

One of the difficulties with the readings for this Sunday is that they lend themselves so well to the problem of the homeless, that there is a danger of overemphasis. These readings are about love of neighbor. Like it or not, the homeless are our neighbors, thus, my focus is on them this Sunday.

Daniel R. Kerr received his 2005 doctorate degree in history from Case Western Reserve University for "Open Penitentiaries: Institutionalizing Homelessness in Cleveland, Ohio." Kerr concludes with pertinent comments. "While individual pathologies may indeed play a role in heightening some people's risk of falling into homelessness, it is not alcohol, drugs, or a failure to accept Christ that causes one to arrive at this condition." Kerr goes on, "By determining that homelessness is caused by individual failure, it is possible for us to retain our faith in the ongoing elaboration of the market economy. In hiding behind our own disguises using [Ronald] Takaki's words, we move away from `exposure, critical awareness, and redemption."

Kerr then suggests something to do. "There is a fundamental question that is rarely asked due to our failure to critically examine the reality behind the growing number of people without homes. Who benefits from institutionalized homelessness?" Kerr begins by focusing on companies offering jobs for temporary workers, but then goes on to include "banks, developers, and contractors interested in building luxury townhouses in former working-class residential neighborhoods."<sup>1</sup> As can be drawn from the readings, the question "Who benefits from institutionalized homelessness?" merits attention.

### **First Reading: Deuteronomy 30:10-14**

Deut 30:1-14

Ehud Ben Zvi, review of Raymond F. Person, Jr., The Deuteronomistic School: History, Social Setting, and Literature<sup>2</sup>

"... as time passed and sociopolitical circumstances shifted, the [Seventh Century BC<sup>3</sup> Deuteronomistic] school [before the Babylonian Exile] understood even the same text differently (see Person's study of Deut 30:1014 as read against two different social, political, and ideological settings)." This change of ancient Deuteronomistic perspective from family morality to the authority of the state, back to family morality, legitimates considering a change in modern perspective in the relationship between homelessness and capitalism.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel R. Kerr, "Open Penitentiaries: Institutionalizing Homelessness in Cleveland, Ohio" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Case Western University, 2005) (Ann Arbor: UMI Microform 3177657, 2005 (800-521-0600)) 522, 524.

<sup>2</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 3 (July 204) 456-458.

<sup>3</sup> <http://cc.usu.edu/~fath6/Origin.htm> 070622.

Personal Notes  
070715 Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 105C  
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Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Samuel, and 2 Samuel form the Deuteronomistic history, written during the Babylonian Exile, about 550 BC.<sup>4</sup>

Timeframe of Deuteronomistic History<sup>5</sup>

Periods of Israelite History: 1250-560 BC

1250-1020	Tribal Period or Period of Judges
1020- 922	United Kingdom: Kingdoms of Saul, David, Solomon
922- 586	Divided Kingdom
922- 722/1	Northern Kingdom (Israel) Capitol: Samaria Destroyed by Assyrians Ten lost tribes of Israel
922- 587/6	Southern Kingdom (Judah) Capitol: Jerusalem Destroyed by Babylonians Destruction marks beginning of Exilic Period

I am contradicting myself, first citing a source that the Deuteronomistic school belongs in the Seventh Century B.C., then citing a more complete source in 550 B.C., the Sixth Century, B.C. My reason for not unscrambling the dichotomy is that I am uncomfortable as to why the sources differ. Both make some sense to me. After all what is a century among friends when tracking back over 2500 years?

Deut 30:1-10

E. Theodore Mullen, Jr., review of Paul A. Barker, [The Triumph of Grace in Deuteronomy: Faithless Israel, Faithful Yahweh in Deuteronomy](#)<sup>6</sup>

Deuteronomy 30:1-10 is tricky. Mullen writes, "Barker argues that 30:1-10 is best understood as an expression of Deuteronomy's expectation of Israel's continued faithlessness rather than as an optimistic view that would credit Israel with the ability to be faithful. This section of the argument is not only the most extensive; it is also the most forced." In other words, just as God will give Israel the grace for Faithfulness, so will God give the Faithful grace to find a better way to help the homeless as part of the command to love one's neighbor.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://secure.britannica.com/eb/article-9045537/books-of-Kings> 070625.

<sup>5</sup> <http://pirate.shu.edu/~carterch/DeuteronomisticHistory/sld005.htm> 070625.

<sup>6</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 69, No. 1 (January 2007) 109.

