

Readings

First Reading:	Ezekiel 2:2-5
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 123:1-2. 2. 3-4 (2c d)
Second Reading	2 Corinthians 12:7-10
Alleluia	cf. Luke 4:18
Gospel:	Mark 6:1-6

Commentary

Prayer for this Sunday draws from the abandonment required to accept and search for truth as part of the challenges of Faith. This is the year of Saint Paul. For Paul, Faith developed from first attacking the followers of Jesus, then joining the group, now known as Christians, and finally being sent away from Jerusalem as an Apostle to the Gentiles.

In the first reading, Ezekiel must face up to truths that his cultural institutions will not accept. God assures Ezekiel that eventually people will admit that Ezekiel is a prophet. Because of God, Ezekiel will be heard and even listened to.

Psalm 123 is about pleading for mercy, for being part of the deaf institutions not listening to the prophets, such as Ezekiel. In the United States, such deafness transfers against Black Catholics. Black Catholics are like Ezekiel, proclaiming the truth that all people are equal in the sight of God, even though unequal in human experience.

My soul burns when I hear pundits proclaim that Catholics in the United States yearned to be part of institutional life. Black Americans, including Black Catholics, had no part of that yearning, when it came to accepting institutional racism. There is plenty of reason for joining the Psalmist begging God for mercy for not listening. The cross for Black Catholics rests in accepting racism, when they know better, and are forced to keep their Faith to themselves.

2 Colossians glories in weaknesses. For the faithful in the United States, such weaknesses readily include racism. Racism is something God has been overcoming with truth over the course of my eighty year lifetime. Faith in God has enabled people to both make and take advantage of equitable opportunities not otherwise available.

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus, again, proclaims amazement at the lack of Faith in his disciples. Before, Jesus was commenting on the situation in the stormy waters, as he slept in the stern of the boat. This time, Jesus comments on the unwillingness of people to accept the fact that the miracles he works are not the function of a human carpenter, but of the Great Carpenter, God. Such Faith can be frightening. Jesus wants the Faithful to believe that he can bring about better times.

=====

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 scholarly details.

Ezekiel 2:2-5

Psalm 123:1-2. 2. 3-4 (2c d)

Codex Sinaiticus¹

The continuing point of the exercise reaching into the original manuscripts is to accept some doubt and the resulting search for truth as part of Christian life. The Church chose Sacred Scripture from many competing original manuscripts. Development of the words of Sacred Scripture is an historical reality. These Notes try to include this reality as an act of humility against the self-righteousness pride required to lead a Christian life and the unacceptable non-academic dictates which cause interior conflicts within Christianity and the Catholic Church.

Where the Lectionary uses the word *pity* three times in verses 2-3, the Codex uses a different word in verse 2. When the new Lectionary comes out, we may become more interested in tracking down such discrepancies.

Psalm 123:2

Stephen L. Cook, review of Roger Tomes, "I Have Written to the King, My Lord": Secular Analogies for the Psalms²

Cook relates that Tomes does well comparing the Psalms to contemporary letters. Cook, however, faults Tomes for not explaining that the Israelites expected far more from their God than did the writers of other contemporary writers. As Cook words his objection, the Psalms "... are prayers to a mysterious and wondrous entity—a being wholly other than any earthly analogue ..."

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

2 Cor 2:9

The eclectic Greek and the Lectionary both have *my* [Paul's] *weaknesses* in verse 9, but the word *my* is difficult, being omitted in important original Greek manuscripts.

¹ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=26&chapter=119&inputControl=420&lid=en&side=r&zoomSlider=0#> 090301. Psalm 123 in the Lectionary is Psalm 122 in the Codex.

² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 531.

Personal Notes
090705 Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, 101B
© 2015
Raymond J. Jirran

2 Cor 12:9

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults³

The Bishops use this verse, about weakness, in Chapter 24, “Life in Christ—Part Two.” The Bishops write, “We should always take heart from the words our Lord spoke to St. Paul: ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness’ (2: Cor 12:9).” We hope such blarney in sicknesses like pedophilia, is not the essence of the sexual cover-up scandal. The careful listener may note that both the Lectionary and Catechism agree with the same translation in this instance.

2 Cor —10-13

Daniel W. Ulrich, “The Missional Audience of the Gospel of Matthew”⁴

Ulrich argues that 2 Corinthians 12 is part of a broader treatment Paul is making for the Gentiles. Ulrich observes, “The tradition of hospitality within Pauline churches was so strong that they welcomed missionaries who sharply criticized Paul and preached ‘a different gospel’...” The conflict was over how much Jewish observance to carry over into Christianity, e.g. circumcision.

