

The word for this week is **shepherd**.

Pope John-Paul II's Apostolic Letter, Rosarium Virginia Mariae, cites **Ephesians 2:14**. The Mystery of Light is the Marriage Feast at Cana, a place where **shepherding** the Faithful away from danger into joy happens.

The overview for these readings is about dealing with scandal.

Jeremiah 23:1-6

verse 1 Woe to the **shepherds**
 who mislead and scatter the flock of my pasture, says the LORD.
verse 2 Therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of Israel,
 against the **shepherds** who **shepherd** my people:
 You have scattered my sheep and driven them away.
 You have not cared for them,
 but I will take care to punish your evil deeds.

A scholar draws a parallel from this verse to Nabal, the husband of Abigail. The marriage between Abigail and Nabal is the first of three marriages broken up by King David. The others are between Michal and Paltiel and between Bathsheba and Uriah.

After describing Nabal as a harsh man of evil deeds 1 Samuel 25 uses that harshness to justify the breakup. Harshness, then, is something serious, especially since it relates to what the Faithful would recognize as political correctness. Harshness "implies the violation of expected behavioral or relational norms." The scholar goes on, "The latter's [Nabal's] socially offensive behavior is manifested by his refusal to recompense David's men for the protection afforded to his **shepherds** (1 Sam 25:14-16, 21). 1 Samuel further characterizes Nabal as one "to whom no one can talk." Abigail adds to the characterization with a play on words between Nabal and the Hebrew for *foolishness*.¹

There is at least one Nabal at Daily Mass at the Newport News Poor Clare Monastery, "violating expected behavioral and relational norms with socially offensive behavior," related to loudness, pitch, and timber of others there assembled in prayer. "To whom no one can talk" characterizes at least one of those socially offensive Faithful. *Foolishness* well describes the daily harshness. Harshness is a refusal to accept the

¹ John Kessler, "Sexuality and Politics: The Motif of the Displaced Husband in the Books of Samuel," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 62, No. 3 (July 2000) 411.

Personal Notes
030720 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 107B
© 2015
Raymond J. Jirran

flock norms of the Good **Shepherd**. Placing a loud speaker on the altar is a stroke of genius, suggesting the point of a need to “be talked to.”

1 Samuel 25 goes to great lengths not to blame David for breaking up the marriage, laying the blame on Nabal’s

own folly and to the hand of Yahweh. ... Nabal, like Saul, is unfit to be king, even though he fancies himself to be worthy of a royal banquet ... ten days later, Yahweh smites him [Nabal] and he dies (vv. 37-38). David has been clearly vindicated by Yahweh (v. 39), and he asks Abigail to be his wife (v. 40).²

verse 4 I will appoint shepherds for them who will **shepherd** them
so that they need no longer fear and tremble;
and none shall be missing, says the LORD.

Why not wonder whether the next Richmond Ordinary may not be John H. Ricard, S.S.J., Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee. His motto is “God is gracious.”³

verse 5 Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD,
when I will raise up a righteous *shoot* to David

The Lectionary is calling to mind the root of Jesse of Isaiah (Isa 10:33—11:10), where the word *shoot* is used. Olive trees can last thousands of years because their roots never die, sending up shoot after shoot after the plant above ground dies. Two scholars translate *shoot* as *branch*.⁴ Since hierarchy arises from the Faithful, the Faithful here are more than a shoot. One may also portray the Faithful as a more substantial *branch*.

Unlike other prophets, who represented hope as only residing directly in God, Jeremiah and Ezekiel both hope to represent God as a good **shepherd**, through a human

² John Kessler, “Sexuality and Politics: The Motif of the Displaced Husband in the Books of Samuel”, the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 62, No. 3 (July 2000) 411-412.

³ <http://www.ptdiocese.org/bishop/ricard.html> July 1, 2003, 11:07 p.m.

⁴ Adrian M. Leske, “Context and Meaning of Zechariah 9:9,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 62, No. 4 (October 2000) 665 and Stephen L. Cook, “The Metamorphosis of a Shepherd: The Tradition History of Zechariah 11:17 + 13:7-9,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 55, No. 3 (July, 1993) 459.

