

Readings

First Reading:	Isaiah 3:4-7a
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 146:7, 8-9, 9-10 (1b)
Second Reading:	James 2:1-5
Alleluia:	cf. Matthew 4:23
Gospel:	Mark 7:31-37

Commentary

The readings for this Sunday are about those without social standing. Isaiah, the prophet, speaks to “those whose hearts are frightened.” The Psalmist sings “The fatherless and the widow the LORD sustains.” Most importantly, James admonishes, “have you not made distinctions among yourselves.”

When the Berlin Wall came tumbling down in 1989, everyone who had “standing” was dumbfounded. They did not realize how that could happen. As historian and scholar Manu Goswami put it, “Following the globally refracted events of 1989, a wave of scholarship translated the multiple defeats of the new-left generation into ostentatious claims of the end of history, the end of ideology, the end of the social.”¹

Some of us, however, without standing, knew very well what had happened. We had been praying for the conversion of Russia ever since the Fatima apparitions in 1917.² Prayer by those without standing was the reason that wall came down.

At the manuscript level, the Greek word for *make distinctions* is not difficult. At the translation level, however, there is difficulty. *Making distinctions* can also be translated *causing conflict*.

Despite conflicted situations within the Gospel, the Gospel is an expression of Faith in God. The Gospel makes little sense when it first records a blatant miracle, and then commands not to tell anyone. The Gospel has Faith that, despite the lack of understanding, God is God and does what God wants. The administration of The Catholic University can be as adamant as it wants about refusing to listen either to the Faithful who lack standing or to her own faculty who do have standing. That should not cause the Faithful to give up; any more than Mark gave up spreading the Good News, even in the parts of the Gospel that made little or no sense.

All of this brings the Faithful to the Raymond Arroyo show again. Before seeing him on the show July 11, I had never seen the Very Reverend David M. O’Connor, S.M., the President of The Catholic University of America. That he has appeared on

¹ Manu Goswami, “Remembering the Future,” [The American Historical Review](#), Vol. 113, No. 2 (April 2008) 424.

² <http://www.theworkofgod.org/Aparitns/Fatima/Message.htm> Accessed July 2, 2009.

EWTN with Raymond Arroyo, may encourage the moral theologians on his faculty to do likewise. I was very glad to see Father O'Connor.³

That is the very good news. The problem is that Father O'Connor is a Canon lawyer, not a moral theologian. Lawyers train to handle conflict situations, though universities are designed to share, to share knowledge, always in accord with the agendas of the bishops. At their founding, the bishops were willing to let the universities lead the way in the search for truth. Lawyers, with their due diligence, can ruin the very collegial foundation necessary for a university. For the good of the university, I worry about a president trained in law.

O'Connor appeared with the Reverend Robert A. Sirico of the Acton Institute, who likes to talk about economics. Both men addressed the latest encyclical, *Veritas in Caritate*, or Truth in Charity.⁴ The Pope gave a copy to President Barack Obama when they met Friday, July 10. O'Connor and Sirico agreed that *Veritas in Caritate* lacks literary unity and that it will take a great deal of time to understand.

Arroyo proffered that the Vatican turned down Douglas W. Kmiec as U.S. Ambassador. Arroyo announced that Obama appointed Kmiec Ambassador to Malta. Arroyo was trying to indicate that Kmiec was persona non grata to the Vatican. This seemed like an ungracious way to embarrass Kmiec, something against which the readings for this Sunday warn.

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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 material.

³ Raymond Arroyo, the Encore Presentation on ETWN, "The World Over," Saturday, July 11, 2009. I do not own the technology required to record this program, and accept the risk associated therewith.

⁴ <http://scottdodge.blogspot.com/2009/07/encyclical-caritas-in-veritate.html> Accessed July 12, 2009.

Isaiah 3:4-7a⁵

Isaiah 5:3-6

Matthew J. Lynch, "Zion's Warrior and the Nations: Isaiah 59:15b—63:6 in Isaiah's Zion Traditions"⁶

God is not fooling around when God proclaims that he is looking out for those "without standing."

Psalm 146:7, 8-9, 9-10 (1b)

The Church makes this Psalm available for Funeral Rites.⁷

Codex Sinaiticus⁸

The continuing point of the exercise reaching into the original manuscripts is to accept some doubt. From doubt, results the 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

⁵ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/print.aspx?manuscript=true&imageType=standard&translation=true&transcription=true&transcriptionType=verse&phd=true&lg=en&quireNo=44&folioNo=6&side=v>
Accessed July 12, 2009.

⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 2 (April 2008) 257.

