

## Personal Notes

Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time, Reading 153C, November 3, 2013

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There are two basic approaches to Bible Study. One: start with the facts to see where they lead. Two: start with where you want to go and make the facts fit. Jeff Cavins, in his Bible Timeline,<sup>1</sup> implicitly prefers the latter. The Navarre Bible Commentary, which Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church uses as compatible with Cavins, explicitly forces facts into preconceived directions. Navarre is about Opus Dei politics favoring the wealthy against the poor. That means opposition to change.

The Navarre-friendly book reviewer, Monsignor John F. McCarthy, puts it this way. "The Commentators have taken a position fully in keeping with traditional Catholic interpretation of the inspired text and basically in opposition to the mainstream of historical-criticism over the past two centuries and more." McCarthy links the Navarre Commentators with Opus Dei.<sup>2</sup>

As interested in history as Cavins claims to be, he has no mention of the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III that contains the earliest surviving picture of an Israelite, Jehu. The obelisk, dated from about 825 B.C., depicts Jehu offering tribute to Shalmaneser about 841 B.C. A replica is available at The Catholic University of America.<sup>3</sup>

Most disturbingly, Cavins leaps to make the facts fit the 1968 birth control encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*. After the fact, what Cavins presents as prophetic, may be a cause of marital dysfunction. That *Humanae Vitae* nonsense is forcing people away from the Church deserves consideration. Some facts lend support for examining such a thesis.

In 1963, three per cent White and twenty-five percent Black births were to unmarried women. By 2009, those statistics had changed to twenty-nine percent White and seventy-three percent Black.<sup>4</sup> By taking away the dignity of protected sex, the

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<sup>1</sup> Jeff Cavins, Tim Gray, and Sarah Christmyer, The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation (West Chester, Pennsylvania: Ascension Press, 2004, 2011)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.rtforum.org/lt/lt102.html> (accessed August 26, 2013. The quotation is on page 1/5. The reference to Opus Dei on page 4/5.

<sup>3</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black\\_Obelisk\\_of\\_Shalmaneser\\_III](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Obelisk_of_Shalmaneser_III) (accessed August 28, 2013)

<sup>4</sup> David Wessel, "50 Years of a Dream: On the anniversary of the March on Washington, how has the outlook for white and black Americans changed?" The Wall Street Journal, Saturday/Sunday, August 24-25, 2013, page C 3, chart above the fold.

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Papacy may have added an impossible burden to that love required to make marriages work. Personal Notes, therefore, is more comfortable casting the recent Papacy in the role of the bad Kings of Israel, rather than the Prophets who called them out. The Papacy has been unwilling to consider whether the medieval Thomistic concept of human sexuality merits reconsideration in the light of newly-discovered scientific facts.

Sunday homilies attest that Church politics reigns over truth. Roman Catholic priests and bishops demonstrate, by their preaching only at the third-grade level, a fear of reading, lest they think differently from the Papacy. The unintended political result of such politics is the Faithful have reason not to listen, particularly to the need to have their marriages blessed by either the Church or the State. When the Papacy loses its moral compass, so does the rest of civilization. The prayer for this Sunday is that God bestow mercy on the Faithful with better Church leadership. As the 145<sup>th</sup> Psalmist puts it, *I will praise your name* (as distinct from institutional leaders) *forever, my king and my God*.

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## Readings

First Reading	Wisdom 11:22—12:2
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13, 14 (cf. 1)
Second Reading:	2 Thessalonians 1:11—2:2
Alleluia:	John 3:16
Gospel:	Luke 19:1-10

## 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.

### **Wisdom 11:22—12:2**

Wisdom 11:22

Gerry Wheaton, "The Festival of Hanukkah in 2 Maccabees: Its Meaning and Function"<sup>5</sup>

Wheaton notes, "The image of weighing mountains in scales occurs in the LXX only in Isa 40:12 and Wis 11:22, though the depiction of God commanding and overwhelming the mountains is more common."

### **Psalm 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13, 14 (cf. 1)**

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<sup>5</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 74, No. 2 (July 2012) 257-258.

