

## Readings

First Reading:	1 Kings 19:16b, 19-21
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 16: 1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11 (cf. 5a)
Second Reading:	Galatians 5:1, 13-18
Alleluia:	1 Samuel 3:9; John 6:68c
Gospel:	Luke 9:51-62

## Commentary

The Catholic hierarchy is using its self-assured knowledge of the natural law, as related to abortion and birth control, to attack Catholic legislators, especially with the Health Care Reform bill. As the scandal of abuse and cover-up by Popes Benedict XVI and John Paul II grows deeper, their credibility and the leadership of their hierarchy shrinks accordingly. Day after day science disputes what a previous generation thought was natural law.

I am most amazed at the astronomers on the Science Channel overthrowing the very laws of physics. If anything is “natural” it is those laws. For example, light does not always travel in a straight line. Sometimes light bends around an obstacle. Only those with perfect knowledge can assert that only they know natural law perfectly—and only God is perfect. Natural law has become an oxymoron, especially in areas of human sexuality.

Nancy Pelosi, other Catholics legislators, and the good Sisters who supported the Health Care Reform bill have demonstrated that the version the hierarchy in the United States uses about when human life begins (and, therefore ends), is not convincing. In the spirit of historians and moral theologians, Nancy Pelosi pointed out that Bishops only began thinking along their present lines toward the end of the Nineteenth Century. Her complaining bishop has not been heard from, since. I see the abortion problem as a distraction from the sexual cover-up problem.

This commentary is written Sunday, April 18, 2010. I almost did not go to Mass at the parish, because I knew: 1) my friend, the newly elected Virginia State Delegate, Robin Abbott, would be present and that His Grace, the local ordinary, was going to have proclaimed, among other things, “... it is critical for us, as constituents and taxpayers, to let our state leaders know we do not want to be forced to pay for life-ending practices and providers.” I was afraid that my fellow parishioners might attack Delegate Abbott after Mass, something I did not want to condone by my presence.

As it turned out, what I have been writing in these Personal Notes for some time turned out to be true. President Obama and the Catholics in Congress have rendered the United States hierarchy, including our local ordinary, politically impotent, at least at the national level. The Faithful at Our Lady of Mount Carmel parish left State Delegate Abbott alone, immediately after Mass at least. I know, because I followed her into the parking lot to give her our marked copy of Charles Curran, The Moral Theology of Pope John Paul II and a printout of <http://ncronline.org/news/politics/ri-hospital-latest-victim-health-care-flap>.

On April 22, Virginia Catholic bishops congratulated themselves on the elimination of “the vast majority of Virginia’s publicly subsidized abortions (that is, those done under a general health rationale ...”<sup>1</sup> In congratulating themselves and those associated with their political foray, the Bishops showed no compassion for the results. What our prayers this Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time are about is love, not only for the unborn, but also for those forced into life, unwanted, unloved, and subject to abuse. There can be a hell-on-earth-life that is worse than death.

The readings for this Sunday work as follows. The first reading, from 1 Kings, draws a parallel between the new dispensation of Jesus and the law as found with the prophet Elijah. Psalm 16 is about extending the acceptance of the resurrection of the Faithful to the time of David. Galatians is all about what it means to be free from *under the law*. In the Gospel, Jesus seeks disciples, not from those observing the natural law, but from those willing to leave everything to follow him. It may be that the Faithful have learned to accept their own sense of prudence when confronted with the nonsense of the hierarchy relative to the direction toward a preference for the poor in which President Obama is leading the country.

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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 details.

#### **1 Kings 19:16b. 19-21**

1 Kings 19:16

John C. Poirier, “Jesus as an Elijianic Figure in Luke 4:16-30”<sup>2</sup>

In the First Testament, Kings and Priests were anointed; prophets were not. *Christ* means *anointed*. Scholars debate whether Elijah was anointed; whether Elijah was anointed or not, Elijah did anoint Elisha, who took his place.

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<sup>1</sup> Email from Jeff Caruso ([office@vacatholic.org](mailto:office@vacatholic.org)), “Victory Alert: General Assembly approves amendment to limit abortion funding!” April 22, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 2 (April 2009) 354.

## **Psalm 16: 1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11 (cf. 5a)**

Psalm 16:10

Jerome Kodell, O.S.B., Kevin J. Madigan and Jon D. Levenson, Resurrection: The Power of God for Christians and Jews<sup>3</sup>

Kodell reports that Madigan and Levenson make a case of belief in the resurrection. *You will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.* A reevaluation of when belief in the resurrection began is in order.

## **Galatians 5:1, 13-18**

Gal 5:1-5

Robert C. Tannehill, review of Richard I. Pervo, Dating Acts: Between the Evangelists and the Apologists<sup>4</sup>

Pervo uses connections in the language of Galatians and Acts to argue that Acts was written after Galatians, around 110. Pervo is interesting, but not entirely convincing.

Gal 5:1-2

Teresa Okure, S.H.C.J., "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (Jn 4:1-42) in Africa"<sup>5</sup>

Okure uses, *for freedom Christ set us free* to argue that Christ came to liberate people from the law, whether to worship at Jerusalem or elsewhere. Okure argues,

This worship, neither in Jerusalem nor on the Gerizim mountain, transcends race, class, and gender (Gal 3:28). Receiving this message, the woman is freed from the sociocultural shackles that bind her (see Gal 5:1-2 [used here]) and is able to lead her own townspeople to the same freedom.