Deut 30:11-14

C. Clifton Black, review of George Keerankeri, S.J., The Love Commandment in Mark: An Exegetico-Theological Study of Mk 12, 28-34<sup>7</sup>

Black notes that Keerankeri questions "Israel's ability to fulfill God's ordinances (Deut. 4:1-8; 30:11-14) versus the ineptitude of Jesus' disciples (Mark 8:14-21; 14:50)." When even the immediate disciples of Jesus are inept at understanding what God wants, an unthinking self-righteous acceptance of things the way they are becomes inappropriate for the Faithful of all ages and times.

Deut 30:11-14

Barry S. Crawford, review of Francis Watson, Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith<sup>8</sup>

This review brings out two important problems. One is that there are tensions within the Pentateuch. *Pentateuch* is a Christian era term for the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.<sup>9</sup> Another problem is that earlier scholarship in Deuteronomy held an anti-Jewish bias, expressed by E. P. Sanders, in the words of Crawford, that "there is nothing wrong with Judaism aside from the fact that it is not Christianity."

Deut 30:19

David Lambert, "Did Israel Believe that Redemption Awaited Its Repentance? The Case of *Jubilees* 1 [sic]"<sup>10</sup>

I am not sure of the answer Lambert gives to his question, but I think the answer is "No." Lambert writes, "... practice was concerned to evoke and construct an experience of externally driven, divine intervention, not an internally driven process of turning away from sin." The function of Twentieth Century prayer, then, can be to direct and redirect internal attitudes toward such problems as homelessness.

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<sup>7</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 4 (October 2005) 717.

<sup>8</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 560.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11646c.htm> 070627 This reference is to the Catholic Encyclopedia.

<sup>10</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 4 (October 2006) 631-649.

**Responsorial Psalm 1: Psalm 69 14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36, 37**

Psalm 69

Sue Gillingham, "From Liturgy to Prophecy: The Use of Psalmody in Second Temple Judaism"<sup>11</sup>

The Psalter has a prophetic rather than a legal, bias, which is expressed in Psalm 69. In verse 36a, *For God will save Zion* implies prophetic transformation.

Psalm 69

Paul R. Raabe, review of David G. Firth, Surrendering Retribution in the Psalms: Responses to Violence in the Individual Complaints<sup>12</sup>

This is a psalm of sickness, though not used in Care for the Sick. Care for the Sick does use Luke 10:25-37, the Gospel reading for this Sunday, about the Good Samaritan.<sup>13</sup> Firth asserts that the governing authorities were always assumed to be the ordinary path of redress to violence. This same path is appropriate for the Faithful in their concern for the homeless.

Psalm 69:34

Stanley B. Marrow, "*Κοσμος* in John"<sup>14</sup>

There is no Hebrew word for *cosmos*. Instead, the Hebrew uses *heaven and earth*.

Psalm 69:34

Lawrence Boadt, C.S.P., "The Use of 'Panels' in the Structure of Psalms 73—78"<sup>15</sup>

Verses 2-14a is a lament; verses 14b-30, a petition; and verses 31-37 a declaration of divine praise. This Lectionary reading uses verses 4, 17, 30 and 34.

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<sup>11</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3 (July 2002) 479.

<sup>12</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 1 (January 2007) 114.

<sup>13</sup> International Commission on English in the Liturgy: A Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops' Conferences, 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 (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1983) 311.

<sup>14</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (2002) 93.

<sup>15</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 4 (October 2004) 4 533, 535.

**Responsorial Psalm: 1. Psalm 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36, 37 (cf. 33) or 2. Psalm 19 8, 9, 10, 11**

Psalm 19

J. Ross Wagner, "From the Heavens to the Heart: The Dynamics of Psalm 19 as Prayer"<sup>16</sup>

Wagner cites M. A. Fishbane to observe, "the psalmist's `desire to be forgiven for covenantal transgressions is set within a larger praise of God as lawgiver and creator.'" Wagner writes that verses 8-11, used today, "both embodies the luminous perfection of the creator of the cosmos and enables humans to share a joyful and life-giving relationship with Yhwh." For the Faithful, such a relationship with the LORD extends to a relationship to homeless neighbors.

**Second Reading: Colossians 1:15-20**

Col 1:18

Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., "The Structured Ministry of the Church in the Pastoral Epistles"<sup>17</sup>

Colossians is a Deutero-Pauline Epistle in which "the body of Christ" is an important idea, first mentioned in 1 Cor 12:27-28 and dropped entirely in the Pastoral Epistles.

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<sup>16</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 61, No. 2 (April 1999) 245-261.

