



Solemnity of the Holy Trinity

June 11, 2017

Readings

This week:

Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9

2 Corinthians 13:11-13

John 3:16-18

Next week:

Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

John 6:51-58

Psalm

Glory and praise forever! (*Daniel 3:52-55*)

Today

Today's presider is Fr. Xavier Lavagetto.

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, June 12, 7:00 pm

TMC Liturgy Team, Thomas House

From Thomas Merton

Let us live in this love and this happiness, you and I and all of us, in the love of Christ and in contemplation, for this is where we find ourselves and one another as we truly are. It is only in this love that we at last become real. For it is here that we most truly share the life of One God in Three Persons.

. . . The One God Who exists only in Three Persons is a circle of relations in which His infinite reality, Love, is ever identical and ever renewed, always perfect and always total, always beginning and never ending, absolute, everlasting and full.

In the Father the infinite Love of God is always beginning and in the Son it is always full and in the Holy Spirit it is perfect and it is renewed and never ceases to rest in its everlasting source. But if you follow Love forward and backward from Person to Person, you can never track it to a stop, you can never corner it and hold it down and fix it to one of the Persons as if He could appropriate to Himself the fruit of the love of the others. For the One Love of the Three Persons is an infinitely rich giving of Itself which never ends and is never taken, but is always perfectly given, only received in order to be perfectly shared.

—*New Seeds of Contemplation*

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 NOTES

News Announcements Requests

More 8:45 helpers needed:

You saw last Sunday how many people it takes to put on our liturgies Sunday after Sunday. If you weren't up on the altar last Sunday, we still need your help. We urgently need two more greeters and one more person to arrange the flowers for the altars. If you are interested in baking communion bread, being a sacristan, a Eucharistic minister or a lector, or just want to take the collected food donations to the food closet once a month, we will welcome you and we will train you. Most assignments are usually only once a month. Please let John or Sally know if you can help out. Their contact info is on page 4 of this bulletin.

Rapid response team opportunity:

Rapid Response Teams are groups of people who can travel quickly to a place where ICE is trying to arrest someone and monitor the interactions (not take action). They are coordinated by Sacred Heart Community Service and many other partners in Santa Clara County. More volunteer responders are needed in Sunnyvale and Mountain View in particular. Volunteers are being trained in Mountain View on June 28. If you'd like to know more, see Patricia Markee.

Join us for the Friday Fish Fest:

The STA Site Committee is holding a Friday Fish Fest this coming Friday, June 16, at 6:00 pm in the Thomas House. Menu will be fish and chips, coleslaw, beer and wine, and whatever else you might want to bring to share.



Everyone is invited, giving us all the opportunity to get to know each other a little better. New-comers to the parish are especially invited.

We will collect a nominal \$5 per person for the meal, but do not let that keep you away. The committee wants to build connections among those who attend the four Masses at STA, both newbies and those who have been here much longer. If you can help with set-up and clean-up, please let Helen Baumann know—hbbaumann@aol.com or (650) 327-9236.

Please keep bringing food this spring. 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 FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Ramadan can make Lenten fasting seem tepid:

By Maureen Fiedler, SL, May 31, 2017, at ncronline.org. Sr. Maureen is the host of Interfaith Voices, a public radio show, heard on 62 radio stations in North America. She holds a Ph.D. in Government from Georgetown University.

Every year when the Muslim holy month of Ramadan rolls around, I stand in awe of my Muslim sisters and brothers. The fast that Muslims observe during Ramadan is so much more stringent than anything we Catholics do for Lent, or were ever required to do. It boggles my mind—not to mention my digestive tract.

For those who may not know, the observance of Ramadan requires that Muslims refrain not only from eating but even from drinking water during all the hours of daylight for the entire 30-day period. This observance, which began at the end of May this year [and ends on June 24], commemorates the period when the Quran was first revealed to Prophet Muhammad. Eating is permitted only during the hours of darkness. Muslims also refrain

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Sister Carol Keehan:

GOP health care plan 'cannot be fixed':

Abridged from www.americamagazine.org.

There is no fixing the American Health Care Act currently under review by a Senate committee of 13 Republican men. The whole package needs to be tossed. That is the blunt assessment of Carol Keehan, DC, the president and chief executive officer of the Catholic Health Association of the United States. . . .

