

The issue in these readings is how to let politics flow out of religious values, rather than how to let religious values flow out of politics. In other words, begin with Jesus, rather than some political figure. The important thing is getting the religious values correct, over and above getting political values correct. The Faithful err when they assume religious values have no need of theological examination and explanation. The readings for this Feast of Christ the King are suited for developing a Faithful relationship between religion and politics.

## 2 Samuel 5:1-3

David, the great Grandfather of Jesus, is anointed king for leading Israel. Similarly, the Church anoints Christians at Baptism, Confirmation, Orders, and the Rites of Healing. Anointing and kingship go together for Christians. Through David, the Lectionary portrays Jesus as the Good Shepherd, *You shall shepherd my people Israel* (2 Sam 5:2). Though these readings do not use the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew does regard 2 Samuel 5:2 as fulfilled in the life of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> This reading from 2 Samuel is part of the history of the rise of David, extending from 1 Samuel 16:14 through 2 Samuel 5:25.<sup>2</sup>

*King*, as found in verses 2 and 3, is a new title for David. Kingship does appear as central to this passage.<sup>3</sup> The Biblical Jewish Kingdom of Israel serves as a foil rather than as the essence for the Kingdom of God.

## Psalm 122:1-2, 3-4, 4-5

The Responsorial antiphon is *Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord*, undoubtedly the gist of the Transfiguration conversation between Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. Psalm 122 is also used next Sunday, the First Sunday in Advent, Cycle A.

<u>Reading</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>verses</u>		<u>Sunday</u>
1A	6	1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9	( )	Advent 1
162C	983	1-2, 2-3, 4-5	(cf. 1)	Ordinary 34 = Today

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<sup>1</sup> John Paul Heil, "Ezekiel 34 and the Narrative Strategy of the Shepherd and Sheep Metaphor in Matthew," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 55, No. 4 (October 1993) 698-699.

<sup>2</sup> Bill T. Arnold, "Necromancy and Cleromancy in 1 and 2 Samuel," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 2 (April 2004) 200.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony R. Ceresko, O.S.F.S., "The Identity of 'the Blind and the Lame' (*iwwer upisseah*) in 2 Samuel 5:8b," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 63, No. 1 (January 2001) 25.

The Responsorial antiphon for Reading 1A and 162C are the same, though the Lectionary leaves the verse reference at 1A blank on page 6.

Psalm 122 is one of the Funerals choices, Part III: Texts of Sacred Scripture, 16.11 Antiphons and Psalms.<sup>4</sup> As for secular and sacred politics, all politicians, like all of the Faithful, are dead in the end. The point of Psalm 122 is placing the love of God above all else. Begin with God, then do politics.

## **Colossians 1:12-20**

*And transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.* This Deutero-Pauline Epistle develops the concept of Church as the body of Christ begun in 1 Corinthians 12:27-28. The term *church* appears 62 times in the Epistles of Saint Paul. As the body of Christ, Church in this instance is not something structured, to be governed, as in the Pastoral Epistles of Timothy and Titus.<sup>5</sup> Colossians, here, abstracts from the political need to govern the Church to concentrate on the sacrificial need of the body of Christ, the Church, for salvation.

## **Mark 11:9, 10**

*the kingdom of our father David*

## **Luke 23:35-43**

Funerals also uses verses 25-30 from this gospel at Part III: Texts of Sacred Scripture 15.1 Gospel Readings for Funerals for Children Who Died before Baptism.<sup>6</sup> Those must be some children for Funerals to relate them to the Good Thief.

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<sup>4</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 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) 289.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., "The Structured Ministry of the Church in the Pastoral Epistles," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 4 (October 2004) 584.

<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 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

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Everyone can relate to the Good Thief, Dismas, the politician, *par excellence*. Dismas talked his way into heaven, but he began with God. All have sinned. All look forward to a remembrance from Jesus in his kingdom. Jesus may be King of all in the hearts of the Faithful, but the unconscious makes such precedence all too often a wonder to behold. The knack is so to live that politics, whether sacred or secular, does not overwhelm a truly religious worship of God, rather than mammon.

I am finishing these Notes Thursday, November 04, 2004, following the re-election of George W. Bush as President of the United States. Polls show that religious, value oriented people were a main component of his support. My heart aches that the Catholic hierarchy attacked rather than led their Catholic candidate. To my mind, Catholic theology of Christ the King is far more sound and viable than the evangelical theology that supports Bush. The important thing is getting the religious values correct, over and above getting political values correct.

For more on sources see the Appendix file.

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Confirmed by the Apostolic See (New Jersey: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1998)  
236.