

Personal Notes

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Reading 144C, October 13, 2013

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Raymond J. Jirran, Ph.D.

At Mass, Sunday, August 11, I began wondering what the Columbian priest was doing at my Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, when the ratio of priests to the Faithful is 1/1360 in the United States and 1/4910 in Columbia. For the Philippines, the ratio is even worse, 1/9939.¹ One wonders why foreign priests come to the United States when the need in their native places is so much greater.

There is no question about the decline in priestly numbers, but that question is not the question. The question is why have both priestly and Faithful numbers declined. When Paul Sullins of the Department of Sociology at The Catholic University of America studied the priest shortage, he titled his study, "Empty Pews and Empty Altars: A Reconsideration of the Catholic Priest Shortage."²

When declining numbers of the Faithful are taken into account, priests in the United States are not overworked. Sullins found that "In the most recent years there have been just under 39 of these [life cycle of baptism, marriage, and funeral sacraments] per priest performed annually; but in the mid-1950s there were over 40." Sullins concludes, "the absence of a clergy crisis is a much more serious problem than the presence of one."

Sullins writes,

What has diminished, in other words, is not the substantive power of the particular ideals of the Catholic faith, or even the level of personal belief in them, but the tendency or perceived necessity in American society for *any* [his emphasis] religious belief to find expression in institutional practice.

Institutional practice, then, requires examination. Canonization of Saints is a reasonable place to begin. As long as Pope Francis keeps John Paul II (Father of the sexual coverup) and Benedict XVI (enabler) on the fast track for Sainthood, Pope Francis will remain the complicit Pope Pabulum and the Faithful can expect continued declining interest in institutional Roman Catholicism.

¹ http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/rel_cat-religion-catholics (accessed August 11, 2013) and http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/rel_cat-tot_pri-religion-cath (accesses August 11, 2013).

² Paul Sullins, "Empty Pews and Empty Altars: A Reconsideration of the Catholic Priest Shortage (Revised 8-10-2000)" Catholic Social Science Review, 2001 ages 253-270. <https://www.google.com/search?q=Paul+Sullins%2C+Empty&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a> (accessed August 11, 2013) page 10/21, 17/21.

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The Responsorial Antiphon: *The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power* (cfr. Psalm 98:2b). *The nations* is a secular reference. The Faithful can pray that religious institutions catch up to recognizing the saving power of the Lord.

Readings

First Reading	2 Kings 5:14-17
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4 (cf. 2b)
Second Reading:	2 Timothy 2:8-13
Alleluia:	1 Thessalonians 5:18
Gospel:	Luke 17:11-19

Annotated Bibliography

Musings above the solid line draw from material below. Those uninterested in scholarly and tangential details should stop reading here. If they do, however, they may miss some interesting details.

2 Kings 5:14-17

Personal Notes cites members of the Protestant Revolt in the spirit of Gerald O'Collins, S.J., writing,³

In fact, by allowing the liturgy to be celebrated in the vernacular, by stressing “the table of God’s word” along with the importance of the homily (no. 52), and by granting to the laity—although restricted to certain circumstances—communion “under both kinds” (no. 55), Vatican II conceded the demands of Martin Luther and other 16th-century Protestant reformers, albeit in the 20th century. In short, while SC [Sacrosanctum concilium [sic]] did not use explicitly the language of “reform” or “reformation,” what it enacted can and should be described in those terms.

Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4 (cf. 2b)

Psalm 98:4, 8

Gianni Barbiero, “Psalm 132: A Prayer of `Solomon’”⁴

Gianni Barbiero notes the Kingdom Psalms (95:1, 96:12, 98:4, 8 [used here], cf. 149:5) have a collective, eschatological sense.

³ Theological Studies, Vol. 73, No. 4 (December 2012) 772.

⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 2 (April 2013) 248.

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Psalm 98:3-10

Nancy L. DeClassé-Walford, "Psalm 145: All Flesh Will Bless God's Holy Name"⁵

DeClassé-Walford asserts, "only here [Psalm 145] and in Ps 96 does the psalmist refer to God as "*the king*." DeClassé-Walford argues, "The psalm singer (vv. 1 and 2) and then all of the covenant partners . . . will bless and thank Yhwh for all that Yhwh is."

2 Timothy 2:8-13

This reading is available for Funerals for Adults.⁶

2 Tim 2:1-7

Philip H. Towner, review of Michel Gourgues, Les deux lettres à Timothée, La lettre 'a Tite'⁷

Towner reports:

Quite apart from G.'s assertion of the material indebtedness of 1 Tim 2:11-15 to 1 Corinthians, here he offers a modest exploration of the function of intertextuality as a device by which Pauline tradition can be reshaped and reimagined authoritatively for a new context—intertextuality as a modality of authoritative pseudonymity. I wish that G. had pursued this further, particularly with reference to the presentation of Paul in and through the intertextuality rich passages of 2 Tim 2:8-13 [used here]; 3:10-17 [used next Sunday]; 4:9-18 [used the Sunday after that]. Greater attention to intertextuality might have led to a different assessment of the three letters, with 1 Timothy/Titus understood as reimaginings of Pauline ecclesiology, and 2 Timothy being a theologizing of the Pauline mission and (near) canonization of the apostle.

