



Easter Sunday

April 1, 2018

Readings

This week:

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

Corinthians 5:6b-8

John 20:1-9

Next week:

Acts 4:32-35

1 John 5:1-6

John 20:19-31

Psalm

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad. (*Psalm 118*)

Today

Today's presider is Msgr. John Sandersfeld.

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

No meetings this week.

From Thomas Merton

. . . The power of Easter has burst upon us with the resurrection of Christ. . . Easter is the hour of our own deliverance—from what? Precisely from Lent and from its hard Law which accuses and judges our infirmity. We are no longer under the Law. We are delivered from the harsh judgment! . . . Here is all the greatness and all the unimaginable splendor of the Easter mystery—here is the "grace" of Easter which we fail to lay hands on because we are afraid to understand its full meaning. . . .

In all other religions men seek justification, salvation, escape from "the wheel of birth and death" by ritual acts, or by religious observances, or by ascetic and contemplative techniques. . . . But Christianity is precisely a liberation from every rigid legal and religious system. . . . This gift, this mercy, this unbounded love of God for us has been lavished upon us as a result of Christ's victory. To taste this love is to share in His victory. To realize our freedom, to exult in our liberation from death, from sin and from the Law, is to sing the Alleluia which truly glorifies God in this world and in the world to come. . . .

—*Seasons of Celebration*

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

Golf for a good cause:

Play golf at Stanford and empower children of low-income families to reach their full potential! Join us for our 23rd Annual Seton Scramble for Students on Monday, May 14, 2018. A full day of golf at Stanford includes a Hobeys breakfast, a boxed lunch, and a Coupa Cafe catered afternoon reception (with a lively auction)



—plus wine, beer and beverages throughout the day! Tournament prizes too! Non-golfers are also welcome to the afternoon reception and auction starting at 4:00 pm.

All proceeds directly support tuition assistance for students at St. Elizabeth Seton School.

Register at www.setonpaloalto.org or contact Carmel Caligaris for more information: development@setonpaloalto.org or (650) 326-1258. There is early-bird pricing if you register before April 15.

Please remember in your prayers this week: Denise Alongi, George Bouchey, Tom Carmody, George Chippendale, Sr. Fran Ciluaga, Mary Connors, Ken Dias, Fr. Thierry Geris, Deonna Gill, Emily Gill, Joanne Hasegawa, Dick Jackman, 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.

ValLimar Jansen coming May 6:

ValLimar Jansen, a highly regarded speaker, singer, composer, and recording artist, is coming to OLR on Sunday, May 6, 1:00-5:00 pm, to lead an afternoon of prayer and song on *Our Call to True Discipleship*. ValLimar trained as a Fine Arts major at Howard University in Washington, DC, and she holds masters and doctorate degrees in the arts from California State University, San Bernardino, and the University of California, Santa Barbara.

ValLimar has been the cantor for several Jazz Liturgies and closing liturgies at the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress. She has toured regionally, and has served as a cantor, principal vocalist, lector, workshop presenter, or presider at the San Jose Jazz Festival, the Sacramento Jazz Festival, and many other major events. In addition, she has sung with David Haas, Marty Haugen, Bob Hurd, Tom Kendzia, Jesse Manibusan, and many others. She is a guest artist on Marty Haugen's *Turn My Heart* and Cross Culture's CD of global praise music, *Songs of Faith From Near and Far*. ValLimar and her husband Frank also have a CD, *Catholic Classics: African American Sacred Songs*.



COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Scholars urge dialogue:

Abridged from an article by Heidi Schlumpf, NCR national correspondent, March 26, 2018, at ncronline.org.

As the U.S. bishops were urging Congress to enact a permanent Conscience Protection Act to protect health care workers from participating in abortions—a lobbying effort that seemed to collapse March 22—scholars were debating the complexities of that and other religious freedom debates, especially when one group's religious freedom conflicts with other freedoms or values in a pluralistic, democratic society.

"Whose conscience prevails when such conflict ensues?" asked Miguel Diaz, professor of theology at Loyola University in Chicago and former ambassador to the Holy See. "Is it the institutionalized conscience related to the religious body, the conscience of the individuals within

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March for Our Lives:

By Pat Perriello, published March 26, 2018, at ncronline.org.

As an old man, I have a constitutional right to wax poetic over "the good old days." I'm allowed to tell you how I had to walk five miles to school every day through the snow and rain. (Actually, I did walk one mile to high school every day.) I'm also permitted to tell you that kids today are just no good.