<sup>17</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 66, No. 4 (October 2006) 584.

Max Zerwick, S.J., waxes strong.<sup>18</sup>

287. In Col 1:16 ff., St. Paul establishes Christ's universal primacy on the grounds *οτι εν αυτω εκτισθη τα παντα* (aorist: historical fact). Christ is however not only the efficient cause (*δι' αυτου*) but also the final cause (*εις αυτον*) and as such is even more in the present (and future) than in the past; hence to describe this state of affairs Paul now uses the perfect: *παντα δι αυτου και εις αυτον εκτισται*, and adds by way of conclusion: *και τα παντα εν αυτω συνεστηκεν*, a perfect expressing the fact that we and the universe have in Christ our subsistence, our internal cohesion, an intimate relation with one another and with the universe. What Christ's resurrection was for Paul, namely the beginning, once and for all, of the new *αιων* [age], which is ours, is well illustrated by his use of a perfect along with three aorists in 1 Cor 15:3, "Christ died (*απθανεν*) for our sins ... and was buried (*εταφη*) and is risen (*εγηγεραται*—but in English has to use past instead of the perfect on account of the following "on the third day") ... and He appeared (*ωφθη*) to Cephas." —For Jo [sic] cf. *μεμισηκεν* 15:18, 24.

More simply, In Colossians 1:16 ff, St. Paul establishes Christ's universal primacy over the entire cosmos.

**Alleluia: cf. John 6:63c, 68c**

**Gospel: Luke 10:25-37**

The following is from the "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."<sup>19</sup> Paragraph 15 draws from Luke 10-35-37, utilizing verses in the Lectionary for today. Brackets [ ] indicate personal insertions by me.

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<sup>18</sup> Maximilian Zerwick, S.J., English Edition adapted from the Fourth Latin Edition by Joseph Smith, S.J., Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblico—114—Biblical Greek (Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1994) 97.

<sup>19</sup> 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\\_20-23/25](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclixals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_2.../1/30/2006_20-23/25). I am somewhat anglicizing the grammar.

## PART I

### THE UNITY OF LOVE IN CREATION AND IN SALVATION HISTORY

*Jesus Christ—the incarnate love of God*

12. ... treated at Reading 056B, Sixth Sunday of Easter 060521.

13. Jesus gave this act of oblation an enduring presence through his institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. He anticipated his death and resurrection by giving his disciples, in the bread and wine, his very self, his body and blood as the new manna (cf. *Jn* 6:31-33 [sic]<sup>20</sup>). The ancient world had dimly perceived that man's real food—what truly nourishes him as man [sic]—is ultimately the *Logos*, eternal wisdom: this same *Logos* now truly becomes food for us—as love. The Eucharist draws us into Jesus' act of self-oblation. More than just statically receiving the incarnate *Logos*, we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving. The imagery [In the readings today, Colossians 1:15 proclaims, "Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God."] of marriage between God and Israel is now realized in a way previously inconceivable: it had meant standing in God's presence, but now it becomes union with God through sharing in Jesus' self-gift, sharing in his body and blood. The sacramental "mysticism," grounded in God's condescension towards us, operated at a radically different level and lifts us to far greater heights than anything that any human mystical elevation could ever accomplish.

14. Here we need to consider yet another aspect: this sacramental "mysticism" is social in character, for in sacramental communion I become one with the Lord, like all the other communicants. As Saint Paul says, "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor 10:17). Union with Christ is also union with all those with whom he gives himself. I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, his own. Communion draws me out of myself towards him, and thus also towards unity with all Christians. We become "one body," completely joined in a single existence. Love of God and love of neighbor are now truly united:

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<sup>20</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20051225\\_deus-caritas-est\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html) accessed May 2, 2010.

Personal Notes  
070715 Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 105C  
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God incarnate draws us all to himself. We can thus understand how *agape* also became a term for the Eucharist: there God's own *agape* comes to us bodily, in order to continue his work in us and through us. Only by keeping in mind this Christological and sacramental basis can we correctly understand Jesus' teaching on love. The transition which he makes from the Law and the Prophets to the twofold commandment of love of God and of neighbor, and his grounding the whole life of faith on this central precept, is not simply a matter of morality—something that could exist apart from and alongside faith in Christ and its sacramental re-actualization. Faith, worship, and *ethos* are interwoven, as a single reality, which takes shape in our encounter with God's *agape*. Here the usual contraposition between worship and ethics simply falls apart. "Worship" itself, Eucharistic communion, includes the reality both of being loved and of loving others in turn. A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented. Conversely, as we shall have to consider in greater detail below, the "commandment" of love is only possible because it is more than a requirement. Love can be "commanded" because it has first been given.