Earlier this month the AHCA was rushed through the House of Representatives before it could be "scored" by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. An earlier version of the bill that did not draw enough support from fractious Republicans had fared poorly under a CBO analysis, and the latest incarnation of the effort to "repeal and replace" Obamacare did only slightly better when a new analysis came out of the CBO on May 24. According to CBO analysts, an estimated 52 million people un-

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We cannot love God unless we love each other:

By Beth Haile, who has a PhD in moral theology from Carroll College in Montana, and is currently a writer living in Waterloo, Iowa. Abridged from an article in the February 2017 issue of U.S. Catholic.

A few days after Election Day, I met with a dear friend who was struggling with unexpected anger after the election of Donald Trump. “I think of myself as a person who embraces diversity. But how diverse can I be if I hate half the people of this country?” She paused for a moment and then noted soberly, “Actually, I am beginning to understand how easy it is to dehumanize a group. All I see when I look at all those Trump supporters is a bunch of racists and bigots.”

It was a jarring statement. My friend is on the whole a very peaceful person who values pluralism and tolerance. But the run-up to the election and its aftermath were hard for her. When the neighbors put up a Trump/Pence sign, she found herself avoiding them. “I don’t like it, but I just can’t stand to be around them and the views they hold,” she told me. “They oppose everything I stand for.”

This exchange reminded me of an encounter that Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker movement, had with an explicitly anti-Semitic and racist elderly guest whose “greatest affliction was having to share the hospitality of the city with Negroes.” Despite the repugnance

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GOP health care plan, continued:

der age 65 would be uninsured by 2026 under the latest version of the House Republican health care plan. That is one million less than would have been uninsured under the original bill, but it is 23 million more than Obamacare would leave uninsured by 2026 (presuming Congress does nothing before then to improve the program).

Congress is asking the nation to make “immoral choices,” said Sister Keehan. The proposed \$824 billion cut to Medicaid under the AHCA would only be exacerbated by the \$600 billion more in reductions (both over 10 years) sought by the president’s recent budget plan. The hits on health care, she argued, are “clearly for the purpose of finding the money to handle [GOP proposed] tax cuts,” pointing out that while 14 million people are dropped from Medicaid under AHCA, the bill provides almost \$16 billion in annual tax cuts for people who make over \$1 million a year.

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“These are just intolerable choices,” she said.

The AHCA would “undermine in a huge way people who are very vulnerable,” said Sister Keehan, “the working

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Ramadan, continued:

from smoking and engaging in sexual relations during Ramadan, and are taught to refrain from sinful behavior such as insulting, backbiting, cursing, lying and fighting. In spring and summer months, those daylight hours of fasting must seem endless! Granted, there is typically a grand meal after sundown, called an iftar, but people are really hungry at that point, not having eaten all day long. I have been a part of iftars, the meal that breaks the fast, and everyone savors the dates that typically begin that grand meal.

By contrast, the Catholic observance of fasting and abstinence during the season of Lent

is mild. When I was growing up, the church required that Catholics eat only one full meal a day on weekdays during Lent, preferably around noon. Two light meals were permitted at other times as long as those two combined meals were less than a full meal. In other words, there was one meal and two snacks. Drinking water was never a problem.

Today, the requirement for fasting on all the weekdays of Lent has been dropped entirely. Fasting like that in the old days is required only on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Abstinence from meat is practiced only on the Fridays of Lent. And although fasting and penitential practices are recommended all during Lent, they are no longer required.

So fasting for Catholics is not even remotely close to what fasting means for Muslims during Ramadan. Eating one full meal, meatless or not, is far different from not eating at all. And being able to consume liquids is far different from going thirsty as Muslims are required to do. Compared with the Muslim approach, where nothing passes one’s lips—solid or liquid—all day long, the Catholic approach is downright tepid. Still, both practices exist as a reminder that there is something more important than the material in life—something, indeed, *Someone* more significant than food. Someone larger than life, and indeed, beyond human life.

And so, I wish a blessed Ramadan to our Muslim sisters and brothers.



Please remember in your prayers this week: Denise Alongi, George Bouchey, Tom Carmody, George Chippendale, Sr. Fran Ciluaga, Mary Connors, Mike Cummings, Ken Dias, Fr. Thierry Geris, Deonna Gill, Emily Gill, Joanne Hasegawa, Dick Jackman, François Jamati, Michael Kiriti, Hunter Kubit, Fr. Lavagetto’s mother, Deacon Ysidro and Dolores Madrigal, Mary Rose McGuire, Maureen Mooney, Hayden Pastorini, Paul Prochaska, Anne Rush, Priya Smith, Bernice Sullivan, Jean Vistica, Dolores Walsh, Kay Williams, and T.J. Wooten.

