



15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 15, 2018

Readings

This week:

Amos 7:12-15

Ephesians 1:3-14

Mark 6:7-13

Next week:

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Ephesians 2:13-18

Mark 6:30-34

Psalm

Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation. (*Psalm 85*)

Today

Today's presider is Fr. Larry Percell.

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, July 16, 7:30 pm

Spiritual Education, Thomas House

From Thomas Merton

We speak of "falling in love," as though love were something like water that collects in pools, lakes, rivers, and oceans. . . .The expression to "fall in love" reflects a peculiar attitude toward love and toward life itself—a mixture of fear, awe, fascination, and confusion.

. . .Love is, in fact, an intensification of life, a completeness, a fullness, a wholeness of life. . . .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 is our true destiny. We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone—we find it with one another. . . .Hence, our attitude toward life is also going to be in one way or another an attitude toward love.

—*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 NOTES

News Announcements Requests

St. Elizabeth Seton School:

St. Elizabeth Seton School relies on private donations and grants to support our mission of transforming the lives of children from low-income families by providing an elementary education regardless of a family's ability to pay tuition. Meeting the needs of Seton students would be very difficult without donor support. School tuition is beyond the reach of most families and virtually all students require scholarship assistance. We rely on the generosity of donors—individuals, community organizations, foundations, and businesses—to help bridge the gap in the cost of educating a child, our tuition and the amount a family can pay. Through the support of scholarships, you will be helping to educate a future first generation college graduate, or pave the way for an English language learner to master critical verbal and reading skills to be well positioned and competitive in the work place.

You may contribute a restricted gift to any of the programs below or donate an unrestricted gift.

- Tuition Assistance
- Resource Specialist for children with special learning needs
- Preschool Program
- Technology Education
- Music Education
- Athletic Program
- Counseling Program
- Extended Day Program (before and after school)
- Summer School Program

Contact info: info@setonpaloalto.org, 1095 Channing Ave, Palo Alto, CA 94301.

And don't forget that we are collecting backpacks and school supplies for the children who start school next month. Checks can be made out to St. Elizabeth Seton school, with "Backpacks" on the memo line. Checks or purchases should be brought to St. Thomas Aquinas Church by Sunday, August 12. If you have questions, call our coordinator, John Arnold, at (650) 269-2950, or e-mail him at jsaoso@comcast.net.

COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Nevertheless, Mary Magdalene persisted:

By Meghan J. Clark, an associate professor of theology at St. John's University in New York. Published June 29, 2018, at www.uscatholic.org. The feast of St. Mary Magdalene is normally celebrated on July 22, which is next Sunday.

... Readers of Scripture first meet Mary Magdalene during Jesus' preaching and healing ministry in Galilee as someone healed "from whom seven demons had gone out" (Luke 8:2). Later all the gospels mention her in the litany of women who traveled with Jesus to Jerusalem. All four gospels name her as a witness to both the crucifixion and the empty tomb. In John's gospel Mary Magdalene is the first person to meet the resurrected Jesus and is thus charged with telling the others. For this she is given the title "Apostle to the Apostles." In a world where women were not considered reliable witnesses, it is women upon whom our knowledge of the death and resurrection of Jesus relies. The women of the gospels, especially Magdalene, have long been maligned, minimized, or simply missing from the way we envision Jesus' followers.

... Mary Magdalene has long fascinated believers and secular society. Can men and women truly be friends? Long before *When Harry Met Sally*, . . . believers and nonbelievers alike have struggled with Mary of Magdala and her friendship with Jesus of Nazareth. Even today, at the excavation site of the first-century synagogue at Magdala, the women of the gospels occupy the small side chapels of the worship center, the central space reserved for Peter. In the very place Mary Magdalene likely heard Jesus preach for the first time, she and the other women witnesses still remain on the periphery.

