

Personal Notes
080824 Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time, 121A
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These Lectionary readings are about the authority of the Church. The fun of the problem is defining *Church*. Certainly, *Church* is more than the Magisterium. Just as certainly, *Church* is more than the Papacy. Confusion arises when the papacy is more concerned about power for its own sake, rather than the use of power in the best interests of the Church Faithful.

It is an axiom that power used is power used up. Power used against scholarship, because it is scholarship, produces a void in the Church. Repeating drivel because drivel has been repeated for centuries does not make the drivel truthful.

A story about one of the great-unknown Catholic Sacred Scripture scholars of our day indicates that drivel does not have to be repeated. Carlo Maria Cardinal Martini purportedly received 40 votes on the first ballot, against the 38 votes for the future John Paul II. Someone denied that scenario. There are no official records.¹ Wouldn't it be fun to know who lied? Then again, John Paul II is known for his convenient truths.

When parish priest after parish priest and bishop after bishop simply regurgitate convenient truths, the reason may lay in that secret election and campaign among the Cardinal electorate for John Paul II. In the current Roman Latin Church, the papacy exercises enormous influence over who is ordained to preach, promoted to bishop and Cardinal, and permitted to teach. We wonder what would have happened, had Martini become Pope.

Martini is one of the "five wise men," and the only Catholic, on the commission determining how to present the Greek text of the New Testament. In other words, Martini was dedicated to the truth, wherever it led. When he retired, Martini left Rome to spend his last days in Jerusalem, where the more rigorous scholars resided.

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland posit:

Furthermore, a peculiar kind of responsibility is involved in preparing an edition of the Greek New Testament. It is not just any random text, but the very foundation for New Testament exegesis by theologians of all confessions and denominations throughout the world. Further, this Greek text serves as the base for new translations as well as for revisions of earlier translations in modern languages, i.e., it is in effect the foundation to which the whole contemporary Church looks in formulating expressions of faith. The full awesome weight of this responsibility is better shared by a committee [including Cardinal Martini]: a single scholar simply could not bear it.

The other readings for this Sunday liturgy follow our concern for the truth. When Isaiah 22:22 proclaims *I will place the key of the House of David on Eliakim's shoulder,*

¹ Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr. (Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989) 33, 35.

Isaiah means that truth will overcome political correctness. Psalm 138:2 mentions *your truth* as something meriting praise. Romans 11:33 refers to the ways of God as *unsearchable*, meaning that the canons of political correctness do not lead to God.

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.

Isaiah 22:19-23

Isa 22:15-25

Wolfgang M. W. Roth, "The Wooing of Rebekah: A Tradition-Critical Study of Genesis 24"²

In a long run-over sentence, Roth writes,

The history of monarchic Israel, on the other hand, offers at least three examples of highly placed officials who in one way or another did not measure up to the image of the prudent, selfless and circumspect steward of Gen 24: Ziba, whose apparent double play between his master Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, and David, is an example of a highly placed selfish steward (2 Sam 9:1-13; 16:1-4; 19-17-30.) Shebna, the steward of King Hezekiah, who had cut for himself a pretentious tomb in the rock (Isa 22:15-19), and his successor Eliakim who unsuccessfully made his position a watering trough for too many members of his family (Isa 22:20-25, esp. vss. 24-2),

What Isaiah meant and what the Lectionary may mean become undecipherable.

Isa 22:20

Randall E. Otto, "The Prophets and Their Perspective"³

Otto argues that by *on that* day Isaiah was not looking toward some distant time in the future, but immediately.

² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 34, No. 2 (April 1972) 184.

³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 63, No. 2 (April 2001) 233.

Isa 22:21

Brittany E. Wilson, "Pugnacious Precursors and the Bearer of Peace: Jael, Judith, and Mary in Luke 1:42"⁴

Wilson observes that Eliakim is a father, a term that reflects protection of the Israelites.

