



24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 11, 2016

Readings

This week:

Exodus 32:7-11, 13-14

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Luke 15:1-32

Next week:

Amos 8:4-7

1 Timothy 2:1-8

Luke 16:1-13

Psalm

I will rise and go to my father. (*Psalm 51*)

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, September 12, 7:00 pm

TMC Liturgy Team, Thomas House

From Thomas Merton

The real violence exerted by propaganda is this: by means of apparent truth and apparent reason, it induces us to surrender our freedom and self-possession. It predetermines us to certain conclusions, and does so in such a way that we imagine that we are fully free in reaching them by our own judgment and our own thought. Propaganda *makes up our mind* for us, but in such a way that it leaves us the sense of pride and satisfaction of [those] who have made up their own minds. And, in the last analysis, propaganda achieves this effect *because we want it to*. This is one of the few real pleasures left to modern man: this illusion that he is thinking for himself when, in fact, someone else is doing his thinking for him. And this someone else is not a personal authority, the great mind of a genial thinker, it is the mass mind, the general "they," the anonymous whole. One is left, therefore, not only with the sense that one has thought things out for himself, but that he has also reached the correct answer without difficulty—the answer which is shown to be correct because it is the answer of everybody. Since it is at once my answer and the answer of everybody, how should I resist it?

—*Confessions of a Guilty Bystander*

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

Musical transitions:

Over the past months, because of their family circumstances, the Eke Family has been unable to keep their scheduled dates to lead the music at the 8:45 Mass. Since they are uncertain about when they would be able to return and keep a regular schedule, they have asked that we find a replacement for them.

We have searched during these months and have been fortunate to find a musician whom we believe will be a good fit for the 8:45 Mass community. His name is Taber Dullea, and he has been serving as a music minister in the Diocese of San Jose since 2001. His first parish pastor was Father John Sandersfeld., who recommended him highly. Taber has served as choir member, pianist, cantor, and music director. He has agreed to lead the music for the 8:45 Sunday Mass on September 18 and 25. We're sure you will give Taber our usual warm welcome and perhaps offer to help in any way he may need as he becomes acquainted with our community.

We wish the Eke Family the very best, and will welcome them back if they should be able to return to lead now and then. And we thank the Singers Support Group, led by Kathy Schneidwind, Jamie Cook on guitar, Patricia Markee on piano, and singers Linda Vartanian, Eliane and Armand Neukermans, and Vickie Sullivan. They stepped up and led us for several weeks during this transition time. Please let them know of your appreciation for helping out!



Multifaith peace walk and picnic:

Join together with brothers and sisters of many backgrounds and spiritual traditions as we say “no” to fear and “yes” to friendship by walking together in south Palo Alto to show the way to community and peace.

We will gather today, September 11, at 1:30 pm at Congregation Etyz Chaim at 4161 Alma Street for a brief service at 2:00 pm, and then walk down Alma, then Charleston, then Middlefield, stopping at Our Lady of the Rosary for another brief service. After the walk we will gather at Mitchell Park for the annual 9/11 Peace Picnic hosted by American Muslim Voice. The walk length is 2.5 miles, but shuttle buses are being planned to take folks from OLR and/or Mitchell Park back to their cars. A flyer and more details about parking and shuttles are available at www.multifaithpeace.org.



Today is Grandparents Day:

Abridged from <https://grandparentsday.org/about/generations-united/>.

In 1978, Congress passed legislation proclaiming the first Sunday after Labor Day—today—as National Grandparents Day. President Obama has issued presidential proclamations calling on Americans to “honor those who have helped shape the character of our Nation, and thank these role models for their immeasurable acts of love, care, and understanding.”

“Generations United” is the national membership organization focused on improving the lives of children, youth, and older people through intergenerational strategies, programs, and public policies. It is urging grandparents and older adults to share their wisdom, perspectives and key civic values with young people on Grandparents Day. And it is calling on older adults to join with today’s youth in reaching out to decision makers and discussing how, as a country, we can address the many challenges facing future generations—from literacy to health and wellness to financial stability. Celebrate Grandparents Day by committing to Do Something Grand!



Hispanic heritage month:

During National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 to October 15) we recognize the contributions made and the important presence of Hispanic and Latino Americans to the United States and celebrate their heritage and culture.

