



29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 16, 2016

Readings

This week:

Exodus 17:8-13

2 Timothy 3:14–4:2

Luke 18:1-8

Next week:

Sirach 35:12-14,16-18

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

Luke 18:9-14

Psalm

Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. (*Psalm 121*)

Today

Today's presider is Fr. Jack Izzo.

The Thomas Merton Center community worships and celebrates Sunday liturgy each week at the regularly scheduled 8:45 am parish Mass at St. Thomas Aquinas Church. Members of the Thomas Merton community plan these liturgies in the spirit of Vatican II and its call to "full, active and conscious participation" in Catholic liturgical life.

The Thomas Merton Center is supported by your donations. If you choose to donate by check or cash, every Sunday there is a donation basket in the back of church or by the coffeepot after Mass—or you can use the envelope in the bulletin the last Sunday of every month to mail your donation. Please do not put your TMC donation in the collection baskets passed during Mass (these are for parish contributions only).

Calendar

Monday, October 17, 7:30 pm

Spiritual Education, Thomas House

From Thomas Merton

The expression to "fall in love" reflects a peculiar attitude toward love and toward life itself—a mixture of fear, awe, fascination, and confusion. It implies suspicion, doubt, hesitation, in the presence of something unavoidable—yet not fully reliable. For love takes you out of yourself. You lose control. You "fall." . . .

But the question of love is one that cannot be evaded. Whether or not you claim to be interested in it, from the moment you are alive you are bound to be concerned with love, because love is not just something that happens to you: *it is a certain special way of being alive*. Love is, in fact, an intensification of life, a completeness. . . . We do not become fully human until we give ourselves to each other in love. And this must not be confined only to sexual fulfillment: it embraces everything in the human person—the capacity for self-giving, for sharing, for creativity, for mutual care, for spiritual concern.

—*Love and Living*

The Thomas Merton Center for Catholic Spiritual Development, P.O. Box 60061, Palo Alto, California 94306, was founded by a group of Roman Catholic lay persons in 1995, and incorporated in 1996, to offer Catholic liturgy; to augment, support and lead the development of ecumenical spirituality; and to foster new ways for Catholics and other Christians to develop a deeper spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ and, through him, with God. From its Catholic roots, it seeks to join with members of other faiths, Christian and non-Christian, to support religious education and spiritual development.

COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Second collection checks:

Some of us have pointed out that there is hardly time to write a check for a second collection, from the time it is announced until the basket arrives.

You can write your check in advance to St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, and it will be applied to whatever second collection charity has been announced at Mass that day. All second collection funds are cleared through the parish.

World mission collection:

Today is World Mission Sunday, organized by the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. It is a day set aside for Catholics worldwide to recommit themselves to the Church's missionary activity through prayer and sacrifice. During this year's 90th anniversary, the World Mission Sunday celebration relates its theme to the Year of Mercy: "Mercy Changes the World." Pope Francis notes, "The mercy of God is His loving concern for each one of us. . . . As the Father loves, so do His children. Just as He is merciful, so we are called to be merciful to each other."

Please keep the Missions in your daily prayers, and give generously in the collection today for the Society of the Propagation of the Faith.

Yes on 62 interfaith prayer service:

Wednesday, October 19, 7:00-8:00 pm, join with Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, and others in an interfaith prayer service for Proposition 62, to raise our voices in support of abolishing the death penalty. Prop 62 replaces the death penalty with a strict life sentence and saves taxpayers \$150 million per year.

The service will be at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 81 N. 2nd Street, San Jose. If you have questions, contact Fr. Jon Pedigo at jpedigo@dsj.org.

Our Sunday visitor:

Some of us have been concerned about the young woman with the baby who has been begging outside church on Sundays, fearing that she is homeless or being trafficked. We know more about her now, thanks to a Community Service Office from the Palo Alto Police. She is a member of an ethnic group called Roma, more commonly called gypsies. We learned that there are about a million Roma living in the United States, and about 10% of them live in California (and some of them in Palo Alto). It's fine to give her money, knowing that her this is her "job," to beg. She neither homeless nor being trafficked.

Kenyan crafts: back by popular demand:

Kenya Help will again offer a variety of craft items from Kenya, plus a few homemade items by Gladys Low and Margo McAuliffe. The event will be Sunday, October 30, right after our mass until about 11:30. Please tell your friends. Margo has found a few new items as well as the things you have loved in the past. Please note this is not a sale. All items are gifts for donations. The craft display will be outside, weather permitting. Otherwise we'll be in the bride's room at the back of the Thomas House.

We're happy to announce we've joined the 21st century and can now process donations by credit card. Margo would greatly appreciate anyone who would like to help: please call 322-0821 or e-mail margo@kenyahelp.us to volunteer.