Gal 5:1

Pauline Nigh Hogan, review of John Riches, Galatians through the Centuries<sup>6</sup>

Riches limits himself to commentaries on Galatians. He would have profited from also considering how Galatians fits in a wider scope of literature. Finally, Hogan reports, "R.'s conclusion that 'Galatians' influence is carried predominantly through the written and preached word' (p. 2) is clearly debatable."

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<sup>3</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 1 (April 2009) 184.

<sup>4</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 4 (April 2007) 827.

<sup>5</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 2009) 410.

<sup>6</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 2 (April 2009) 420.

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Gal 5:1

Christl M. Maier, "Psalm 87 as a Reappraisal of the Zion Tradition and Its Reception in Galatians 4:26"<sup>7</sup>

The Exodus from Egypt is about freedom from slavery; just as the exodus from this life to the next offers deliverance from other types of slavery. Maier argues, "Paul's concept of justification is founded on the Christ-event, mediated through baptism (Gal 3:26-28), and it is a [sic] concept of freedom, especially freedom from the Jewish law (Gal 5:1)." Jewish law, the Ten Commandments, is a version of natural law.

Gal 5:13

Dino Dozzi, "'Thus Says the Lord' The Gospel in the Writings of Saint Francis"<sup>8</sup>  
Saint Francis insists that brotherly love outweigh the juridical aspects of administering his community. In a footnote, Dozzi argues, "that the culmination of freedom is to willingly become slaves of one another."

Gal 5:13

Bernard O. Ukwuegbu, "Paraenesis, Identity-defining Norms, or Both? Galatians 5:13—6:10 in the Light of Social Identity Theory"<sup>9</sup>

Ukwuegbu argues that people construct laws for the purpose of self-determination. Ukwuegbu insists, "Paul is not telling them [the Galatians] to allow themselves to be exploited or oppressed as mere slaves." Ukwuegbu points out that "it would have sounded strange to them to claim that loving behavior replaces the need to obey the law." From this, it follows that the Bishops of the United States going to the Vatican to learn how to advance up the ecclesiastical bureaucratic ladder are not following the same set of customs required to advance the whole culture of the United States of America. Such lack of coordination is found in their miserable cover-up of sexual abuse. Raymond Arroyo and Robert Bennett seemed to argue along the same lines in the episode recorded Friday, April 16.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (April 2007) 482.

<sup>8</sup> Greyfriars Review, Vol. 18, Supplement (2004) 61.

<sup>9</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (April 2008) 538 ff. The quotations are from pages 543 and 547.

<sup>10</sup> Raymond Arroyo, Friday, April 15 and the Encore Presentations on ETWN, "The World Over," Saturday, April 16, Sunday, April 17, 2010. I do not own the technology required to record this program, and accept the risk associated therewith.

Gal 5:18

Joel Marcus, "*Under the Law*": "The Background of a Pauline Expression"<sup>11</sup>

*Under the law* is a Pauline expression, used frequently in Galatians and nowhere else in the New Testament, except relatively sparingly in other Pauline epistles.

## 1John 6:68c

## Luke 9:51-62

Different languages perceive reality differently. The ancient Greeks used pronouns for emphasis. Translating this emphasis from the original Greek into English is an object of the highlighting on the last page of the hard copy, not found on the web site. The purpose of the highlighting is to transfer the Greek emphasis on personal pronouns into the English translation. Pronouns highlighted in blue have greater emphasis than in English, but are not as intense as the words marked in red. Anyone wanting a copy of the highlighted verses, please ask me at [Jirran@verizon.net](mailto:Jirran@verizon.net). Thank you.

Luke 9:52-56

Paul Lawrence, [The IVP Atlas of Bible History](#)<sup>12</sup>

Lawrence explains,

Having removed the Israelites to Assyria and beyond, the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharvaim and settled them in the town of Samaria to replace the Israelites. Since Sargon II did not subdue Babylon and its near neighbor Cuthah until 709 B.C., the reference seems to be to the succeeding years rather than the immediate aftermath. Not all the places can be securely identified, but Hamath was on the Orontes River in Syria. Avva and Sepharvaim may be in its general vicinity.

It is clear that these new arrivals continued in their idolatry. Some were attacked by lions. This prompted the intervention of the Assyrian king, who sent back one of the priests taken captive from Samaria to teach the people what the god of the land required. The writer of Kings acknowledged that thereafter the people did worship the Lord, but they also serve their own gods. Their descendants emerged as a group that the Jews of Jerusalem were to regard with an undying animosity—the Samaritans.

Luke 9:51-56

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<sup>11</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 63, No. 1 (April 2001) 72.

<sup>12</sup> Downers Grove, Illinois, *InterVarsity Press*, 2006, 89.

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F. Scott Spencer, review of Richard A. Burrige, Imitating Jesus: An Inclusive Approach to New Testament Ethics<sup>13</sup>

In extending himself to the Samaritans, Luke shows Jesus extending himself to everyone.

Luke 9:51-56

Andrew E. Arterbury, "Breaking the Betrothal Bonds: Hospitality in John 4"<sup>14</sup>  
Arterbury argues,

Of course, the Samaritans had a reputation for being an inhospitable people. For instance, in Luke 51-56, the Samaritans do not receive ... the traveling Jesus. In addition, Josephus claims that in 52 C.E., near the Samaritan village of Ginea, the Samaritans killed many of the Galilean pilgrims traveling through their land ..."

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>13</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 1 (April 2009) 159.

<sup>14</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 1 (April 2010) 76.