Hispanics have had a profound and positive influence on our country through their strong commitment to family, faith, hard work, and service. They have enhanced and shaped our national character with centuries-old traditions that reflect the multiethnic and multicultural customs of their community.

Hispanic Heritage Month, whose roots go back to 1968, begins each year on September 15, the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Mexico, Chile and Belize also celebrate their independence days during this period.

... Today, 55 million people or 17% of the American population are of Hispanic or Latino origin. Share in this special tribute by learning and celebrating the generations of Hispanic and Latino Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation and society.

COMMUNITY NOTES

News Announcements Requests

Anne Frank today is a Syrian girl:

Abridged from an editorial by Nicholas Kristof, August 25, 2016, at www.nytimes.com. Kristof is an American journalist, author, op-ed columnist, and a winner of two Pulitzer Prizes. He has written an op-ed column for The New York Times since November 2001

On April 30, 1941, a Jewish man here in Amsterdam wrote a desperate letter to an American friend, pleading for help emigrating to the United States. “USA is the only country we could go to,” he wrote. “It is for the sake of the children

mainly.” A volunteer found that plea for help in 2005 when she was sorting old World War II refugee files in New York City. It

looked like countless other files, until she saw the children’s names. “Oh my God,” she said, “this is the Anne Frank file.” Along with the letter were many others by Otto Frank, frantically seeking help to flee Nazi persecution and obtain a visa to America, Britain or Cuba—but getting nowhere because of global indifference to Jewish refugees. We all know that the Frank children were murdered by the Nazis, but what is less known is the way Anne’s fate was sealed by a callous fear of refugees, among the world’s most desperate people.

Sound familiar? President Obama vowed to admit 10,000 Syrian refugees—a tiny number, just 0.2% of the total—and Hillary Clinton suggested taking more. Donald Trump has repeatedly excoriated them for a willingness to welcome Syrians and has called for barring Muslims. Fears of terrorism have left Muslim refugees toxic in the West, and almost no one wants them any more than anyone wanted a German-Dutch teenager named Anne.

... For the Frank family, a new life in America seemed feasible. Anne had studied English, and her father spoke English, had lived in Manhattan, and had been a longtime friend of an official in the Franklin Roosevelt administration. The obstacle was an American wariness toward refugees that outweighed sympathy. ...

The New York Times in 1938 quoted the granddaughter of President Ulysses S. Grant warning about “so-called Jewish refugees” and hinting that they were Communists “coming to this country to join the ranks of those who hate our institutions and want to overthrow them.” ...

[The] State Department systematically tightened rules on Jewish refugees. In this climate, Otto Frank was unable to get visas for his family members, who were victims in



How Tim Kaine navigates his faith and politics:

Abridged from an article by Brian Roewe, August 25, 2016, at www.ncronline.org.

... Tim Kaine is the third Catholic to appear on a presidential ticket in the past two election cycles, all VP nominees. ... Kaine said he chooses to share his faith as insight into his motivations in a life of public service, but also to allow people—and voters—to understand how he might approach an issue, whether the economy, foreign policy or another yet to rise to prominence.

... By now, the story of Tim Kaine’s Catholicism has largely come into focus. He was raised in a working-class Irish family that rarely missed Mass on Sunday. He attended the Jesuit-run Rockhurst High School in Kansas City, Mo., where the “men for others” motto became a huge influence on his faith formation, as well as his public life. After finishing in 1979 an economics degree from the University of Missouri (in three years), he enrolled at Harvard Law School, only to temporarily step away to spend a year (1980-81) as a missionary with Jesuits in Honduras. “I went to Honduras because I didn’t know what I wanted to do and everybody in law school seems so sure, [so] I figured, well, if I take a year off maybe I can figure it out,” he said.

Kaine did. Profoundly moved by his experience in Central America—where he witnessed extreme poverty while a military dictatorship, with U.S. training, kidnapped, tortured and killed civilians—and now fluent in Spanish, he decided to apply his legal skills toward twin goals: social justice and racial reconciliation. The two first came together in his 17 years as a civil rights lawyer in Richmond, Va., working on housing discrimination. As Kaine witnessed life under a military regime, which cracked down on the Jesuit priests he would later call “the heroes of my life,” he left with greater awareness of inequity in his own country.

