

Personal Notes
040704 Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 102C
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The readings for today reflect the secular rebelliousness of the Fourth of July and the sacred rebelliousness of the International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), a sacred rebelliousness that parallels Saint Jerome's Vulgate translation.¹ The ICEL translated the Lectionary. The issue is inclusive language and patriarchal sexism. God may not be sexist, but the way in which men often view God is sexist. The ICEL translations make explicit that God is not sexist, something only implicit in the Greek and Latin.

With the realization that Christians can themselves interfere with living Christian lives comes a sorrowful frustration. Saint Augustine writes, "There are not a few Christians who seek to hinder us from living as Christians."² I would add that sometimes that includes me against myself. Pope Saint Gregory adds, "it is generally in prayer that we have to suffer the images of our former sins."³ I would say that Saint Gregory is referring to what psychologists call surfacing of the unconscious, including sexism.

Third Isaiah struggles with the return of the Jews to their decimated city, Jerusalem. Like a mother with her child, Isaiah looks toward the future and better times. The ICEL was doing the same, trying to avoid an appearance of sexism.

Psalm 66 begins with the whole earth praising God and ends with individual personal application of this praise to the psalmist. This exemplifies application of religious principles garnered out of past experience into the present. The ICEL worked to do the same over sexism.

Appropriateness for change in translation and thereby in changes toward sexism is in evidence. Psalm 66 in the original Vulgate referred to the Resurrection,⁴ a

¹ See <http://www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/Sep1997/feature2.asp> June 13, 2004.

² Saint Augustine, Bishop and Doctor, *On the Love of God, and the Illumination of the Blind Man*, PL 39, 1539-32 as cited in The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers: Volume One: From the First Sunday of Advent to Quinquagesima, tr. and ed. M. F. Toal, D.D. (P.O. Box 612, Swedesboro, NJ 08085: Preservation Press, 1996) 420.

³ Saint Gregory, *Steadfastness in Prayer, Given to the People in the Basilica of the Blessed Peter the Apostle on Quinquagesima Sunday*, PL 76, 1081-1086 as cited in The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers: Volume One: From the First Sunday of Advent to Quinquagesima, tr. and ed. M. F. Toal, D.D. (P.O. Box 612, Swedesboro, NJ 08085: Preservation Press, 1996) 424.

reference no longer present in the Nova Vulgata. When the psalmist wrote Psalm 66, the word *resurrection* was relatively unknown.⁵ The Christian Fathers of the Church applied the term to Jesus. New applications of old principles are legitimate ways to face sexism.

Interestingly, the expansion of the love of God from the Jewish people to all humanity arose out of foreign relations with the Jews, not from religious principles. Galatians simply proclaims that God loves everybody. Paul uses circumcision and the foreskin to make that universal point. The word, *praeputium* in the Latin arises from the Hebrew for *foreskin*, something women do not have, though women can have circumcision. In using *uncircumcision*, ICEL was not so untoward as to use the graphic language used here, in the liturgy.

The Greek does not refer to *peaceful person* as translated by the ICEL in Luke 10:6, but to *son of peace*, or *filiius pacis*. *Son of peace* would mean *peaceful person* in modern English, but without the sexism of the original Greek. The Greek seems to be a translation of the Aramaic phrase, *a man of peace*. The Aramaic is a sign of Mary because she spoke Aramaic. By including Mary, by listening to Mary, Luke is struggling with sexism according to his best lights.

From translating the Aramaic into Greek, Luke then seems to translate Hebrew into Greek because in Hebrew something is said *to return* when it fails in its effect. From the Lectionary: *If a peaceful person lives there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you* (Luke 10:6). Hebrew is the language of the original First Testament. These readings for the Fourteenth Sunday are about sexism and the incorporation of women into the kingdom of God.

Isaiah 66:10-14c

Here the Bible brings out feminine aspects of God. In ancient neighboring Ugaritic literature, Asherah is a "begetter of the gods," who balanced El, the "father of gods and human beings."⁶ The Jews have placed both feminine and masculine virtues in their monotheistic God.

⁴ Carroll Stuhlmueller, C.P., The Spirituality of the Psalms (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2002) ISBN 0-8146-2599 196.

⁵ Theophylactus: On the Gospel, PG 123, 1017 as cited in The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers: Volume One: From the First Sunday of Advent to Quinquagesima, tr. and ed. M. F. Toal, D.D. (P.O. Box 612, Swedesboro, NJ 08085: Preservation Press, 1996) 420.

⁶ Richard J. Clifford, S.J., "The Unity of the Book of Isaiah and Its Cosmogonic Language," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 55, No. 1 (January 1993) 17.

Psalm 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 20

The Lectionary uses this Psalm at two Sunday liturgies, today and the Sixth Sunday of Easter.

| Readings | Page in Lectionary | Verses used | |
|----------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------|
| 55A | 417 | 1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20 (1) | Easter 6 |
| 102C | 687 | 1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20 (1) | Today |

Verse 5 is translated *children of Adam* where the Vulgate has *filios hominum* or *sons of men*. The ICEL was trying to soften sexism in the translation.

Galatians 6:14-18

The background for this passage is found in Galatians 3:1-5, 5:1, and 6:12 with an apparent reference to Christian Jews insisting on circumcision.⁷ According to such Christians, in order to be a son of Abraham, one had to be circumcised. Paul insisted that the fullness of Christianity and the promise of Abraham had nothing to do with circumcision.

