

Personal Notes

Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time, 154A, November 6, 2011

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The Church hierarchy, like shepherds, aims at convincing the Faithful, like sheep, that they will rise from the dead. Accepting the notion that the Faithful will actually rise from the dead takes more Faith than the current clerical shepherds, with their scandalous sexual-coverup and illiterate 2011 Missal, can muster. On this day the Faithful sheep are on their own, with or without a hierarchy of shepherds.

A little bit of humor may help cope with the present situation. Sheep judging their shepherds is inherently funny. There is a web site in Germany, <http://hirtenbarometer.de/>, doing just that, complete with pictures of sheep.¹ Their web site invites the Faithful, after identifying who they are, to rate their pastors. The message for those going to the German web site is,

Hello sheep! Write a review on the work of your Pastors and have a look at what other sheep of thy Lieblings-Hirten hold of the work. Constructive feedback and dialog on an equal footing - this is Hirtenbarometer! We are looking forward to meeting you! Thy Hirtenbarometer-Team.

So far, the Germans have registered 25,000 parishes and 8,000 priests.² I wonder how long it will take the U.S. Faithful to make a similar effort and who will be included. U.S. sheep judging U.S. shepherds, with fingers on a web site, might prove more useful than judging U.S. shepherds, with feet walking out the door.

Just as real sheep take the lead of their shepherd to find water, so do the Faithful, as sheep, take the lead of their shepherd, as the Responsorial psalmist puts it: *My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God*. That thirst takes constant attention, such as a rating service offering feedback to such Church efforts as pastoring. Just as it takes a certain amount of effort for water to be available for thirst, so does it take a certain amount of effort for the Faithful to make God available.

The virgins, who are part of the Faithful sheep in the Gospel, failed to make the effort to keep available, what turned out to be, the oil of gladness. The Book of Wisdom makes the point that wisdom requires effort. To be available, the Faithful must themselves seek wisdom. Seeking wisdom is its own wisdom. When shepherds become dysfunctional, the sheep are on their own. Those virgins without the oil, lacked effective leadership.

¹ at <http://hirtenbarometer.de/> (accessed August 8, 2011), where they are rating their pastors. <http://translation.babylon.com/german/to-english/> (accessed August 7, 2011) offers a free translation service used in the text above.

² Reuters, "News of the Weird: German website allows priest ratings," Daily Press (published in Newport News, Virginia), Thursday, August 4, 2011, page 2, col. 2-3, below the fold.

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Paul looks kindly on the Thessalonians as he writes about the wisdom to deal with the fact that some of the Faithful died before the Second Coming of Jesus. Explaining the Faith, Paul is acting as a true pastor of his flock. Paul asserts that it is wisdom to expect that everyone will rise from the dead, when Jesus returns to earth. Just as Paul draws in the Thessalonians, so does he draw in the Faithful. It is one thing to recognize that Jesus rose from the dead. Once the Faithful accept that, Paul assures them that they too will rise from the dead, joined to Jesus.

Readings

First Reading:	Wisdom 6:12-16
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 (2b)
Second Reading:	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Alleluia:	Matthew 24:42a, 44
Gospel:	Matthew 25:1-13

Annotated Bibliography

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

Wisdom 6:12-16

Meaning changes significantly between the Lectionary and NABRE.

Verse Lectionary

NABRE

13 found by those who seek her known to those who desire her

15 taking thought of wisdom setting your heart on her

for her sake keeps vigil is the perfection of wisdom

keeps vigil for her is quickly free from care

16 in the ways ... with all solicitude on the way ... with full attention

The Lectionary implies that wisdom must be sought in the Magisterium; but the NABRE implies that the Faithful are already wise.

Psalm 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 (2b)

The Church makes Psalm 5 available for pastoral care of the sick and funerals.³

³ 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) 289. N.a.,

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Meaning changes significantly between the Lectionary and NABRE.

Verse Lectionary

NABRE

2 & 7 my flesh pines ... upon my couch my body yearns ... upon my bed

Lectionary

4 ... your kindness is a greater good than life

NABRE

... your love is greater than life

The Lectionary covers up the sexual implications in the NABRE.

Psalm 63:7

William L. Holladay, "Indications of Segmented Sleep in the Bible"⁴

Holladay argues from such expressions as *the night-watches* in verse 7 to conclude that the ancients did not sleep the night through as happens in modern society. The night was a time of danger that required vigilance.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

The Church makes this reading available for funerals.⁵

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) 225.

⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 2 (April 2007) 219.

⁵ 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) 220, 252, 309.

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1 Thess 4:

Frank J. Matera, "Christ in the Theologies of Paul and John: A Study in the Diverse Unity of New Testament Theology"⁶

Matera argues that as a Pharisee, Paul already believed in a general resurrection of the dead. With the resurrection of the crucified Jesus, Paul realized that resurrection had already begun. That explains Paul focusing on the Second Coming of Jesus.

