

Readings

First Reading:	Isaiah 50:4c-9a
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 116:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 (9)
Second Reading:	James 2:14-18
Alleluia:	Galatians 6:14
Gospel:	Mark 8:27-35

Commentary

The context of the reader makes a difference for the meanings found in the Readings. For example, the texts have different meanings when read in San Salvador in El Salvador¹ and in Washington, D.C. Where Jesus lived, in Galilee, during his public life, had more in common with San Salvador than Washington. Washington is more like Rome at the time of Jesus.

This parallel is foundational to Liberation Theology, which gives a preference to the poor. By looking toward the cross of Christ, Liberation Theology offers hope for a better life. That cross contributes hope to all.

Isaiah tells the Faithful not to worry about persecution. Psalm 116 expresses great hope for the future. The Epistle of James encourages the Faithful to care for the poor. In the Gospel, after admitting that he is the Christ, Jesus changes the subject to a consideration of the cross.

If Sacred Scripture is read in the context of the reader; EWTN is viewed in the context of the viewer. When the Biblical prophets speak truth to power, they dare not lie. The worst kind of a lie is a half-truth.

I am dumbfounded, therefore, at the reappearance of Wendy E. Long, Council to the Judicial Confirmation Network, who again attacked Sonia Sonyamayor in the same biased uncharitable spirit as last time. I distributed the background on her by way of the internet five weeks ago.² Long belongs to Republican politics, including the unconscionable Swift Boat attacks on John Kerry in the election before last.³ John Kerry, a Catholic, a true war hero and 2004 Democratic presidential candidate who did

¹ <http://www.google.com/search?q=Capitol+of+San+Dalvador&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a> [accessed July 19, 2009].

² Raymond Arroyo, the Encore Presentation on ETWN, "The World Over," Friday, July 17, 2009. I do not own the technology required to record this program, and accept the risk associated therewith.

³

http://www.democraticunderground.com/discuss/duboard.php?az=view_all&address=389x5728199 (accessed June 14, 2009).

not realize that he needed to react to the half-truths put out by the Swift Boaters, until it was too late.

Long uses Swift Boat half-truth methodology to attack Sonyamayor. For example, Long presented a judicial decision of Sonyamayor as if it were a decision the judge made alone. In reality, Sonyamayor was part of a panel of judges making that decision. The attentive viewer will also note that the attack Arroyo made on Sonyamayor was not based on her many judicial decisions, but on her activity advocating outside the courtroom.

No judge in recent history has made as many decisions as Sonyamayor. With most of the Congress being professional lawyers, they know better than to accept the trash Arroyo puts out through Long. The Senators also know that all court rulings have a public record justification for the decision. They are aware that, within days of her nomination, Justice Sonyamayor discussed the details of the Connecticut Firefighters case in a television interview, which was quoted in major newspapers. There is, however, a far bigger burden at stake.

Inadvertently perhaps, Arroyo points out that the Bishops have not offered convincing arguments concerning abortion. The arguments the Bishops offer are simplistic and not convincing in the real world of life as lived: imperfect life, with heartaches: personal, physical, philosophical, charitable, selfish, and lies to cover up sin. That is why Catholics voted for Barack Obama and how Obama is now able to add another Catholic to the Supreme Court, who does not follow the abortion lead of the hierarchy.

Six of the nine judges are about to be Catholic. They consider Roe v. Wade, in the words of Sonyamayor, "settled law." Arroyo did not mention that comment. In addition, the nominee for Surgeon General is a Catholic highly honored by the Holy See. She also has no problem with the policies of Obama on abortion. More and more, abortion looks like a red herring used by the Bishops to distract from their own sexual cover-ups.

As an academic, I remain upset that the administration of The Catholic University of America (CU) is on the censured list of the American Association of University Professors. In the past, I have argued that CU contributes the arguments the hierarchy can use in the public sphere. Perhaps I have been too generous. Perhaps the reality is that the Bishops are dictating what the professors at CU are to think and have turned CU into a catechetical school, masquerading under the name of a university.

The prayer for the Sunday is for the ability to read Sacred Scripture, in the spirit of Liberation Theology, from the point of view of most of society.

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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.

Isaiah 50:4c-9a⁴

The Sinaiticus Greek shows a problem with the manuscript at verse 4c, for *opens my ear that I may hear*.