On a more serious note, I have harbored some concerns about young people for some time. It seemed to this old man that the emphasis on technology was at least somewhat harmful to our younger generation. Watching young people of every age immersed in their cell phones and video games made me wonder about their ability to interact with live individuals. I had trouble understanding why they would text their friends rather than pick up

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Scholars urge dialogue:

or outside that institution, or the conscience of a democratically elected government and its leaders whose primary responsibility is to serve a pluralistic society and advance the common good?" Diaz said.

Too often those questions are not debated in a reasoned discussion, but in culture war attacks aimed more at winning the argument than finding a solution that respects both sides, said several speakers at a two-day conference on "The Question of Religious Freedom" March 12-13 at Loyola University. "Religious people tend to enter discussions with the attitude that they already have all the answers they need," said Robin Lovin, an emeritus professor of ethics at Southern Methodist University. Instead, societies have to answer not only whether an option is "good," but whether it is "politic," he said. "Are we in the realm of contingent truths where all solutions are important? Or are we dealing with truth that can't be questioned?" Lovin asked.

... At least one speaker predicted that if opposing sides in religious freedom disagreements could work toward compromise in service of the common good, they could serve as a sign of hope for reducing overall political polarization. Culture wars and fights over religious liberty are the wrong metaphor, set the wrong tone and send the wrong message, said Kathleen Brady, a fellow at ... Emory University. "And if finally we finish by mowing down our opponents, we will not have won. We will have lost what is most important."

Instead, Christians should model God's love through openness to the other, hearing their point of view and learning from others, she said. "These aren't just democratic values. They are Christian values," she said.

... Thomas Berg, who has written briefs in support of same-sex marriage. ... agreed that those on opposite sides should try to support one another's liberties, rather than replicating and aggravating "culture war" debates. "The strongest features of the case for same-sex civil marriage show an equally strong case for protecting the religious liberty of dissenters," said Berg, professor of law and public policy at St. Thomas University in Minnesota.

... But too often activists allow "the perfect to be the enemy of the good," or lose credibility because they support liberty for one group but not another, he said. For example, Republicans support religious liberty for Christians but tend to deny such rights to Muslims, while liberals have become increasingly hostile to any religious liberty claims. "Religious freedom is a fundamental value, just as nondiscrimination is; courts and legislatures should give strong weight to both," he said. Without such compromises, polarization will continue in the political sphere, said Lovin. ...

Young Catholics call for an authentic, empowering church:

Abridged from an article by Fr. Thomas Reese, SJ, published March 26, 2018 at ncronline.org. Fr. Reese is a columnist for Religion News Service and author of Inside the Vatican: The Politics and Organization of the Catholic Church.

After a weeklong meeting in Rome with Pope Francis, young Catholics called for an authentic and empowering church where they would feel welcomed. The call came in a 16-page document approved by the 300 young people from all over the world who participated in a meeting preparing for the Synod of Bishops planned for October on the topic of "Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment." In preparation for this pre-synodal meeting, 15,000 young people engaged online through Facebook groups.

... What do the young people want from the church? "Young people look for a sense of self by seeking communities that are supportive, uplifting, authentic and accessible," said the document, "communities that empower them." They desire "strong communities in which young people share their struggles and testimonies with each other. The Church oftentimes appears as too severe and is often associated with excessive moralism," they noted. "We need a Church that is welcoming and merciful, which appreciates its roots and patrimony and which loves everyone, even those who are not following the perceived standards." They asked the hierarchy to "be a transparent, welcoming, honest, inviting, communicative, accessible, joyful and interactive community."

The pre-synod participants noted that many of their peers are leaving the church in large numbers. "Young people who are disconnected from or who leave the Church do so after experiencing indifference, judgment and rejection," said the document.

"One could attend, participate in, and leave Mass without experiencing a sense of community or family as the Body of Christ. Christians profess a living God, but some attend Masses or belong to communities which seem dead," the delegates complained. "Young people are attracted to the joy which should be a hallmark of our faith." They want "to see a Church that is a living testimony to what it teaches and witnesses to authenticity on the path to holiness, which includes acknowledging mistakes and asking for forgiveness." ...

"The young have many questions about the faith," said the document, "but desire answers which are not watered-down, or which utilize pre-fabricated formulations. We, the young Church, ask that our leaders speak in practical terms about controversial subjects such as homosexuality and gender issues, about which young people are already freely discussing without taboo." ...