1 Thess 4:13—5:11

K. K. (Khiok-khng) Yeo, review of S. Sobanaraj, Diversity in Paul's Eschatology: Paul's View on the Parousia and Bodily Resurrection⁷

To ensure he did not miss the point about the subject matter of this book, Yeo used the word *eschatology* or its derivatives twenty-four times. This means that Yeo regards Sobanaraj as a beginning scholar, just learning how to write about eschatology in a way relevant to the present but true to the past.

1 Thess 4:13-18

John Clabeaux, review of Colin R. Nicholl, From Hope to Despair in Thessalonica: Situating 1 and 2 Thessalonians⁸

Clabeaux reports that Nicholl devotes a chapter to 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. The Thessalonians were concerned about those who died before the Second Coming of Jesus. Paul reassures the Faithful that God will bring *those who have fallen asleep*, back to resurrected life. Clabeaux reports that the book is good, but technical.

1 Thessalonians 4:14

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

Wallace explains:

Many modern translations render the particle *since* [*rather than **if** we believe that Jesus died and rose again*]. Although it is certainly true that Paul embraced this as true, to translate it as *since* keeps the audience at an arm's length. The sentence becomes a lecture rather than a dialogue. By translating it *if*, the audience is drawn into the argument of

⁶ Theological Studies, Vol. 67, No. 2 (June 2006) 245.

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 2 (April 2008) 394.

⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 1 (January 2008) 164.

⁹ Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 1996, 68.

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the apodosis [the *then* statement]. Their response would be something like “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again? Of course we believe that! You mean that this indicates that the dead in Christ will not miss out on the rapture?” In such instances it is not the protasis [the *if* statement] that is in doubt, but the apodosis. (Further to say that the connection is merely logical hardly does such texts justice.) Not infrequently in the NT, the speaker draws his audience to just such a connection, basing his argument on what both speaker and audience already embrace as true. These instances are not without exegetical significance. ...

1 Thess 4:14

Kenneth Schenck, "2 Corinthians and the *Πιστις Χριστου* Debate"¹⁰

Schenck argues that Paul places his Faith in Jesus for his own resurrection.

Schenck argues that Paul had the same faith Jesus did, therefore, the Faith of Jesus.

1 Thess 4:14

Joseph Plevnik, S.J., “The Destination of the Apostle and of the Faithful: Second Corinthians 4:13b-14 and First Thessalonians 4:14”¹¹

First Thessalonians 4:14 is about the link between the resurrection of Jesus and the resurrection of the Faithful. That is why the Church makes this reading available for Funerals.

1 Thess 4:15

Jeffrey S. Lamp, "Is Paul Anti-Jewish? *Testament of Levi 6* in the Interpretation of 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16"¹²

Lamp points out that the Greek for *coming* in *until the coming of the Lord*, connotes showing or revealing himself, rather than arrival.

Matthew 24:42a, 44

Matthew 25:1-13

¹⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 529.

¹¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 62, No. 1 (January 2000) 83-95.

¹² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 3 (July 2003) 413.

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Matt 25

Benedict T. Viviano, O.P., review of Ulrich Luz, Matthew 21—28: A Commentary¹³

Luz sets about showing how the Faithful have taken the biblical text to themselves through the arts. Lutz declares, "The history of interpretation shows that authentic interpretation is new interpretation that makes the text one's own. . . . It must bring one's . . . own person into the conversation with the text and may not simply repeat the text (p. 19)." Viviano recommends that this book should be "in every theological library." The listed price is \$90.00 with xlv and 682 pages. I do not intend to get the book.

Matt 25:1-13

Barbara E. Reid, O.P., review of Marianne Blickenstaff, "While the Bridegroom Is with Them": Marriage, Family, Gender and Violence in the Gospel of Matthew¹⁴

The parable of the ten virgins is unique to Matthew. Blickenstaff argues that commentators have been interpreting the parable incorrectly. The bridegroom is a human tyrant, with whom no one would want to live. The review, then, gets interesting, because Reid disagrees with Blickenstaff who asserts that that interpretation of the bridegroom not being Jesus cannot be maintained. That is a triple negative. Blickenstaff disagrees with herself and Reid disagrees with the disagreement. ☺ Reid concludes, "This book is an important resource for Matthean scholars and those interested in studies on violence and peacebuilding."

Matt 25:1-13

William L. Holladay, "Indications of Segmented Sleep in the Bible"¹⁵

As above, here Holladay again argues that the ancients did not expect to sleep the night through. *Therefore stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour*" (Matthew 25:13).

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

¹³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 1 (January 2007) 156.

¹⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 533.

¹⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 2 (July 2007) 217.