Isa 50:4-11

Gregory J. Polan, O.S.B., review of John Goldingay, The Message of Isaiah 40—55: A Literary-Theological Commentary⁵

Polan writes, “In walking the reader through this passage [Isa 52:13—53:12], he [Goldingay] draws lines of connection to the other three Servant Songs (Isa 41:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-11 [used here]) to show both the development of the image of the Servant and an unfolding portrait of the Servant’s mission.” Polan concludes that Goldingay “provides a commentary that will be standard and essential reading for years to come.”

Isaiah 50:4-11

Eugene Hensell, O.S.B., review of Jim. W. Adams, The Performative Nature and Function of Isaiah 40—55⁶

After citing Isa 4:11 among many other passages, Hensell concludes, “A. has shown that used carefully and in conjunction with other exegetical tools speech act theory can uncover fresh insights and can lead the way to deeper meanings.”

Isa 50:4-5

Reed Lessing, review of Archibald L. H. M. Van Wieringen, The Reader-Oriented Unity of the Book of Isaiah⁷

Though he has some reservations, Lessing thinks highly of Van Wieringen. Lessing writes that in Van Wieringen,

The Servant listens to Yhwh (50:4-5 [used here]), whereas the people do not (e.g., 42:19-20; 43:8; 48:8). ... Van Wieringen provides a wealth of synchronic connections within the book of Isaiah, but he often fails to synthesize his results either at the end of chapters or at the end of the book. The author’s strength, however, is his ability to provide structural sense in a biblical book

⁴ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/print.aspx?manuscript=true&imageType=standard&translation=true&transcription=true&transcriptionType=verse&phd=true&lg=en&quireNo=45&folioNo=5&side=> (accessed July 18, 2009).

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (July 2007) 544.

⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 2 (April 2008) 332.

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 1 (January 2008) 133-134.

that often appears to be a meandering homily with no stated communicative goals.

Isaiah 50:7

Dino Dozzi, "'Thus Says the Lord' The Gospel in the Writings of Saint Francis"⁸
Saint Francis writes of his brothers, "Let them not be ashamed and remember, moreover, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the all powerful living God, set His face like flint (Is 50:7 [used here]) and was not ashamed." In other words, Franciscan Christian asceticism offers, in the words of Dozzi, "the inner freedom from all forms of desire."

Psalm 116:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 (9)

The Church makes verses from this Psalm available for both funerals and visits to the sick.⁹

Codex Sinaiticus¹⁰

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

⁸ Greyfriars Review, Vol. 18, Supplement (2004) 55.

⁹ 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) 224, 274; 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) 327.

¹⁰ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=26&chapter=114&imageType=raking&imageType=standard&inputControl=420&lid=en&manuscript=true&phd=true&side=r&transcription=true&transcriptionType=page&transcriptionType=verse&translation=true&zoomSlider=0#> (accessed January 24, 2009). Psalm 116 in the Lectionary is Psalm 114 in the Codex Sinaiticus. Psalm 118 in the Lectionary is Psalm 117 in the Codex Sinaiticus.

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

The Lectionary translates the same Greek word for soul as *life* in verse 4, *save my life*. In verse 8, the Lectionary does use soul, *he had freed my soul from death*. The Lectionary translation leaves me wondering what accounts for the difference.

James 2:14-18¹¹

James 2:16-18, 22-26

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.¹²

The Princeton University Library has a Fifth/Sixth Century papyrus manuscript with these verses.

James 2:15-16

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults¹³

The Bishops use this verse in Chapter 31, "Seventh Commandment: Do Not Steal—Act Justly." In this chapter on justice, the Bishops write about acts of charity, to say, "Acts of Charity for the poor are a good way to start living the Church's social teaching. ... This requires participation in political and social processes to correct unjust laws and structures of injustice." The Bishops pretend that only the state has a need to "correct unjust laws and structures of injustice," as if their own employees and sexual victims had no such claims.

James 2:14-26

Mark E. Taylor and George H. Guthrie, "The Structure of James"¹⁴

These later verses refer back to the introduction in James 1. In this section of the letter, James is concerned about wrong actions toward the poor.

¹¹ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/print.aspx?manuscript=true&imageType=standard&translation=true&transcription=true&transcriptionType=verse&phd=true&lg=en&quireNo=89&folioNo=2&side=r>
Accessed July 18, 2009.

¹² Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 99.

¹³ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006, 425.