Verse 15 writes of *a new creation* reflective of Isaiah 66:13, *will I comfort you; in Jerusalem you shall find your comfort*. Third Isaiah sees the relatively dilapidated Jerusalem to prophesy a new creation, a new day, arriving with Galatians. Throughout the readings, *Jerusalem* makes sense as the individual souls of the Faithful. In Galatians, the *new creation* is a *new creation* of soul. A soul not besmirched with modern sexism.

In verse 16, Galatians writes of peace of soul, a peace found in the cross. Galatians juxtaposes the Cross of Jesus with the world. Galatians writes *the world has been crucified to me*, meaning that the Cross reduces worldly anxieties to peace. The revelation of modern sexism places stress on institutional authority trying to cope with new freedoms from former obligations.

1 Corinthians 6:2 goes on to proclaim that Christians are to judge the world.⁸ The atheist Karl Marx, observing such attitudes, bespoke of Christianity as the

⁷ Charles H. Talbert, "Paul, Judaism, and the Revisionists," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 63, No. 1 (January 2001) 11.

⁸ Stanley B. Marrow, "Κοσμος in John," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 2002) 95.

opiate of the masses. Properly construed, the Cross is no opiate from anything, but rather a strengthening sacred moral power to stand up to anything, thereby permitting truth to speak to power.

Particularly interesting for followers of Saint Francis of Assisi is the *marks of Jesus* in verse 17. Saint Jerome translated those marks as *stigmata*. Toward the end of his life, Saint Francis had the stigmata. In addition, interesting for women, the ICEL *brothers and sisters* of verse 18 is the Vulgate *fraters* or *brothers*.

Colossians 3:15a, 16a

Peace of Christ includes peace on the Cross as well as peace judging the world. This judgment is brought out in Luke 10:12 with the mention of Sodom.⁹ Sexism also involves homosexuality.

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

Pastoral Care of the Sick uses Luke 10:5-6, 8-9 in Part III, Readings, Responses, and verses from Sacred Scripture.¹⁰ These readings concern bringing peace to the household.

Luke is best understood as offering a sequence of logic and concept within a frame of a geographical movement toward Jerusalem. Luke is reorganizing the original source materials concerning the relationship of disciples to the passion and death of Jesus.¹¹ Unveiling sexism is part of the Christian Cross.

⁹ Joseph A. Comber, C.F.X., "The Composition and Literary Characteristics of Matt 11:20-24," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 39, No. 4 (October 1977) 500. Also see Stanley B. Marrow, *Κοσμος in John*, the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 2002) 95.

¹⁰ 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), Reading L, page 310-311. Richard J. Clifford, S.J., "The Unity of the Book of Isaiah and Its Cosmogonic Language," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 55, No. 1 (January 1993) 1, 3.

¹¹ Richard J. Dillon, "Previewing Luke's Project from His Prologue (Luke 1:1-4)," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 43, No. 2 (April 1981) 221-222.

The *others* of verse 1 are grammatically masculine, rather than ambiguous, as in the ICEL translation. Richard Bauckham insists that women are included among the seventy-two.¹² Including married pairs among the seventy-two sent out, Bauckham insists, contrary to most commentators, is appropriate.¹³ Verse 5 brings out *peace* within the context of the Cross of rejection by the household. In the Greek, *house* and *household* refer to the family living in the house,¹⁴ including women. Verse 6 goes on to identify the house with a patriarchal grammatically singular *him*.

Luke 10:7 parallels 1 Corinthians 9:4, 14 about the laborer being worthy of his hire. This seems to mean that Luke and Paul used the same underlying written sources. Paul plainly used oral sources.¹⁵ In other words, the authors of the New Testament were firmly immersed in the patriarchal cultures of their times.

Shaking off the dust in verse 11 stems from the Jewish practice of shaking off the dust from their feet as they entered Israel, regarded as sacred ground.¹⁶ The meaning is more entering the Promised Land than leaving and excluding those who would not enter. A sense of Exodus from untoward worldly concerns into the Promised Land permeates all of the readings.

Third Isaiah is about Jerusalem, the result of the Exodus. Verse 6 in Psalm 66 proclaims, *He has changed the sea into dry land, through the river they passed on foot*. The crucifixion of Galatians is about death and through death an Exodus into eternal glory. The *kingdom of God* in Luke is about an Exodus from the cares and worries of this world. Sexism is a universal problem in the modern

¹² Richard Bauckham, *Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) 111, 112, 192, 200.

¹³ Richard Bauckham, *Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) 216.

¹⁴ Robert H. Gundry, "Mark 10:29: Order in the List," *the Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (July 1997) 468.

¹⁵ Jeremy Corley, "The Pauline Authorship of 1 Corinthians 13," *the Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 2 (April 2004) 265.

¹⁶ 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) 654.

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world, something against which to rest the Cross of Jesus as a means for understanding how to cope within a framework of the eternal peace of God.

Sexism is the issue in these readings, as set forth in the ICEL translations. ICEL did not choose the readings. ICEL only translated. Isaiah portrays God as a woman rather than as a man. At one point, Psalm 66 refers to *children of Adam*, rather than *sons of man*. Galatians is about not needing circumcision. Luke tells of the terrible judgment of Sodom against those who do not hear and receive the holy word of God. Sexism is involved in all of the readings.

For more on sources and their availability, besides the footnotes, see the Appendix file.