—Thanks, Margo McAuliffe.

Parish holiday faire:

Saturday, November 5, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, the Parish Community Life Committee is sponsoring a holiday faire in the Our Lady of the Rosary Hall (3233 Cowper). The committee is collecting holiday decorations during October after Masses. You can donate new or like-new items, from any holiday—

Valentine's, St. Patrick's, Easter, Fourth of July, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Featured items will include handmade holiday pillowcase sets, gift tags, baked goods, and festive décor.

There will be a Fair prep/crafting session on Saturday, October 15, 10:00 am to noon. There are many tasks that are easy to do, even if you aren't "crafty," so come to help out. Supplies will be provided, but bring a pencil and scissors. High schoolers are invited as well.

Contact Anne Morrison at (650) 493-2998 or ahbert55@aol.com or Natalie Lucha at (650) 494-1178 or nlucha22@yahoo.com if you have questions.



The Food Closet never closes:

As we move into the cooler days of Fall, please keep bringing food for the Food Closet. Donations have been down, and the Food Closet still needs flip-top soups and entrees, as well as small bottles of water, crackers, granola bars, fruit cups, juice pouches. Please continue to be generous with your food donations, and with your dollars too!

COMMUNITY NOTES

News Announcements Requests

Francis names cardinals, including 3 Americans:

Abridged from an article by Laurie Goodstein, October 9, 2016, at www.nytimes.com.

Pope Francis [last] Sunday named 17 new cardinals, including three Americans, adding prelates from developing countries to give them a greater voice in selecting the next pope. Francis' American appointments elevate moderates in the church hierarchy, bypassing doctrinal conservatives from large archdioceses. The three Americans, the most Francis named from any one country, are Archbishops Blase J. Cupich of Chicago and Joseph Tobin of Indianapolis and a former Dallas bishop, Kevin Farrell, whom Francis recently reassigned to the Vatican to lead a new department for family, laity and life. . . . American electoral politics is never a determining factor in the selection of cardinals. But all three American picks have been outspoken opponents of Republican Party positions at a time when the United States church hierarchy is often seen as an ally of the party because of mutual opposition to abortion and same-sex marriage. Archbishop Tobin insisted that his archdiocese would continue to resettle Syrian refugees in Indiana, despite attempts to bar them by Gov. Mike Pence, Donald J. Trump's running mate on the Republican ticket. Bishop Farrell is among the few prelates in the United States to issue emphatic pleas for gun control, a surprising move for a bishop based in the open-carry state of Texas. And Archbishop Cupich, in an archdiocese populated with immigrants from many countries, has become a prominent advocate of overhauling immigration law, a position held by the United States bishops' conference. On internal church matters, all three American appointees have indicated they support Francis' efforts to set a tone that is more pastoral than judgmental toward women, gays and Catholics who have divorced and remarried. Alejandro Bermúdez, a journalist from Peru who is the executive director of the Catholic News Agency, a conservative-leaning outlet, said, "The pope is making sure that his successor follows his line of thought." Mr. Bermúdez said the pope was promoting prelates from many smaller dioceses — not only in the United States, but also in Venezuela and Mexico — who are "the classic Pope Francis-type of bishops." "They aren't so interested in leading cultural battles, but more in doing pastoral work," Mr. Bermúdez said. "The pope is convinced that the cultural wars are not going to bring anything but further misunderstanding and defeats for the Catholic Church." . . . Archbishop Tobin, who previously served in the Vatican,

Fr. Boyle on Christian ministry:

Maureen Locke was cleaning out files and came across a sermon that Monsignor Eugene J. Boyle gave at the Centenary of St. Thomas Aquinas Church on November 3, 2001. He talks about the history of the church, established in March 1901, and goes on to say:

Imbued with the spirit of [Archbishop Edward J.] Hanna and [Monsignor Joseph A.] Gleason [appointed second pastor of the parish in 1909] and as always the Spirit of Jesus which they embodied for their time, here is what I believe Christian ministry for today and tomorrow might look like. A truly Christian ministry would have an attitude of welcome, a mood of receptivity for the voice of God speaking to us in the voice of these times and this place. An authentic Catholic ministry today would secure itself in the Spirit of Jesus, truly open itself to the world situation where it is placed and constantly affirm, as Jesus did, the presence of the sacred in all people's lives. "God loves you; you are somebody." Affirmation and the call to witness—these are two features of Jesus' approach to ministry.

Christian ministers, cleric and lay, would act and speak not as sole dispensers or guardians of the sacred, but also as heralds of the good news that human loving and acts of decency are intimately connected with the sacred. Live in love and you make God's presence and reign visible. Christian ministers would have the ability to be with people in their lives, in their lived experiences of being vulnerable, broken, joyful, needy, searching and questioning. Jesus did this. People felt his compassion, his ability to understand their situation, to identify with them, to crawl into their skins.