We cannot love God, . . .continued:

of his views, Day insisted that this man was still a guest and ought to be welcomed as “Christ among us” by the Catholic Workers.

It can be easy to romanticize the poor, but Day knew that those whom we are called to serve are quite frequently disagreeable and often sinful. As a spiritual practice, hospitality teaches workers to abandon any expectations they may have and resist the ever-present temptation of self-righteousness. Hospitality in its truest form is “making room” for the guest we do not choose. It requires vulnerability and a willingness to be surprised by who we find at our door.

This is particularly challenging when the guest at our door professes values, tacitly or explicitly, that are not only contrary to our own, but, as in my friend’s case, immoral. Yet Jesus ate with sinners. It is one thing to imagine a dinner with adulterers and tax collectors; it is quite another to imagine sharing a table with racists, sexists, xenophobes, and anti-Semites.

For Day, pacifism emerged from such a radical hospitality. To welcome any guest as Christ, particularly a sinner, we need to experience what she called a “disarmament of heart.” This disarmament of heart undergirded the neutrality of the Worker movement during the Spanish Civil War, despite the fact that many Catholics argued for supporting Franco as a last defense against Communism. Day insisted that her workers prayed not for the Franco supporters, nor for the Communist loyalists, but for “the Spanish people—all of them our brothers in Christ—all of them Temples of the Holy Ghost, all of them members or potential members of the Mystical Body of Christ.”

Far from “being passive,” Day’s response to violence was to act “disarmingly,” to remove any barriers that stood in the way of love. The most effective response to violence, thought Day, was a hospitality that humanized. In *The Long Loneliness*, she writes:

“We cannot love God unless we love each other, and to love we must know each other. We know Him in the breaking of bread, and we know each other in the breaking of bread, and we are not alone anymore.”

My friend’s comments about Trump supporters reveal how deep and visceral the divisions in our country are. The Christian tradition with its commitment to radical hospitality equips us to be a force of unity and reconciliation, but only if we are willing to adopt a sort of Catholic Worker neutrality and make room for our neighbors—in our homes and in our pews—without casting judgment or taking sides. This does not mean that we do not stand up to evil in the world, but it does mean that we refuse to fight on the world’s terms. We can begin by being attentive to opportunities to open our door and say “come in.”

GOP health care plan, continued:

people, many of whom wait on us: They cut your hair; they do your nails; they work on our farms; they get your coffee. These are hard-working Americans.”

Sister Keehan noted the Affordable Care Act’s positive impact since 2010 on thousands of U.S. families who had been cut off from insurance because of pre-existing conditions or low income or who previously faced crippling debt because of lifetime limits on health benefits. “We have 20 million people who have for the first time just got health insurance, and now we are going to take it away?” she asked.

“We don’t need to do this,” Sister Keehan said. “You can’t do a tax cut for corporate America and the nation’s highest earning people on the backs of the poor; we cannot as a people tolerate that.” . . .

Sister Keehan strongly disagrees with the argument that the AHCA is necessary now because the ACA is failing. She argues Obamacare is flawed but that it was on a trajectory to stabilization before moves by congressional Republicans and now the Trump administration to undermine it. “It needs improvements,” she said. “It is not a bill that I would have passed; it’s not a bill [former President Obama] would have passed; it’s a bill we could get passed.” But the ACA has made “remarkable progress” toward the universal health coverage most industrialized states take for granted. “Let’s take our time and get it right,” Sister Keehan said.

That way, she added with a wry laugh, “by the time I am in a nursing home, you won’t still have to be writing about this.”

Understanding the significance of Trinity Sunday can be as simple as one-two-three. . . . Yet , the mystery of a triune God equally confounds the simple child and the wise old person, as the well-known story of St. Augustine teaches us. One day while walking along the seashore pondering the Trinity, Augustine encountered a boy pouring ocean water into a hole in the sand. The boy explained: “I am going to put the entire ocean into this hole.” St. Augustine told him that it was impossible. The hole in the sand was too small to contain all of the vast ocean. Surprisingly, the boy replied, “And neither can you fit the Trinity into your little brain.” When the boy vanished, St. Augustine realized he had been talking to an angel. We continue to walk by faith, affirming the Trinity every time we cross ourselves.

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