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Pastoral Care of the Sick, Part II: Pastoral Care of the Dying, Chapter Eight: Rites for Exceptional Circumstances, Continuous Rite of Penance, Anointing, and Viaticum, Responsorial Psalms E, uses Psalm 145.<sup>6</sup>

Psalm 145:1

Nancy L. DeClassé-Walford, "Psalm 145: All Flesh Will Bless God's Holy Name"<sup>7</sup>

DeClassé-Walford argues there are two central themes in Psalm 145, praise and recognition of God as king. *I will praise your name forever, my king and my God*. This psalm appears in the Jewish Prayer Book more than any of the other 149 psalms in the Hebrew Psalter. DeClassé-Walford notes that "the Babylonian Talmud tractate Ber. 4b states that Psalm 145, like the Shema [Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one . . . ], is to be recited three times a day."

## 2 Thessalonians 1:11—2:2

2 Thess 2:1-12

Alicia Batten, review of Fritz W. Rocker, Belial und Katechon: Eine Untersuchung zu 2Thess 2, 1-12 und 1Thess 4,13—5,11<sup>8</sup>

Batten has great respect for this slightly revised dissertation by Rocker. The focus is mainly on 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, including only two verses from the readings this Sunday. The matter is about *the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ*. Rocker concludes that Paul and the Synoptic Gospels are proclaiming restraint against lies and lawlessness. Personal Notes regards any proclamation against lies and lawlessness as belonging in the context of the Twentieth Century Papacy and the sexual cover up.

2 Thessalonians 2:1

Daniel B. Wallace, With Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes: Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> 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 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 (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1983) 328.

<sup>7</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 74, No. 1 (July 2012) 55, 58.

<sup>8</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 73, No. 2 (April 2011) 403.

<sup>9</sup> Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 1996, 288, 290 (source of the first quote), 398 (source of the second quote), 735. For TSKS see page 270.

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Wallace has a lot to say about this verse. Wallace translates, “Now **we** ask you, brothers, concerning **the coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ **and** our **gathering together** with him.” The Lectionary has, *We ask you, brothers and sisters, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our assembling with him*. The Lectionary omits *now*, adds *and sisters*, substitutes *with regard to* for *concerning*, and substitutes *assembling* for *gathering together*. Personal Notes is only noting the differences, not judging which is the better translation. Wallace continues,

This text impacts the discussion in some American evangelical circles over the time of the rapture. Many posttribulationists/non-dispensationalists have considered the two to have the same referent precisely because of their misunderstanding of Sharp’s rule and its specific requirements.

Since the TSKS [article-substantive-και-substantive] construction involves impersonal substantives, the highest degree of doubts cast upon the probability of the terms referring to the same event. This is especially the case since the terms look to concrete temporal referents (the parousia [sic] and the gathering of the saints), for the identical category is unattested for *concrete* impersonals in the NT.

This is not to say that one could not see a posttribulational rapture in the text, for even if the words do not have an identical referent, they could have simultaneous ones. Our only point is that because of the misuse of syntax by some scholars, certain approaches to the theology of the NT have often been jettisoned without a fair hearing.

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The first person plural passes almost imperceptibly from exclusive to inclusive in this verse: “*we* ask you” is clearly exclusive, while “*our* Lord” and “*our* gathering” are clearly inclusive. This illustrates that even in the same text one cannot assume that the presence of the second person pronoun (“we ask **you** [sic]”) renders all first person pronouns exclusive.

## **John 3:16**

## **Luke 19:1-10**

Luke 19:1-10

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Carol Schersten LaHurd, review of Kenneth E. Bailey, Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels<sup>10</sup>

Referencing Luke 10:1-10, LaHurd reports,

. . . Jesus' interaction with the oppressed and the oppressor. Interspersed with the rhetorical-theological exploration are cultural details: treatment of beggars, norms of hospitality, and the significance of Zacchaeus's climbing a tree. Conclusions include the argument that Zacchaeus's salvation is "a process that affects all of life" and that Jesus in these two stories is living out his expressed ministry of "proclamation, justice advocacy, and compassion" (p. 185). This is B. at his best: a careful reader who shares his knowledge of ancient sources, poetic conventions, and cultural background.