Personal Notes
030720 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 107B
© 2015
Raymond J. Jirran

religious tradition, pious zeal has much to commend it, but the perennial problem is that its righteousness is always in danger of missing `the righteousness of God.’”⁷

Pope John II comments:

Prayer for peace and for the family

6. A number of historical circumstances also make a revival of the Rosary quite timely. First of all, the need to implore from God *the gift of peace*. The Rosary has many times been proposed by my predecessors and myself as a prayer for peace. At the start of a millennium which began with the terrifying attacks of 11 September 2001, a millennium which witnesses every day in numerous parts of the world fresh scenes of bloodshed and violence, to rediscover the Rosary means to immerse oneself in contemplation of the mystery of Christ who “is our peace,” since he made “the two of us one, and broke down the dividing wall of hostility” (**Eph 2:14**). Consequently, one cannot recite the Rosary without feeling caught up in a clear commitment to advancing peace, especially in the land of Jesus, still so sorely afflicted and so close to the heart of every Christian.

“Behold, your Mother!” (Jn 19:27)

7. Many signs indicate that still today the Blessed Virgin desires to exercise through this same prayer that maternal concern to which the dying Redeemer entrusted, in the person of the beloved disciple, all the sons and daughters of the Church: “Woman, behold your son!” (Jn 19:26). Well-known are the occasions in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries on which the Mother of Christ made her presence felt and her voice heard, in order to exhort the People of God to this form of contemplative prayer. I would mention in particular, on account of their great influence on the lives of Christians and the authoritative recognition they have received from the Church, the apparitions of Lourdes and of

⁷ Vincent M. Smiles, “The Concept of “Zeal” in Second-Temple Judaism and Paul’s Critique of It in Romans 10:2,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 2 (April 2002) 299.

Fatima;⁸ these shrines continue to be visited by great numbers of pilgrims seeking comfort and hope.

Following the witnesses

8. It would be impossible to name all the many Saints who discovered in the Rosary a genuine path to growth in holiness. We need but mention Saint Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort, the author of an excellent work on the Rosary⁹ and, closer to ourselves, Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, whom I recently had the joy of canonizing. As a true apostle of the Rosary, Blessed Bartolo Longo had a special charism. His path to holiness rested on an inspiration heard in the depths of his heart: "Whoever spreads the Rosary is saved!"¹⁰ As a result, he felt called to build a Church dedicated to Our Lady of the Holy Rosary in Pompei against the background of the ruins of the ancient city, which scarcely heard the proclamation of Christ before being buried in 79 A.D. during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, only to emerge centuries later from its ashes as a witness to the lights and shadows of classical civilization. By his whole life's work and especially by the practice of the "Fifteen Saturdays," Bartolo Longo promoted the Christocentric and contemplative heart of the Rosary, and received great encouragement and support from Leo XIII the "Pope of the Rosary."

John 10:27

verse 27 My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord;
I know them, and they follow me.

This does not mean that the Faithful expect to act like sheep before unworthy **shepherds**. What this does mean is that the Faithful should keep listening, until they discern the voice of the Lord, to then follow that voice wherever it may lead.

⁸ It is well-known and bears repeating that private revelations are not the same as public revelation, which is binding on the whole Church. It is the task of the Magisterium to discern and recognize the authenticity and value of private revelations for the piety of the faithful.

⁹ The Secret of the Rosary.

¹⁰ Blessed Bartolo Longo, Storia del Santuario di Pompei, (Pompei, 1990), 59.

Mark 6:30-34

My pastor, Monsignor Michael D. McCarron may use this passage to proclaim that everyone needs a vacation. When human nature gets irritated enough, it tends to lash out to relieve the tension. Read carefully, this passage admonishes not trying to do too much. Just because there is a lot of good to do, does not mean that one must do all of it. Prioritizing to the point of prioritizing is an appropriate function of the Faithful. What about one like a Poor Clare nun, with a vow of obedience? That vow does not dismiss the obligation to be human and humane and, thereby to prioritize, for example the willingness to observe the rule of silence.