March for Our Lives, continued:

a phone and call them. The art of conversation seemed a lost cause. I particularly began to doubt they would have the ability to communicate appropriately and effectively with adults.

Well, even old men can be wrong once in a while. Saturday, March 24, marked the March for Our Lives on Washington, as well as marches across the country and the world for an end to shootings in our schools. How did we get to this point? Almost immediately after the shooting in Parkland, Florida, students started speaking out. They were articulate, thoughtful, passionate, sad and afraid. As they continued to speak out they were challenged, and in some cases ridiculed by the gun lobby and politicians. Their ability to respond to these challenges with maturity and common sense put the adults to shame. I have been overwhelmed by how they have been able to conduct themselves in a way that belies their age.

They have spoken at rallies and have done interviews on network and cable television. You expect them to sound like a football player who scored the winning touchdown after a big game. Instead, they sound like a TV-savvy politician addressing a major political issue.

Also, it is not just a few handpicked students who are in front speaking out. Every time you turn on the TV you see a different student making sense and speaking with conviction. Moreover, the news media randomly picks out a student in the crowd for reactions, and the student begins talking as if he or she has been doing this kind of public speaking for years.

Part of it is the gravity of the situation. These students feel compelled to speak out. I saw one sign in a crowd of students that said: "Fix this before I text my mom from under a desk." The existential threat is palpable and was perhaps brought home once again by a shooting in a Maryland school that left one girl dead.

Of course, we don't know how long this momentum will last, but students have organized and put together an enormous demonstration, along with satellite demonstrations in cities across the country. They are registering young people to vote, which should have a dramatic impact on the November election. It is true they have adults helping them, . . . but adults are not speaking for them. Young people are telling their stories and expressing their concerns in a profound way, and I believe our country may never be the same again.

Crowd estimates are that about 800,000 parents, students, teachers, and concerned citizens marched in Washington on Saturday. I believe this is a movement that cannot be denied, and we have teenagers to thank for it.

It appears we are in good hands with this new generation. Frankly, they can't take over for us old fogeys soon enough.

April is genocide awareness and prevention month:

"Never again," uttered after the Holocaust, has come to mean "over and over again." Genocide continues today in many parts of the world, as millions of people are exterminated, based solely on who they are. April marks the start of many genocides:

April 1915 – Ottomans began rounding up Armenians, the first step in exterminating more than 1,000,000 people

April 1933 – Nazis began annihilation of 6,000,000 Jews

April 1975 – Khmer Rouge killed more than 2,000,000 people in Cambodia

April 1992 – The siege of Sarajevo, Bosnia, resulted in the deaths of more than 10,000 people

April 1994 – Genocide killed 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus in Rwanda

April 2003 – In Sudan's Darfur region, 400,000 have been killed and 2,500,000 have become refugees

April 2011 – In the Syrian conflict, 150,000 civilians have died, and more than 2,400,000 have become refugees

What to do about this carnage? Dr. Ellen J. Kennedy, founder and Executive Director of World Without Genocide, offers one solution: ". . . Every morning I wonder what the day's news will bring: which human right will be abridged, which group of people will be increasingly marginalized, which effort at global peace and justice will be at gravest risk of being dismantled. What will I do today, I think; which issue needs attention most desperately? Lack of access to health care. Poverty. Violence against women. Hunger. Genocides on three continents. Denial of women's reproductive rights. Child soldiers. Sex trafficking. Corruption, political instability, and widening economic inequality. Climate change. Xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and anti-Muslimism. The worst refugee crisis in world history. Racial inequities in housing, education, and the law. . . . The list is endless, and rights that were so hard-won only yesterday might be gone tomorrow. If we think about that long list, we can become paralyzed in a cycle of rage, despair, fear, and inaction. So how do we move forward? For me, it's simple. I think about William Proxmire, the late senator from Wisconsin. The Convention on the Punishment and Prevention of the Crime of Genocide was passed in the United Nations in 1948. In the mid-1960s, the U.S. still hadn't ratified it, a process that requires 67 'yes' votes in the U.S. Senate. Sen. Proxmire took on the task of getting it ratified, something he assumed would be easily accomplished. He gave 3,211 speeches on the floor of the Senate, a speech a day for 19 years, every one of them unique, until the Convention was finally ratified in 1988—forty years after its ratification by the UN. "Senator Proxmire kept standing up. Imagine that. All those speeches, all those years—and he didn't give up. We can't give up, either. Pick your issue. Stand up. And keep standing up, just like Senator Proxmire."