Luke 19:1-10

Gioacchino Campese, C.S., "The Irruption of Migrants: Theology of Migration in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"<sup>11</sup>

Campese argues,

Theology of migration starting from this profound rediscovery of the Christian tradition of hospitality, inspired by some of the biblical icons of hospitality, such as Abraham (Gen 18) and Jesus himself (Lk 19:1-10 [used here]), has also affirmed hospitality as a *locus theologicus*, that is, a privileged locus where God reveals Godself [sic] in often surprising ways and by grace enables the conversion and the transformation of individuals and communities.

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 pray with the new Missal, despite itself.

Luke 19:1-10

Mary Collins and Edward Foley, "Mystagogy: Discerning the Mystery of Faith"<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 73, No. 3 (July 2011) 606.

<sup>11</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 73, No. 1 (March 2012) 29-30.

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Collins and Foley offer the following:

Jesus as Mystagogue

The foundational reason that Mystagogy is considered a potential theological method in Christianity must be the memory of Jesus as both a frequent and adept ritualizer, especially evident in his table ministry. Robert Karris captures this ritual propensity when noting that, in the Gospel of Luke, “Jesus is either going to a meal, at a meal, or coming from a meal.” This waggish characterization supports a serious theological point: “in Luke’s Gospel Jesus got himself crucified by the way he ate.” Besides the Gospel of Luke, Edward Schillebeeckx demonstrates that Jesus’ practice of eating with sinners extends across the gospel landscape. Joachim Jeremias realized early on that this practice was a key psychological factor in turning the Pharisees against Jesus. Sallie McFague, among others, considers Jesus’ eating and drinking with sinners as illustrative of the enacted parable of Jesus’ own life in which he is revealed as “parable of God.” Beyond eating and drinking with sinners, meal-sharing [sic] is generally recognized as a key practice of the historical Jesus.

Personal Notes cites members of the Protestant Revolt in the spirit of Gerald O’Collins, S.J., writing,<sup>13</sup>

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 16<sup>th</sup>-century Protestant reformers, albeit in the 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

Luke 19:8

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<sup>12</sup> 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) 84 n 30. On August 28, 2013, this passage was corrected and uploaded at Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Reading 132C, September 15, 2013.

<sup>13</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 73, No. 4 (December 2012) 772.

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Erasmus Sarcerius (1501-1559), "Annotations on Ephesians"<sup>14</sup>

The Protestant revolutionary, Sarcerius, limits restitution. "Those who do not have the means to repay this are not obliged to do so, as long as they are willing and ready to . . . Zacchaeus was right to give back, as far as he could, the things he had stolen and cheated people of."

This principle might be applied to involuntary servitude.

For context, Desiderius Erasmus lived 1466-1536.

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](http://www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes).

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The Responsorial Antiphon for this Sunday is *I will praise your name forever, my king [sic] and my God*.<sup>15</sup> Just as the ancient Israelite people were able to praise God, despite bad leadership, so can the Faithful praise God, despite the cesspool of sexual evil admitted in the current Papacy. The sexual coverup, at least, amounts to a cesspool of evil.

In the gobbledygook prayer at Sunday Mass immediately following mention of forgiven sins, the Faithful hearing the 2011 Roman Missal can listen for "Almighty and merciful God"<sup>16</sup> and pray for institutional religion, including the Roman Catholic Church.

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<sup>14</sup> 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) 360.

<sup>15</sup> 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 the Saints (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1988) 808. Personal Notes refers to this book as the Lectionary.

<sup>16</sup> 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

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This is a call for grace that some Black Baptists call to mind with

Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the god of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you and seen that which is done to you in Egypt; and I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey (Exodus 3:16-17).<sup>17</sup>

So long as Roman Catholic priests and bishops demonstrate, by their preaching, a fear of reading, lest they think differently from the Papacy, the Faithful have reason not to listen, particularly to the need to have their marriages blessed by either the Church or the State.

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(Washington, DC, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011) . Personal Notes refers to this book as the Missal.

<sup>17</sup> 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) 101-102.