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 74, No. 1 (January 2012) 58.

⁶ 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) Part III: Texts of Sacred Scripture 13 Funerals for Adults page 220.

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 2 (April 2013) 361.

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2 Timothy 2:9

Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563), "Commentary on Ephesians"⁸

The Protestant revolutionary, Musculus, insists "that God can still further the cause of his truth despite the actions of tyrants, so that even if the apostle was bound in their chains, the gospel [sic] itself was not in prison, just as he says in 2 Timothy 2:9 that the Word of God is not bound in the way that he was." That may be what is happening with the Roman Catholic liturgy in the United States. The Papacy has bound the 2011 Missal in illiteracy, yet the Word continues. Saint Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556) was a contemporary of Musculus.

2 Timothy 2:11

Daniel B. Wallace, With Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes: Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament⁹

For 2 Timothy 2:11, the Lectionary has *This saying is trustworthy: If we have died with him [sic] we shall also live with him.* The *if* phrase is assumed true for the sake of argument. Wallace argues, "By translating it *if*, the audience is drawn into the argument of the apodosis . . . it is not the protasis that is in doubt, but the apodosis."

2 Timothy 2:13

William Greenhill (1591-1671), "Exposition of Ezekiel"¹⁰

The Protestant revolutionary, Greenhill, argues,

Is he [God] not bound up by his faithfulness and promise to do them good though they fail? According to that in 2 Timothy 2:13, "If we believe not yet he abides faithful. He cannot deny himself."

Answer: If the covenant were [sic] made on conditions, and those not observed, no imputation could be laid on the Lord if he perform not what was his part. You may see how the covenant runs in several places: "The Lord your God, he is God, the faithful God, who keeps covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; and repays them that hate him to their face, to

⁸ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament X: Galatians, Ephesians, (ed.) Gerald L. Bray (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2011) 406.

⁹ Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 1996, 220, 694.

¹⁰ in Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament XII: Ezekiel, Daniel, (ed.) Carl L. Beckwith (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2012) 89.

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destroy them” (Deut 7:9). All the blessings and cursing, Deuteronomy 28, depend on obedience and disobedience, keeping and breaking covenant, so that the Lord is free to punish if man [sic] perform not.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Luke 17:11-19

Luke 17:16

Maurice A. Robinson, “The Rich Man and Lazarus—Luke 16:19-31”¹¹

The missing Greek for *on his face* in *he fell at the feet of Jesus* helps the manuscript researcher decide which reading to choose. The Lectionary does not translate the preposition in question. I am not quarreling with the translation.

Personal Notes gave up systematically examining the illiterate 2011 Missal November 25, 2012. On April 7, 2013, with Reading 045C 2nd Sunday of Easter_A Catholic Bible Study 130407, Personal Notes systematically began to incorporate material from A Commentary on the Order of Mass of *The Roman Missal: A New English Translation: Developed under the Auspices of the Catholic Academy of Liturgy*, Edward Foley (ed.) (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011). The hope is that this approach will help the Faithful pray with the new Missal, despite itself.

Catherine Vincie, “The Mystagogical Implications”¹²

Vincie dreams,

There is no room in this gathering for distinctions among us, no privileged seats, no special places for any except the poor at the Lord’s table. . . . After reverencing the altar the priest then goes to the presider’s chair. Not a throne, this simple but dignified chair—along with his vesture—symbolizes his leadership and ministerial ordering within the people of God.

¹¹ in Translating the New Testament: Text, Translation, Theology, Stanley E. Porter and Mark J. Boda (eds.) (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009) 100.

¹² in A Commentary on the Order of Mass of *The Roman Missal: A New English Translation: Developed under the Auspices of the Catholic Academy of Liturgy*, Edward Foley (ed.) (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011) 144-145.

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Except Vincie denies that chair to be a throne, I would have thought, as someone who helps set up special thrones for Deacons and Presiders at Mass, I know better. The dictionary defines throne as a ***chair of state***.¹³

For more on sources see the Appendix file. A complete set of Personal Notes, dating from the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, July 14, 2002 to the present, is on the web site at www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes.

In the gobbledygook prayer at Sunday Mass immediately following mention of forgiven sins, the Faithful, hearing the 2011 Roman Missal, can listen for “make us always determined to carry out good works.”¹⁴ This is a call for grace that some Black Baptists call to mind with *For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him* (Genesis 21:2).¹⁵

¹³ <http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/unabridged/throne> (accessed August 18, 2013).

¹⁴ n.a., The Roman Missal: Renewed by Decree of the Most Holy Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI and Revised at the Direction of Pope John Paul II: English Translation According to the Third Typical Edition: For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America: Approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See (Washington, DC, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011) 488. Personal Notes refers to this book as the Missal.

¹⁵ UMI Annual Sunday School Lesson Commentary: Precepts for Living ®: 2013-2014: International Sunday School Lessons: Volume 165: UMI (Urban Ministries, Inc.), a. Okechuku Ogonnaya, Ph.D., (ed.) (Chicago, IL 60643: UMI (Urban Ministries, Inc.), 2013) 66-67.