⁷ N.a., 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 IV: Order of Christian Funerals: Including Appendix 2: Cremation: 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 Jersey: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1998) 307.

⁸ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=26&chapter=144&inputControl=420&lid=en&side=r&verse=10&zoomSlider=0> Accessed May 31, 2009
Psalm 145 in the Lectionary is Psalm 144 in the Codex Sinaiticus.
Psalm 146 in the Lectionary is Psalm 145 in the Sinaiticus.
<http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=26&chapter=146&inputControl=420&lid=en&side=r&zoomSlider=0#> Accessed December 28, 2008
Psalm 146 in the Lectionary is Psalm 145 in the Sinaiticus.
Psalm 147 in the Lectionary is Psalm 146 in the Codex Sinaiticus.

to include this reality as an act of humility against the self-righteous pride required to lead a Christian life.

James 2:1-5⁹

Jas 2:1-13

Teresa Okure, S.H.C.J., "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (Jn 4:1-42) in Africa"¹⁰

Okure points out that the Samaritan woman lacked standing, until Jesus Christ allowed it. Jesus Christ reaches out to all the Faithful in that way.

James 2:1-11

Mark E. Taylor and George H. Guthrie, "The Structure of James"¹¹

Concern for those without standing before the powerful is more than a passing reference, but is at the core of the Letter of James.

Jas 2:4

Peter Spitaler, "James 1:5-8: A Dispute with God"¹²

Spitaler writes, "... at the beginning of his letter, James portrays a 'disputer' quarreling with God. This particular conflict anticipates and complements accounts of interpersonal, social controversies that James addresses later in the letter."

What the Lectionary translates as "have you not made distinctions among yourselves," Spitaler would translate, "Have you not been divided among yourselves ..." The Sinaiticus translation is "do you not then make distinctions."

cf. Matthew 4:23

⁹ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/print.aspx?manuscript=true&imageType=standard&translation=true&transcription=true&transcriptionType=verse&phd=true&lg=en&quireNo=89&folioNo=1&side=v>

Accessed July 5, 2009; translated.

¹⁰ Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 2009) 418.

¹¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 4 (October 2006) 687, 688, 695-700.

¹² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 3 (July 2009) 560, 561, 564, 576.

Mark 7:31-37¹³

There are three difficult Greek words. In Verse 35, some manuscripts omit *immediately*, in *immediately the man's ears were opened*. Some manuscripts omit *immediately* in *his speech impediment was removed*. The Lectionary only uses the first *immediately*. The Sinaiticus omits the first and includes the second.

In Verse 37, *he makes the deaf hear and the mute speak*, some of the better manuscripts omit the second *the*. The Sinaiticus omits the second *the*.

My sense of the difficult words is to make the reading more matter-of-fact.

Mark 24:31

Jim Perkinson, "Kongo *Nkisi* /Canaanite Repartee / Black Savvy"¹⁴

Mark 24-31 is about the Syro-Phoenician woman. Perkinson points out, "only here, in the gospel corpus, is anyone ever affirmed for speaking *logos* (the "word" of sacred power) back to Jesus. And he affirms her response as itself the efficacy that obtains the cure." Like me before The Catholic University of America, the Syro-Phoenician woman lacked status. She was a woman and a foreigner. Jesus, nonetheless, gave her the status she needed for the healing she wanted. I pray that The Catholic University of America would, likewise, give me the status I need in order to heal the breach caused by the censure the American Association of University Professors is imposing on Catholic University

Mark 7:31-37

C. Clifton Black, "Mark as Historian of God's Kingdom"¹⁵

Black writes of, "... a divine eschatology that explodes modern historiography. ... Mark, evangelist and historian, stands ready to assist, for he was the first to make such an attempt. The results, impossible to predict, will surely surprise." As an historian, my approach does link to Mark, in that, I treasure the facts, and whatever they may be. Only after gathering the facts, do I begin to interpret their meaning. Mark was doing the same thing. The interpretation is important.

¹³ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/print.aspx?manuscript=true&imageType=standard&translation=true&transcription=true&transcriptionType=verse&phd=true&lg=en&quireNo=76&folioNo=6&side=v>

Accessed July 5, 2009, translated.

<http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/print.aspx?manuscript=true&imageType=standard&translation=true&transcription=true&transcriptionType=verse&phd=true&lg=en&quireNo=76&folioNo=7&side=r>
Accessed July 12, 2009, translated.

¹⁴ CrossCurrents, Vol. 57, No. 3 (Fall 2007) 271.

¹⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 1 (January 2009) 81.

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