

## Personal Notes

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, 157A, November 13, 2011

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Religious politics is deeply involved with males: first refusing to understand females, and then ending up abusing those males who do attempt to understand. The case of the Reverend Roy Bourgeois, S.M. helps bring the matter into focus for Roman Catholics. On the one hand, in good conscience, Bourgeois is convinced that women are suited for priesthood. On the other hand, his religious superiors demand that he proclaim women are not suited for priesthood. To illustrate the quandary, the Early Church did ordain women. William Tabbernee reviews Ordained Women in the Early Church in the January 2007 issue of the Catholic Historical Review.<sup>1</sup>

The further reality is that if Bourgeois does not retract his statement, his religious superiors threaten to cast him out of his order. Bourgeois reacts as follows,<sup>2</sup>

What you are asking me to do in your letter [of proposed dismissal] is not possible without betraying my conscience. In essence, you are telling me to lie and say I do not believe that God calls both men and women to the priesthood. This I cannot do, therefore I will not recant.

I think a less Draconian penalty would be more appropriate, than casting him out of his religious order. Through it all, the readings advise, *Blessed are those who fear the Lord*. Church officials have cornered Bourgeois, much like Jesus, who refused to deny he was God.

## **Readings**

First Reading:	Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 (cf. 1a)
Second Reading:	1 Thessalonians 5:1-6
Alleluia:	John 15:4a, 5b
Gospel:	Matthew 25:14-30

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<sup>1</sup> Ordained Women in the Early Church: A Documentary History. Edited and Translated by Kevin Madigan and Carolyn Osiek. (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005. Pp. xvi, 220. \$48.00). Reviewed by William Tabbernee, Phillips Theological Seminary in The Catholic Historical Review, January 2007, pages 127-128.

<sup>2</sup> Tom Roberts, "Bourgeois facing expulsion from Maryknoll," <http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/bourgeois-facing-expulsion-maryknoll> (accessed August 8, 2011).

## Annotated Bibliography

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

### Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

Meaning changes significantly between the Lectionary and NABRE.

Verse	<u>Lectionary</u>	NABRE
10	When one finds a worthy wife	Who can find a woman of worth
11	... entrusting his heart to her ... has an unending prize	... trusts her judgment ... does not lack income
12	... she brings him good, not evil	She <u>[sic]</u> brings him profit, not loss

Proverbs, then, is about a gold digger, who did not want to work, looking for a rich wife.

31 Give her a reward ... Acclaim her ...

If she is already rich, she is better acclaimed, than given a reward.

Proverbs 31:13-31

Bettye Collier-Thomas, Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850-1979<sup>3</sup>

In 1909, the Reverend Florence Spearing Randolph (1866-1951) preached on "Woman, the Builder of her House." Randolph seems to be praising the woman who keeps her mouth shut, her head covered, and her feet in the house. She uses King James diction to make her point.

The Reverend Randolph is relatively well known. The Reverend F. E. Redwine, however, is little known. At Runnel's Chapel in Flint, Texas, on May 2, 1948, she took as her topic "What Woman Is." Redwine described a woman as a "helpmeet [sic]." There was not a sign of feminism in her sermon.

### Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 (cf. 1a)

Meaning changes significantly between the Lectionary and NABRE.

Verse	<u>Lectionary</u>	NABRE
1	Blessed are <i>you</i> <i>You</i> is for the Chosen People, <i>all</i> is for all the Faithful.	Blessed are <i>all</i> ...

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<sup>3</sup> San Francisco, CA 94103-1741: A Wiley Imprint: 1998, 137, 139, 218.

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4 Behold, thus is the man blessed ... Just so will the man be blessed ...  
The Lectionary is about the present; the NABRE about the future.

The point of the Psalm and the Responsorial Antiphon is *Blessed are those who fear the Lord*.

Psalm 128:3

Bettye Collier-Thomas, Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850-1979<sup>4</sup>

In that same sermon mentioned above, "Woman the Builder of the House," Randolph comments, "Children are a blessing, though we do not regard them as such in this day in which we live." Randolph means that the Faithful no longer live in a very agricultural society, in which children can help with family income.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:1-6**

1 Thess 5:5

Karl P. Donfried, review of Gordon D. Fee, The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians<sup>5</sup>

Donfried reports that Fee ignores the Dead Sea Scroll mention of "sons of light." The Greek uses *sons* with no manuscript problems indicated. Like the Lectionary, the NABRE also uses *children*. Donfried errs when he cites the verse as 4; in reality, it is verse 5.

### **John 15:4a, 5b**

### **Matthew 25:14-30**

Matt 25:14

Jack Mahoney, S.J., "Evolution, Altruism, and the Image of God"<sup>6</sup>

In 2004, the Catholic International Theological Commission (ITC) provided the Catholic Church with its first detailed statement recognizing evolution, in the biblical image of stewardship. The ITC proclaimed, "human beings exercise this stewardship ... by guarding their own biological integrity," among other things, such as caring for the environment. These musings mentioned the ITC in Reading 167A for June 26, 2011.

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<sup>4</sup> San Francisco, CA 94103-1741: A Wiley Imprint: 1998, 137.

<sup>5</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 4 (July 2010) 825.

<sup>6</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 71, No. 3 (September 2010) 683.

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Matt 25:15-28

Carolyn Osiek, R.S.C.J., “When You Pray, Go into Your *ταμειον*’ (Mathew 6:6: But Why?”<sup>7</sup>

Osiek is interested in the words Matthew uses of coins. From that usage, Osiek argues that Matthew did not seem particularly knowledgeable about Palestinian housing customs in the late First Century. Her point is that the room to which Matthew said was suited for prayer, would not have been the private space people of the Twenty-first Century might expect. Osiek surmises that Matthew may be referring to communal family prayer inside the house.

Matt 25:26

Daniel B. Wallace, With Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes: Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament<sup>8</sup>

Wallace observes that the phrase, *You wicked, lazy servant!* is emotional without grammatical accoutrements. Wallace writes, “... context may of course inform its flavor.” The flavor is emotional here.

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

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<sup>7</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 4 (July 2009) 728.

<sup>8</sup> Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 1996, 68.