Psalm 138:1-2, 2-3, 6, 8

Romans 11:33-36

Rom 9:1—11:36

Brendan Byrne, S.J., "The Problem of *Νομοσ* and the Relationship with Judaism in Romans"⁵

Byrne writes,

Specifically, the long sequence comprising Rom 9:1—11:36 seems designed to counter a belief that he [St. Paul] is indifferent to the fate of his people by birth and is casual or careless about relating his gentile communities to the identity and heritage of Israel.

The Alands word it differently. "The Old Testament was only beginning to retreat from its traditionally central position as Holy Scripture [at 130-150 AD] (at first the Old Testament held the position in the Church that the New Testament now holds for us)."⁶

Rom 11:36

Dino Dozzi, "'Thus Says the Lord' The Gospel in the Writings of Saint Francis"⁷

Dozzi moves from the *for him and through him and for him* of Romans to the Creator, Redeemer, and Savior of Francis. What is new for me is turning out from the efficiency of the evolutionary process to the redemptive and saving acts of God, through Jesus. This is something for which to be thankful. While the term *Eucharist* means *an act of thanksgiving*, Romans spells out that for which to be thankful.

⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (April 2006) 444.

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 62, No. 2 (April 2000) 308 ff.

⁶ Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr. (Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989) 64.

⁷ Greyfriars Review, Vol. 18, Supplement (2004) 99.

Mathew 16:18

Matthew 16:13-20

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.⁸

The Alands warn against the tendency to focus on textual difficulties in the Greek, without balancing those difficulties with the fact that a little less than two-thirds of the New Testament contains no difficulties and is passed down without disagreement. That warning is well suited to these Notes, which first look in the critical apparatus for a cross, which always represents a passage with very difficult textual decisions. I agree with the scholars who think that the difficult passages are those most helpful to spiritual growth.

The Alands also point out that in 1968 and 1987, the Magisterium approved the use of Nestle-Aland²⁸ that these Notes use. The Magisterium had forbidden versions of Nestle-Aland, until the 26th edition. I have done nothing with the differences mentioned in the August 25, 2002 Notes for this Reading 121, the Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time.

There is a cross in the Greek apparatus for the word *strictly ordered* in the Lectionary.

Matthew 16:20	
<u>Lectionary</u> (1998)	Then he strictly ordered his disciples
<u>The Vulgate</u> (circa 410)	Tunc praecepit discipulis,
<u>Douay-Rheims</u> (1582-1610)	Then he commanded his disciples
<u>King James</u> (1611)	Then charged he his disciples
<u>Catholic RSV</u> (1969)	Then he strictly charged the disciples
<u>New American</u> (NAB) (1970)	Then he strictly ordered his disciples
<u>New Jerusalem</u> (1985)	Then he gave the disciples strict orders

It looks to me as if the King James and Douay-Rheims translators hesitate over the word *strictly*. I wonder if the reason is that these Seventeenth Century translators lacked the better manuscripts only made available in the Twentieth Century. The

⁸ Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 26, 30.

Lectionary omitted this verse for the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, June 29, which fell on a Sunday this year.

Matt 16:14

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy⁹
Barker uses Matthew 16:14, about John the Baptist, Elijah, and Jeremiah to wonder about the influence of the transmigration of souls on Jewish religion. Barker wonders how the ancients ever came up with that idea. She then asks, "Who wrote the books of Moses? And who rewrote parts of them to produce Deuteronomy?"

Matt 16:16-18

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults¹⁰

The Bishops use these verses to lay their claim to the founding of the institutional Church by Jesus. This happens in Chapter 10, "The Church: Reflecting the Light of Christ."

Matt 16:17

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy¹¹
Barker wonders about nationalist movements among the early Christians, years before modern Europe developed the state system. Barker writes, "... Peter, known as Simon Bar Jona (Matt. 16:17) [*sic*] when the *barjone* were Zealots, cannot have been unconnected with the nationalist movement. Praying about the relationship between church and state is always helpful, because the church is more in charge of the truth, while the state is more in charge of politics and both need to influence one another.

Matt 15:14

Mark F. Whitters, "Jesus in the Footsteps of Jeremiah"¹²

When asked with whom to compare Jesus, Whitters observes that Jeremiah is the leading choice of the people. Matthew mentions this right in the middle of the Gospel.