A scholar points out that verses **30-34** are part of a larger pericope (**30-44**) about the feeding of the 5,000. Mark compares the feeding of the 5,000

with “the macabre banquet of Herod in 6:14-29” and the rejection of Jesus in 6:1-6a by the people of Nazareth. The echoes of the themes of manna in the wilderness and “the metaphorical use of feeding for teaching” from the OT and deuterocanonical [books of Scripture contained in the Septuagint but not in the Hebrew canon] literature further increase the reader’s appreciation for the feeding miracle in its narrative context.

The authors’ witty rejection of the rationalizing interpretation of the feeding story that treats it as an example of the crowd’ sharing inspired by Jesus’ preaching, and their alternative suggestion that the passage be read in light of the metaphor of the church as a pilgrim people complete the artistry of the interpretation.¹¹

verse 30 The *apostles* gathered together with Jesus
 and reported all they had done and taught.

A scholar points out that this is the apostles’ return from the disciples’ being sent out in verses 7-13. Most commentators link verse 30 with what follows, as the Lectionary presents. The other, less developed link, belongs with what precedes. *Apostle* means

¹¹ Sharyn Dowd, review of John R. Donahue, S.J., and Daniel J. Harrington, S.J., “The Gospel of Mark,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 1 (January 2003) 123.

Personal Notes
030720 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 107B
© 2015
Raymond J. Jirran

someone sent out, i.e. the disciples. At this point, *apostle* is not a title. Mark likes to write about discipleship, so important in our period of declining “vocations.”¹²

A scholar thinks that verse **30** is “another suggestion of their [the apostles] failure, as happens on the way to Jerusalem. Eventually, the apostles forsake Jesus and flee. Thank God, such is not the end of the story. Thank God for Galilee where the resurrected Christ shows himself to his disciples. as he promised.”¹³

verse 31 He said to them,
 “Come away *by yourselves* to a deserted place and rest a while.”
 People were coming and going in great numbers,
 and they had no *opportunity* even to eat.

The grammarian offers insight for *by yourselves*. From the Greek, the grammarian suggests “Now you (namely in your turn do as I did and)” as in Mark 35: “By now it was already late and his disciples approached him and said, “This is a deserted place and it is already very late.”¹⁴

The grammarian notes that *opportunity* may also be translated *have a good opportunity, have leisure/time*.

verse 33 People saw them leaving and many came to know about it.
 They hastened there on foot from all the towns
 and arrived at the place before them.

The grammarian points out that *They hastened* may be translated as *They ran*.

¹² 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) 647-649.

¹³ 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) 647, 663.

¹⁴ Translation from Tuesday after Epiphany or January 8, WI, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, The Roman Missal Restored by Decree of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican and Promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI: Lectionary for Mass: For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America: Second Typical Edition: Volume II: Proper of Seasons for Weekdays, Year I: Proper of Saints: Common of Saints (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2002)129.

Personal Notes
030720 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 107B
© 2015
Raymond J. Jirran

verse 34 When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd,
 his heart was *moved with pity* for them,
 for they were like sheep without a **shepherd**;
 and he began to teach them many things.

The grammarian explains *moved with pity* as also translatable as *be moved to pity in one's most inward parts, be touched by, have compassion on*.

To summarize, Jeremiah is about accepting established norms as emanating from The Good **Shepherd**, the psalm is about finding safety in the flock of the **shepherd**. Ephesians offers an explanation for that safety in the sacrifice of the Mass, an expression of the life of Christ, while Mark tells the Faithful disciples to take a rest from their labors so as not to become un-Christ-like. All of this means that the prophets anticipated the scandalous behavior of the hierarchy practically from the beginning of Sacred Scripture. Life goes on, even supernatural life, so, the Faithful need not be afraid to take a vacation. With the Monsignor, God seems to command a vacation.

APPENDIX

The Quarterly references apply recent scholarship to the Lectionary¹⁵ readings. In effect, these Personal Notes annotate the Index references at www.western-civilization.com. By reviewing the footnotes, one can quickly decide whether the effort to consult the original article may be worthwhile. The idea is to balance and connect recent scholarship with the substance of traditional spirituality.