2 Cor 11—12

David L. Balch, review of Dieter Georgi, The City in the Valley: Biblical Interpretation and Urban Theology⁵

Georgi argues that Paul is trying to dampen the competitiveness required for urban living.

2 Cor 12:1-7

Mayer I. Gruber, review of Philip Alexander, Mystical Texts (Companion to the Qumran Scrolls 7; Library of Second Temple Studies 61; London/New York: Clark, 2006)⁶

Alexander argues that Christians have difficulty accepting Jewish mysticism. Alexander thinks that Jewish mysticism has a place in Christian aesthetical thinking. As Gruber words it,

To scholars, clergy, students, and educated laypersons who search everywhere for ideas, meanings, and experiences beyond the scandals reported in the media, A.’s book will be a veritable

³ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006, 330.

⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 1 (January 2007) 80.

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 1 (January 2007) 146.

⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (July 2007) 539-540.

inspiration. Until now the DSS [Dead Sea Scrolls] aroused attention partly because the delay in publishing the fragments from cave 4, which had to be put together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, was perceived as a scandal or conspiracy. A.'s new book demonstrates that the texts themselves are far more compelling than the real or alleged scandal. With A. as our guide, these texts can indeed lift us into the realm of God and the angels.

2 Cor 12:9d-10

Patricia M. McDonald, review of Hendrikus Boers, Christ in the Letters of Paul: In Place of a Christology⁷

Boers argues that Paul is resolving his doubts as he goes along and is not developing what today is known as Christology.

2 Cor 12:9

Dino Dozzi, "'Thus Says the Lord' The Gospel in the Writings of Saint Francis"⁸
In his First Rule, Francis wants his followers to engage the urban competitive world with only the truth, without any of the other accoutrements of power.

2 Cor 12:10

Thomas D. Stegman, S.J., "Ἐπιστευσά, διό ελαλήσα (2 Corinthians 4:13): Paul's Christological Reading of Psalm 115:1a LXX"⁹

Stegman argues that Paul engaged in both passive suffering imposed by others and active suffering that he imposed on himself in order to spread the Gospel. Stegman cites chapter and verse in support of his argument.

2 Cor 12:10

Richard J. Dillon, review of Tor Vegge, Paulua und das antike Schulwesen: Schule und Bildung des Paulus¹⁰

Vegge tries to reconstruct the formal education of Paul. Dillon does not like Vegge, because Vegge ignores facts that do not suit his theory.

cf. Luke 4:18

Mark 6:1-6

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 1 (January 2008) 140.

⁸ Greyfriars Review, Vol. 18, Supplement (2004) 74.

⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 4 (October 2007) 727.

¹⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 626.

Personal Notes
090705 Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, 101B
© 2015
Raymond J. Jirran

Mark 6:6

Mark 6:6 is one more example of sloppy scholarship in the Lectionary. The Lectionary only uses Mark 6:6a, which it references as Mark 6:6, without qualification, without the “a.”

There is a difficulty with the Greek. The tense for *amazed* may be either imperfect active indicative or aorist active indicative. There is no aorist tense in English. Aorist means that the act is completed, finished, over with—signified by –ed in English. Imperfect means that the act is ongoing, incomplete—signified by -ing in English. The Lectionary and the eclectic Greek are in agreement. The Codex uses the alternative tense. The Codex omits the final letter, as it often does. The gobbledygook remains unresolved.

Mark 6:4

John C. Poirier, “Jesus as an Elijanic Figure in Luke 4:16-30”¹¹
Poirier writes,

Of course, the saying in Luke 4:24 (‘no prophet is acceptable in his own country’) probably comes from Mark 6:4, but it does not perfectly fit its Lucan context, as Luke has just told us in the preceding verse that the people of Nazareth implicitly *accept* Jesus by asking him to heal his hometown folk. It is as if Luke in 4:24 gives an unconscious nod to Marks’s version, but fills out his account with a tradition that leads in a somewhat different direction.

This passage illustrates that an open mind is the first requirement, when dealing with doubtful matters

Mark 6:5-6

Paul Lawrence, The IVP Atlas of Bible History¹²

Lawrence shows the geographic relationship between Nazareth, where Jesus grew up, and Capernum, where Jesus lived as an adult.

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

¹¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 2 (April 2009) 351-352.

¹² Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity Press, 2006, 140.