"Indeed," says Pope Francis in his new exhortation on holiness, "in times when women tended to be most ignored or overlooked, the Holy Spirit raised up saints whose attractiveness produced new spiritual vigor and important reforms in the church. . . . But I think too of all those unknown or forgotten women who, each in her own way, sustained and transformed families and communities by the power of their witness." Beginning with Magdalene and continuing through Christian history, women persist, but their contributions are often ignored. As I walked the way of the cross in their footsteps, I prayed in gratitude. Their fidelity and witness continue to teach us what it means to be a pilgrim church called to follow God. Even today, as she walks with us in faith, she persists.



A soul-searching time as a nation:

(continued from last Sunday's bulletin)

Abridged from an article by Sr. Nancy Sylvester, from global-sistersreport.org, June 27, 2018.

Can this be the moment to pause as a nation and enter the “space” that seems to divide us and converse with each other in new ways? Can we ask what our common humanity is trying to call forth in us? Can we reclaim the best of who we are as Americans and who we want to be in the future? When I think about what is needed to do this work, I realize it demands great courage and understanding. Courage—in facing my own biases, assumptions, operative worldview and the way I have changed and developed. Understanding—in opening myself up to the worldviews of others so as to recall and appreciate the values inherent in other stages of development.

It is the practice of contemplation that moves me toward this action. Through contemplation, one can become aware of how one sees the world. One realizes that everyone views reality with blinders on, and over time, through the developmental process, those blinders can be cut back—broadening the worldview from which one engages reality. As Christians it is the process of “putting on the mind of Christ” or seeing from the heart of Christ. Contemplation helps you become your truest and best self.

I believe we can only enter that “space” between us deeply sourced by the inner presence of God, urging us to embrace all with love, compassion, mercy and justice. I invite then those of us who have a contemplative practice to take seriously the invitation to enter the space to begin conversations with our families, co-workers, church members and political leaders. What shall we talk about? Perhaps we can start with ... What makes us proud to be an American citizen? What kind of future do we desire for children? What is our role within the world community? What are our hopes about the future? Then move toward ... What are our fears about the future? What values do we want embodied in our elected leaders? How might we close the gap that has been created among us as a people? How might we address the issues that seem to divide us? Hopefully, such conversations will be enlightening as we probe some of the values which are contentious from a more neutral direction. Perhaps a greater wisdom will emerge that will invite further discussion and even some practical action together. We are in a precarious position as a country. We cannot be silent. Action will be taken. In addition, another more time-consuming action is needed. Some of us need to enter the space between us and speak truth in a loving way to each other. I believe that if we don't try to do that, the space will continue to widen and deepen until the chasm is so great it will sever us as a people.

CLINIC is lifeline for immigrants and refugees:

(continued from last Sunday's bulletin)

Abridged from an article by Fr. Peter Daly, at ncronline.org.

CLINIC started 30 years ago, founded by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. . . . It has about 60 employees spread throughout the country. Its executive director, Jeanne Atkinson, started working in the immigration field at Catholic Charities. The annual budget for CLINIC is over \$6 million, which comes from the U.S. bishops, foundation grants and fees paid by agencies and students in CLINIC courses. Over 9,000 people participated in CLINIC training programs in 2017.

Beyond its training functions, CLINIC does a lot of advocacy work on immigration issues with government agencies and public officials. Recently it has been working to help holders of temporary protected status (TPS) visas. The Trump administration has announced its intention to end protected status for most holders, a decision that affects hundreds of thousands of people from such countries like El Salvador, Haiti, Syria, Nicaragua and Nepal among others.

. . . CLINIC also works with the various state Catholic conferences on state and local legislation. It also offers guidance for the parishes and community organizations. . . . One part of CLINIC's work directly affects many Catholics at the parish level. It helps dioceses and religious orders to bring priests, sisters and seminarians into the US for ministry or studies. Last year, about 180 priests and religious and seminarians were brought to the US with CLINIC's help.

CLINIC connects migrants and refugees with lawyers to represent them in cases before the Board of Immigration Appeals, a nationwide appeals court for immigration matters. These are often complicated cases, taking many years. Sometimes CLINIC helps to file amicus curiae (literally, “friend of the court”) briefs in Supreme Court cases.