Above all, the Christian minister would be gracious, unconditionally welcoming and generous with the "lost," the "crowd," the people outside the laws of religion and people who have lost faith in religion. The Christian minister would be prepared to take risks, to appear "unorthodox" if compassion and pastoral purpose demand it.

Christian ministry would give power and authority to

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became known there as a supporter of American nuns who were being investigated by other Vatican officials on claims of deviating from church doctrine — an inquiry some American bishops had encouraged. At a Catholic women's conference in Indiana this weekend, Archbishop Tobin said he was "hopeful" that women could become deacons, a possibility now being studied by a Vatican committee appointed by the pope. . . .

Church's ban on contraception challenged:

Abridged from an article by Jamie Manson, September 21, 2016, at ncronline.org. Manson is NCR books editor. She received her Master of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School, where she studied Catholic theology and sexual ethics.

Nearly 50 years since Pope Paul VI issued *Humanae Vitae*, the encyclical that rejected the use of artificial birth control, a group of prominent Catholic theologians, ethicists and physicians has produced a report reassessing and challenging the papal document. The report, entitled "Promoting Good Health and Good Conscience: The Ethics of Using Contraceptives," was commissioned by the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research, an independent think-tank based in London. The 20,000-word academic report, which was co-authored by 22 Catholic scholars from Australia, Colombia, Europe, India, the Philippines, South Africa and the United States, evaluates, from within the Catholic tradition, the morality of using artificial contraceptives for family planning. . . . A five-page statement summarizing the report's key arguments was signed by 149 Catholic scholars from around the world, including former heads of state, members of Parliaments, priests, religious, a bishop and scholars working at Catholic universities.

The statement calls for a development of the doctrine of contraception that would make it compatible with current scientific and theological knowledge. It also calls the Vatican to form a commission to reopen the discussion of the morality of using contraceptives through an independent process of consultation. . . . The report. . . concludes that "contraception for the purpose of family planning is not 'intrinsically evil,'" as Paul VI declared. "On the contrary, it can be a good, to the extent that family planning is indeed a requirement of what popes call 'responsible parenthood. . . . When Paul VI declared that the use of artificial contraception is intrinsically evil, he said that it was always immoral regardless of the intentions of the agents, the circumstances of the situation or the consequences of the action. The report argues that there are circumstances when it can be used legitimately and it can be morally good." . . .

Though the church's ban on contraceptives is often dismissed or ignored by Catholics in the U.S. and Europe, in the developing world the lack of access to contraceptives remains a life or death issue. An estimated 25% of health care facilities in developing countries are operated by Catholic institutions. The ban on contraceptives continues to be significant point of tension for U.N.-based aid agencies that have declared that sexual and reproductive health care is a Sustainable Development Goal. . . .

According to the report, each year there are "290,000 maternal deaths, 74 million unintended pregnancies and 3 million newborn deaths." It is grim statistics like these

that motivated the Wijngaards Institute to challenge the Vatican's ongoing ban on contraception and to contribute broader Catholic perspectives in a U.N. environment where typically the Holy See is the dominant Catholic presence. . . .

Fr. Boyle, continued:

people by trusting that the Spirit of God works not only in the head but also in the body of the faithful and needs to be heard. Christian ministry would look outward, reach outward beyond its own religious community and concerns. It would become effectively involved especially today in the concerns of social justice and peace and interfaith relations and not consider these endeavors peripheral to its mission.

"The joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially those who are poor or afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish to the followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts for theirs is a community of people united in Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit in their pilgrimage to their Father's kingdom, bearers of a message of salvation for all humanity. That is why they cherish a feeling of deep solidarity with the human race and its history." (Gaudium et Spes, #1)

Statistics on domestic and global inequality:

- Incomes of America's top 10% are nine times as high as those of the bottom 90%. The top 1% averages over 38 times more income than the bottom 90%.
- Though worker productivity has increased 132% since the mid-1970s, wages and average income (adjusted for inflation) have remained stagnant over the same period.
- In the first three years of recovery from the Great Recession (2009-12), the top 1% took home 95% of the income gains while incomes fell for the bottom 90%
- America's top 1% holds nearly half of the nation's wealth.
- The richest 1% of the world's population holds over 50% of the world's wealth.
- 8.1% of the global population owns over \$100,000 in assets, but holds 84.6% of the world's wealth.
- A typical White family in the U.S. holds a net worth 13 times greater than the typical Black family.

—Sources: Institute for Policy Studies Inequality; Network Lobby; Economic Policy Institute

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