15. This principle is the starting-point for understanding the great parables of Jesus. The rich man (cf. Lk 16:19-31) begs from his place of torment that his brothers be informed about what happens to those who simply ignore the poor man in need. Jesus takes up this cry for help as a warning to help us return to the right path. The parable of the Good Samaritan (cf. Lk 10:25-37) offers two particularly important clarifications. Until that time, the concept of "neighbor" was understood as referring essentially to one's countrymen and to foreigners who had settled in the land of Israel; in other words, to the closely-knit community of a single country or people. [The Masonic Charges of the African American Prince Hall include the Good Samaritan.]<sup>21</sup> This limit is now abolished. Anyone [without distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor] who needs me, and whom I can help, is my neighbor. The concept of "neighbor" is now universalized, yet it remains concrete. Despite being extended to all mankind [*sic*], it is not reduced to a generic, abstract and undemanding imprecision of love, but calls for my own practical commitment here and now. The Church has the duty to interpret ever anew this relationship between

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<sup>21</sup> Hugh Rowland Page, "A Case Study in Eighteenth-Century Afrodiasporan Biblical Hermeneutics and Historiography: The Masonic Charges of Prince Hall" in Yet with a Steady Beat: Contemporary U.S. Afrocentric Biblical Interpretation, Randall C. Bailey, ed., (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003) 108, 121.



near and far with regard to the actual daily life of her members. Lastly, we should especially mention the great parable of the Last Judgment (cf. Mt 25:31-46), in which love becomes the criterion for the definitive decision about a human life's worth or lack thereof. Jesus identifies himself with those in need, with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and those in prison. "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Mt 25:40). Love of God and love of neighbor have become one: in the least of the brethren, we find Jesus himself, and in Jesus, we find God.

*Love of God and love of neighbor*

16. Having reflected on the nature of love and its meaning in biblical faith, we are left with two questions concerning our own attitude: can we love God without seeing him? And can love be commanded? Against the double commandment of love, these questions raise a double objection. No one has ever seen God, so how could we love him? Moreover, love cannot be commanded; it is ultimately a feeling that is either there or not, nor can it be produced by the will. Scripture seems to reinforce the first objection when it states: "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen" (Jn 4:20). But this text hardly excludes the love of God as something impossible. On the contrary, the whole context of the passage quoted from the *First Letter of John* shows that such love is explicitly demanded. The unbreakable bond between love of God and love of neighbor is emphasized. One is so closely connected to the other that to say that we love God becomes a lie if we are closed to our neighbor or hate him altogether. Saint John's words should rather be interpreted to mean that love of neighbor is a path that leads to the encounter with God, and that closing our eyes to our neighbor also blinds us to God.

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Luke 10:21-25

Warren Carter, "Getting Martha out of the Kitchen: Luke 10:38-42 [sic]  
Again"<sup>22</sup>

Carter writes that Martha "has `seen' God's revelation (10:21-25). She is among the blessed disciples who `see and hear' (10:23-24); she inherits eternal life (10:25)." While Martha was not homeless, the point is that the Faithful owe it to their neighbors and themselves to question some of the fundamental politically correct social assumptions causing pain.

Luke 10:25-28

Gregory R. Perry, review of Filip Noel, The Travel Narrative in the Gospel of Luke: Interpretation of Lk 9:51—19:28<sup>23</sup>

Noel elaborates on how Luke uses the Shema (the Jewish confession of faith made up of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41). If the history of Christianity reveals anything to the Faithful it is that perspectives, such as the perspectives on homelessness, can and do change. Consideration of such changes is appropriate for the spiritual life.

Luke 10:29-37

Craig L. Blomberg, "Interpreting the Parables of Jesus: Where Are We and Where Do We Go from Here?"<sup>24</sup>

Blomberg writes, "As for example-stories, the criteria by which they were first identified were never ones of form, but of perceived function, and studies of individual parables usually assigned to this category (Luke 10:29-37; 12:16-21; 16:19-31; 18:9-14) have increasingly questioned their exemplary nature." This means that even though Jesus said that the Son of Man had nowhere to lay his head, the Faithful usually do not consider homelessness a religious problem about loving neighbors.

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>22</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 58, No. 2 (April 1996) 267, 268, 276.

<sup>23</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 2 (April 2006) 343, 344.

<sup>24</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 53, No. 1 (October 1991) 55, 57, 67.