. . . Pope Francis has frequently said that a Christian should build bridges, not walls, between peoples. That is what CLINIC does. It is a reminder that we are Catholic. That is, that our church and our concerns cross borders and cultures. God did not draw these borders between nations. (Often, like our southern border, they were established by force of arms.) The universal fatherhood of God means that we have a universal brotherhood and sisterhood of humanity.

. . . Around the globe today, more than 65 million people are on the move. They are displaced by war, poverty, famine, terrorism, and crime. The Catholic Church stands in “solidarity” with them. Welcoming the stranger and defending the weak is part of being a Catholic. That is the work of CLINIC and part of the work of the church.

5 ways Catholics can take action to help immigrant families:

(continued from last Sunday's bulletin)

Abridged from an article by Michelle Fordice, project manager in the communications department of CLINIC, from uscatholic.org, June 25, 2018.

Financially support organizations like CLINIC and our affiliates

An immigrant represented by a trained lawyer or accredited representative is far more likely to see a positive outcome of his or her case. US immigration law is incredibly complex. Imagine trying to file your taxes on your own—no help from TurboTax!—in a language that isn't familiar and after suffering a life-changing trauma. On top of that, your life and the lives of your children depend on this one chance. No one should have to do that without help.

Financial donations are especially important right now. Detention centers are usually located in rural areas that are difficult to reach.

Programs need extra funds to get their staff and volunteers where they are needed in order to make sure as many people as possible have access to the above representation.

Consider donating to one of our affiliates near you (find one at cliniclegal.org/directory) or give directly to CLINIC. We are raising \$30,000 to help send volunteers from our affiliates directly to problem areas to bolster local efforts.

In the first wave, we will be sending people to a nonprofit along the U.S.-Mexico border or the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, Texas, where they will provide in-person, in-depth advising and orientation for people in Mexico about what to expect when they attempt to seek asylum in the United States or work with families being detained in Dilley.

Organize screenings and

Know Your Rights presentations

The border is more than a physical place. It exists right in your own neighborhood. You do not need to travel to

Mexico to find immigrants who need help. Organize Know Your Rights presentations and screenings to help immigrants in your own community understand their options. Know Your Rights presentations explain the rights people have, regardless of immigration status, when interacting with law enforcement, at their workplace, and in public schools. Free resources are available in nine languages to help you host these presentations. Screenings, meanwhile, are community events that help immigrants understand the immigration benefits available to them. A screener will ask an immigrant a series of questions and then send them to a lawyer or accredited representative for a final eligibility assessment. If they qualify for aid, organizers can then refer them to quality

legal representation and they receive help in applying.

A recent study CLINIC helped conduct found that as many as two million undocumented immigrants qualify for some type of immigration relief but don't know it. The

study also found that many people who identified as "immigrants" were actually US citizens!

Pray

In response to the current situation at the border, many groups are organizing prayer events, like Break Bread Not Families. Take a moment to say CLINIC's prayer for migrants (below) or a rosary with Our Lady of Guadalupe to pray for the dignity of migrants around the world.

The issue of immigration demands a long-term, prayerful approach. It takes careful consideration to understand how we can work with the immigrants in our community to find solutions and offer aid. Turn inward and ask God to show you your strengths and the strengths of your community. We all have the capacity to help. To learn about discerning how to welcome your neighbor, visit cliniclegal.org/welcome or use our digital devotional to host a small group at your parish and talk about this issue.



Lord, we pray for the protection of all refugees, migrants and displaced people in the world today. You experienced the life of a migrant in the flight to Egypt, when Joseph and Mary fled their home to protect your life. Today, this phenomenon continues in a world that does not respect the vulnerable. Help us to respond to the needs of these people, our brothers and sisters. You told us that when we welcome the stranger we welcome you and that the reward of that assistance is not forgotten on the day of our judgment.

We invoke the Migrant Family of Nazareth to protect those who migrate today. Keep them safe and bring them to their destinations with your guidance. Amen.

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Kay Williams (July 22 and 29), 679-9015

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