¹⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 4 (October 2006) 687, 392-700.

James 5:10-11

Joel Marcus, review of David R. Nienhuis, Not by Paul Alone: The Formation of the Catholic Epistle Collection and the Christian Canon¹⁵

Nienhuis argues that James was written to offset the Pauline teaching about Faith alone being necessary for salvation. Marcus has some reservation, among others, about accepting the mid-Second-century that Nienhuis proposes when James was written.

Galatians 6:14

Mark 8:27-35

This may be the first time I have not found any difficulties with the New Testament manuscripts. Therefore, let me add a bit more from the Sinaiticus web site.

'Codex Sinaiticus'¹⁶

Date

Codex Sinaiticus is generally dated to the fourth century, and sometimes more precisely to the middle of that century. This is based on study of the handwriting, known as palaeographical analysis. Only one other nearly complete manuscript of the Christian Bible – Codex Vaticanus (kept in the Vatican Library in Rome) – is of a similarly early date. The only manuscripts of Christian scripture that are definitely of an earlier date than Codex Sinaiticus contain small portions of the text of the Bible.

Content

As it survives today, Codex Sinaiticus comprises just over 400 large leaves of prepared animal skin, each of which measures 380 mm high by 345 mm wide [roughly 15" x 13.5"]. On these parchment leaves is written around half of the Old Testament and Apocrypha (the Septuagint), the whole of the New Testament, and two early Christian texts not found in modern Bibles. Most of the first part of the manuscript (containing most of the so-called historical books, from Genesis to 1 Chronicles) is now missing and presumed to be lost.

The Septuagint includes books which many Protestant Christian denominations place in the Apocrypha. Those present in

¹⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 2 (April 2008) 385.

¹⁶ <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/codex/date.aspx> [accessed July 19, 2009].
<http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/codex/content.aspx> [accessed July 19, 2009].

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the surviving part of the Septuagint in Codex Sinaiticus are 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, 1 & 4 Maccabees, Wisdom and Sirach.

The number of the books in the New Testament in Codex Sinaiticus is the same as that in modern Bibles in the West, but the order is different. The Letter to the Hebrews is placed after Paul's Second Letter to the Thessalonians, and the Acts of the Apostles between the Pastoral and Catholic Epistles.

The two other early Christian texts are an Epistle by an unknown writer claiming to be the Apostle Barnabas, and 'The Shepherd', written by the early second-century Roman writer, Hermas.

Mark 8:27-35

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.¹⁷

The Bodleian Library at Oxford has a Sixth Century parchment with the verses 27 and 28. The Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna has a Fourth/Fifth century parchment with verses 33-37.

The Alands comment on verse 34 about taking up the cross.

At Mark 10:21 [to be used for the Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time] *sell what you have ... and ...follow me*, the addition [of taking up the cross] was probably suggested by Mark 8:34. Although the sequence of words there is reversed ... the phrase ...[come follow me] prompted the association of 8:34 [used here] and led to the insertion ... [take up your cross] at the end of the sentence in a number of manuscripts. The evidence for omission is incomparably stronger.

The Alands think that monks made the insertion at Mark 10:21 as an act of piety.

Mark 8:31

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults¹⁸

Under "Doctrinal Statement" in their Chapter 8, "The Saving Death and Resurrection of Christ," the Bishops write that "Christ suffered because he was `rejected

¹⁷ Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 122, 125, 308.

¹⁸ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006, 98.

by the elders and chief priests and scribes' who handed `him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified' (Mk 8:31 [used here]; Mt 20:19)."

Mark 8:29-33

Brendan Byrne, S.J., "Jesus as Messiah in the Gospel of Luke: Discerning a Pattern of Correction"¹⁹

The Gospels all qualify Jesus as the waited Davidic messiah. Byrne argues, "Clearly, then, scholars from a Christian background must be wary of attributing to Second Temple Judaism the existence of a pervasive Davidic messianism ... [that] is, in fact, largely the construct of Christian imagination."

Mark 8:27-30

Todd E. Klutz, review of Richard L. Rohrbaugh, The New Testament in Cross-Cultural Perspective²⁰

Klutz writes,

In chap. 5, R. reconsiders the long-debated question of Jesus' messianic self-consciousness in light of the collectivist mode of constructing identity common in the ancient Mediterranean world, with the *locus classicus* of the debate (Mark 8:27-30 [used here]) interpreted as an inquiry into the match between Jesus' public and in-group identities.