... When Kaine arrived in Richmond in 1984, he and his soon-to-be-wife, Anne, joined St. Elizabeth Catholic Church, a predominantly African-American parish where they were married later that year and still remain parish-

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part of American paranoia, demagoguery and indifference. History rhymes. As I’ve periodically argued, President Obama’s reluctance to do more to try to end the slaughter in Syria casts a shadow on his legacy, and there’s simply no excuse for the world’s collective failure to ensure that Syrian refugee children in neighboring countries at least get schooling.

Today, to our shame, Anne Frank is a Syrian girl.

Tim Kaine, continued:

ioners.

The worship environment at St. Elizabeth, influenced by the neighborhood's Baptist and Protestant roots, transported Kaine back to Honduras, where he had fallen in love with a Mass structured less around keeping a schedule and more around communal prayer.

"I was used to going to Mass where it was 45 minutes because they had to clear out the parking lot ahead of the next Mass. So cut and dry," Kaine [said]. "But in Honduras, there would be two weddings, three baptisms, the kiss of peace would last 15 minutes, kids and chickens would be everywhere. It was just so full of life and not organized and kind of chaotic, but chaotic in a beautiful way." The parish has become the heart of Kaine's spiritual life. He's also a regular at the U.S. Senate's Wednesday morning prayer group. Although a proponent of the separation of church and state, he told *NCR* he sees parallels between the two:

"Neither faith nor politics would exist if humans didn't have an instinctive belief that what *is* is not as good as what *could be*. If we didn't perceive the gap between what *is* and what *could be*, there wouldn't be religion and there wouldn't be politics, either. But it's our awareness of our own imperfections and our instinctive understanding that society can be better and I can be better. That's why it's the gulf between the *is* and the *ought* that is where both religion and politics come. And . . . I view that as a divine question mark that's put into every person, that from some point in early age we start to be able to perceive what *is* isn't as good as what *could be*, both individually and in society. And so that's the deep connection, I think, between religion and politics done right."

. . . When news broke of his selection as Clinton's running mate, Catholic social media buzzed about his faith in action. A popular hive was abortion—which despite its factious nature is largely a non-voting issue for most Catholics. (Among all voters and Catholic voters, it ranks behind a dozen other issues, according to Pew Research Center.) While Kaine has voiced his personal opposition to abortion, he has 100 percent ratings from Planned Parenthood and NARAL Pro-Choice America.

In June, he told "Meet the Press": "I deeply believe, and not just as a matter of politics, but even as a matter of morality, that matters about reproduction and intimacy and relationships and contraception are in the personal realm. They're moral decisions for individuals to make for themselves. And the last thing we need is government intruding into those personal decisions. So I've taken the position, which is quite common among Catholics. I've got a personal feeling about abortion, but the right role for government is to let women make their own decisions."

. . . Then there's the death penalty. "The hardest thing



about being a governor was dealing with the death penalty," Kaine told *NCR*. "I hope on Judgment Day that there's both understanding and mercy, because it was tough."

As Virginia's 70th governor (2006-2009), Kaine oversaw 11 executions. In each case, he personally opposed capital punishment but held fast to his perceived moral obligation to his oath to uphold the law—even laws he disliked.

In one case, Kaine granted clemency, believing the man had mental health issues, but he refrained from the temptation to use the policy as a way to in effect eliminate the death penalty in a state that is behind only Texas and Oklahoma in executions since 1976. When the Virginia Legislature sent him bills expanding the death penalty, he vetoed them. His staff at the time described the governor on days of executions as quieter and withdrawing to his office before they began, where they believed he was praying.

Before entering politics, Kaine took on two pro-bono capital punishment cases. In one case, he shared his client's final meal with him, had a priest come to celebrate Mass, and walked the client to the death chamber, holding his hand as he was strapped to the table. Kaine has spared no words about his desire to see the death penalty die, and is encouraged that Clinton, though she has not called for its end, has "expressed great reservations about it in implementation and that way that it's used." He sees the American public, through juries issuing death penalty sentences, largely in line with that view.

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