⁹ London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003, 273.

¹⁰ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006, 111-112, 121.

¹¹ London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003, 40.

¹² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 2 (April 2006) 230, 247.

Matt 16:13-20

Daniel W. Ulrich, "The Missional Audience of the Gospel of Matthew"¹³

Ulrich uses Matthew 16:18 to write, "The evidence for competition between Matthean Judaism and formative Judaism includes the Gospel's polemical characterizations of Israel's leaders and its pointed contrasts between 'their synagogues' and 'my assembly.'" Ulrich argues that Matthew writes not only for a relatively small surrounding community, but also for the diaspora.

Matt 16:14

Jeffrey A. Gibbs, review of Alistair I. Wilson, When Will These Things Happen? A Study of Jesus as Judge in Matthew 21-25¹⁴

Matthew 16:14 is one of three references to Jesus as "prophet" that Wilson uses to conclude, in the words of Gibbs, the reviewer, "in Matthew [sic] 'prophet' is an 'appropriate designation' for Jesus."

Matt 16:17-19

Benedict T. Viviano, O.P., review of Martin Hengel, Der Unterschätzte Petrus: Zwei Studien¹⁵

Viviano points out that Matthew wrote these verses about Peter thirty years after his death. Viviano then reports on Hengel that the verses are "less history than ecclesiology for the future—hence the future tenses in vv. 18 and 19." Hengel points out that not only is there Petrine succession, but there is also Apostolic succession, with implications for the current concentration of authority in the Papal Magisterium.

Matt 16:18-19

Edward F. Siegman, C.P.P.S., "Teaching in Parables: (Mk 4:10-12; Lk 8:9-10; Mt 13:10-15)"¹⁶

Siegman observes that there is scholarly consensus that Form-Critics overdid it when they postulated that Matthew wrote 16:18-19 without the availability of eyewitnesses. As Siegman puts it, "excess of Form Criticism has been discredited by scholars. ... If the Form-Critics are right, the disciples must have been translated to heaven immediately after the Resurrection."

¹³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 1 (April 2007) 74, 76.

¹⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (April 2007) 603.

¹⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (July 2007) 582.

¹⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 23, No. (April 1961) 164.

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Matt 16:18

Michael J. McClymond, "Through a Glass Darkly: Biblical Annotations and Theological interpretation in Modern Catholic and Protestant English-language Bibles"¹⁷

McClymond points out that the annotations to the Douay-Rheims translation of Matthew 16:18 were to the effect that the "succession of the true church' continued at all times ... for the Catholic polemic against the Protestant assertion that the true church had all but disappeared during the medieval era."

Matt 16:18

Kenton L. Sparks, "Gospel as Conquest: Mosaic Typology in Matthew 28:16-20"¹⁸

Sparks argues that while Matthew regarded himself as an observant Jew, yet the Jews Matthew portrays regarded him as a heretic.

Matt 16:19

Lawrence M. Wills, "Scribal Methods in Matthew and *Mishnah Abot*"¹⁹
Mishnah Abot is the 1610 collection of mostly halakic traditions compiled about 200 A.D. and made the basic part of the Talmud. Wills convincingly argues,

Although the rabbinic traditions in the Mishnah are often mined for the light they may shed on the New Testament, this single direction of interest sometimes limits discussion of the common stream of tradition and Matthew and some rabbinic traditions may share. Matthew and *Abot* may reflect similar practices arising in the first-second centuries C.C.

Matt 16:16

Paul Lawrence, The IVP Atlas of Bible History²⁰
Lawrence points out that "It was at Caesarea Philippi that Jesus asked his disciples a question: 'Who do you say I am.'"

¹⁷ Theological Studies, Vol. 67, No. 3 (September 2006) 489, 494.

¹⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 4 (October 2006) 662.

¹⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 63, No. 2 (April 2001) 241-247.

²⁰ Downers Grove, Illinois, *InterVarsity Press*, 2006, 144.