Traditional spirituality rests upon several basic sources in these Personal Notes. The Lectionary gives the readings used at Mass. Where the Lectionary capitalizes all the letters in *LORD*, so do these Notes, under the assumption that LORD means Yahweh. The Vulgate¹⁶ reaches toward a traditional Latin translation, while Nestle¹⁷ and the

¹⁵ All indented verses are taken from National Conference of Catholic Bishops, The Roman Missal Restored by Decree of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican and Promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI: Lectionary for Mass: For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America: Second Typical Edition: Volume I: Sundays, Solemnities, Feasts of the Lord and Saints (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1998).

¹⁶ The Latin. Saint Jerome, and the Vulgate all refer to Nova Vulgata: Bibliorum Sacrorum Editio: Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II ratione habita iussu Pauli PP, VI Recognita Auctoritate Joannis Pauli PP, II Promulgata Editio Typica Altera

Personal Notes
030720 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 107B
© 2015
Raymond J. Jirran

grammarian¹⁸ reach even further back to the original Greek. Sunday Sermons¹⁹ brings the Fathers of the Church to bear, in the monastic traditions, including the Poor Clares. Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Letter on the Rosary²⁰ ties the devotion to the Mass. I try

(00120 Citta Del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1979, 1986, 1998) ISBN 88-2209-2163-4

¹⁷ Nestle-Aland: Novum Testamentum: Graece et Latine: Textum Graecum post Eberhard et Erwin Nestle communiter ediderunt Barbara et Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger: Textus Latinus Novae Vulgatae Bibliorum Sacrorum Editioni debetur: Utriusque textus apparatus criticum recensuerunt et editionem novis curis elaboraverunt Barbara et Kurt Aland una cum Instituto Studiorum Textus Novi Testamenti Monasterii Westphaliae (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 1999) Editio XXVII and Nestle-Aland: Greek-English New Testament: Greek text Novum Testamentum Graece, in the tradition of Eberhard Nestle and Erwin Nestle edited by Barbara and Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger. English text 2nd Edition of the Revised Standard Version The Critical Apparatuses prepared and edited together with the Institute for New Testament Textual Research, Munster/Westphalia by Barbara and Kurt Aland (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 1998) Editio XXVII.

¹⁸ Max Zerwick, S.J. and Mary Grosvenor, A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament unabridged, 5th, revised edition (Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico 1996) and 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).

¹⁹ 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); The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers: Volume Two: From the First Sunday in Lent to the Sunday after the Ascension, tr. and ed. M. F. Toal, D.D. (P.O. Box 612, Swedesboro, NJ 08085: Preservation Press, 1996); The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers: Volume Three: From Pentecost to the Tenth Sunday after Pentecost, tr. and ed. M. F. Toal (P.O. Box 612, Swedesboro, NJ 08085: Preservation Press, 1996); The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers: A Manual of Preaching, Spiritual Reading and Meditation: Volume Four: From the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost to the Twenty-fourth and Last Sunday after Pentecost, tr. and ed. M. F. Toal, D.D. (P.O. Box 612, Swedesboro, NJ 08085: Preservation Press, 1996).

²⁰ Pope John Paul II, *Rosarium Virginiae Mariae*, at <http://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP2ROSAR.HTM>, 10/16/02.

Personal Notes
030720 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 107B
© 2015
Raymond J. Jirran

to use American English and style for the Apostolic Letter, changing the original without comment.

The Sunday **words** are developed out of Carroll Stuhlmueller, C.P.²¹ Stuhlmueller advises praying the psalms with a word-focus. A single word is somewhat easier than the Responsorial Antiphon that is a little more difficult, but that I use personally.

As the readings cycles progress, eventually Stuhlmueller and the Sunday Sermons will be used up. After that, I may simply add to what I originally wrote. That change will take several more years to accomplish.

This Appendix takes up two pages; my computer can readily accommodate that. I will not expect regular readers to print the Appendix, nor do I intend to print it for my personal use each week.

Brackets [] indicate insertions made by me, parentheses () indicate insertions made by someone else.

Thursday, July 03, 2003

²¹Carroll Stuhlmueller, C.P., The Spirituality of the Psalms (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2002) ISBN 0-8146-2599.