Klutz thinks that Rohrbaugh has much to offer.

Mark 8:29

John E. Thiel, "For What May We Hope? Thoughts on the Eschatological Imagination"²¹

Thiel argues that eternity will be spent fulfilling promises. Thiel writes, "Even though this passage [Mark 8:31, used here] characterizes Jesus' explanation as instruction, the Easter event seems to raise it to the heights of promise, and, in light of the Easter event, to the summit of a promise fulfilled." Thiel goes on, "Promises are the most important words that persons speak, since they extend personal relationship into an unseen future in which faithfulness may be broken."

¹⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 1 (January 2003) 80.

²⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 4 (October 2007) 830.

²¹ Theological Studies, Vol. 67, No. 3 (September 2006) 532.

Mark 8:31

C. Clifton Black, "Mark as Historian of God's Kingdom"²²
Black argues,

In Mark's Gospel, however, Jesus' mighty works are of a piece with his teaching (1:25-27), which includes the Son of Man's death and resurrection (8:31 [used here]; 9:9) but comes repeatedly into focus on the kingdom of God (1:13-15; 9:1). The big question is not how the historian deals with the resurrection, which in Mark is but the climax of a larger apocalyptic scenario (see 13:3-37). The crucial issue is how we shall address a claim for the irruption of God's kingdom in human history.

Mark 8:31

PHEME PERKINS, "What is a Gnostic Gospel?"²³

After referring to Mark 8:31, Perkins argues, "Although it is irresponsible to market Gnostic texts as Gospels, the Christian canon might have influenced the scribes who assembled the Coptic codices."

Mark 8:31

Sean Freyne, "The Galilean Jesus and a Contemporary Christology"²⁴

Freyne points out that Jesus changes the subject, when he is recognized as the Messiah.

Mark 8:31

Robert Lassalle-Klein, "Jesus of Galilee and the Crucified People: The Contextual Christology of Jon Sobrino and Ignacio Ellacuría"²⁵
Lassalle-Klein argues

Noting that biblical scholars generally view the three passion predictions (Mk 8:31 [used here]; 9:31; 10:33-34) as later insertions, [Daniel] Harrington says that Sobrino "wisely points to the fate of John the Baptist" to argue that Jesus went to Jerusalem ready to accept death "out of fidelity to the cause of the kingdom of

²² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 1 (January 2009) 81.

²³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 1 (January 2009) 110.

²⁴ Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 2009) 286.

²⁵ Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 2009) 364.

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God out of confidence in the one whom he called 'Father,' and out of loyalty to his prophetic calling."

Mark 8:33

Mary Ann Beavis, review of Ira Brent Driggers, Following God through Mark: Theological Tension in the Second Gospel²⁶

In the words of Beavis, Driggers argues,

The scenario of Jesus and the disciples as engaged in an eschatological struggle between the in breaking reign of God and the powerful kingdom of Satan is likewise thinly attested in the Gospel, since "Satan" is mentioned in only four passages in Mark, once with reference to Peter (1:13; 3:23 and 26; 4:15; 8:33 [used here]), and only the "parables" in 3:23-37 seem to associate Satan with Beelzebul, the "prince of demons."

In other words, Beavis thinks Driggers needs more work to be convincing.

Mark 8:34

Sharon H. Ringe, review of Barbara E. Reid, O.P., Taking Up the Cross: New Testament Interpretations through Latina and Feminist Eyes²⁷

Ringe explains that "A challenge from a student to take into account the deadly consequences of the command to take up the cross (Mark 8:43 [used here]) sparked Reid's `ardent interest in looking at the ways in which Christians understand and speak about the cross and what effect that has on the way we live' (p. 1)."

Mark 8:34

Jon Sobrino, S.J., "Jesus of Galilee from the Salvadoran Context: Compassion, Hope, and Following the Light of the Cross"²⁸

Sobrino stresses the parallel between El Salvador and Galilee, as described above the double line.

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

²⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 598.

²⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 619.

²⁸ Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 2009) 458.

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I am adding the following to reading 128, the Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, September 6, 2009.

Mark 24:31

Jim Perkinson, "Kongo *Nkisi* /Canaanite Repartee / Black Savvy"²⁹

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 the administration of Catholic University

²⁹ CrossCurrents, Vol. 57, No. 3 (Fall 2007) 271.