Peter, James, and John witness raising the twelve-year-old girl from the dead, satisfies the requirement of the Torah (Deut 19:15) for two or three

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<sup>5</sup> Richard Bauckham, Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels (Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) 191.

<sup>6</sup> 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, 292.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "The Poor Widow in Mark and Her Poor Rich Readers," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 53, No. 4 (October 1991) 599.

<sup>8</sup> E. Best, "Peter in the Gospel According to Mark," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 4 (October 1978) 557-558.

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witnesses.<sup>9</sup> When the Synoptic Gospels name the trio, they always name Peter first, as here.<sup>10</sup> In his Gospel, Matthew mysteriously feels free to rearrange what Mark wrote.<sup>11</sup> The net result is a multi-faceted spectrum of the mystery of the love of God. Facing the mystery with Faith develops the courage needed to keep the Faith.

In the Gospel of Mark, the question is not only who Jesus is, but also who have the disciples become by knowing Jesus. Healing is plainly part of the ministry of Jesus in which the disciples take part.<sup>12</sup> By knowing and accepting Jesus, the Faithful, each in their own way, become other Christs.

Healing is more important for relationships than for physical health. In this way, the Newport News branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has a Christian role to play in society. Out of the overflow of the Christian love of God, comes good works in society.

The readings for this Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time show courage in the face of sickness and death, all within the political mystery of who gets what. The Faithful know that even such possessions as good health have no merit outside the love of God.

What I already folded into the Catholic Biblical Quarterly index at the time I wrote, three years ago, is now repeating. Basically, this means that only new material, entered in the last three years, needs incorporation. This may also mean that anyone interested in material older than three years needs to go to the older version. More importantly, new versions may be significantly shorter.

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

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<sup>9</sup> Richard Bauckham, Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels (Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) 299.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Bauckham, Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels (Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) 301.

<sup>11</sup> Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Observations on the "Miracle Chapters" of Matthew 8-9*, the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 4 (October 1978) 560.

<sup>12</sup> 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) 655, 662.