



28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 13, 2019

Readings

This week:

2 Kings 5:14–17

2 Timothy 2:8–13

Luke 17:11–19

Next week:

Exodus 17:8–13

2 Timothy 3:14–4:2

Luke 18:1–8

Psalm

The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving pow’r. (*Psalm 98*)

Today

Today’s presider is Rev. 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, Waverley and Homer Streets, Palo Alto. Members of the Thomas Merton community participate in planning 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, there are return envelopes in the bulletin on the last Sunday of each month for your convenience (donations by check or cash are welcome). The donation basket is in the back of church after Mass or available by the coffeepot after Mass—or you can use the envelope to mail your donation. **Please do not put your TMC envelope in the collection baskets passed during Mass (these are for parish contributions only).**

Calendar

Monday, October 14, 7:00 p.m.

TMC Liturgy Committee, Thomas House Library

Friday, October 18, 6:00 p.m.

Fish Fest Supper, Thomas House

From Thomas Merton

The completely irreligious mind is, it seems to me, the unreal mind, the tense, void, abstracted mind that does not even see the things that grow out of the earth or feel glad about them: it knows the world only through prices and figures and statistics. For when the world is reduced to number and measure, you can indeed be irreligious, unless your numbers turn out to be implicated in music, or astronomy, and then the fatal drive to adoration begins again!

The numbers that are germane to music and astronomy are implicated in the magic of seasons and harvests. And there, despite yourself, you recapture something of the hidden and forgotten atavistic joy of those Neolithic peoples who, who for whole millennia, were quiet and human.

--Conjectures 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. Visit: www.thomasmerton.org.

COMMUNITY NOTES

News Announcements Requests

Fr. Daniel Kiriti greets friends on October 13 in Menlo Park:



Fr. Kiriti will speak at the home of Anita Dippery today, Oct 13 at 2 pm. Anita's address is 455 Santa Rita (just off Middle Road) in Menlo Park. RSVP to Anita at 650 325-9936. Fr. Kiriti's talks are always wide ranging, full of insights about Kenya, the church in Kenya, education in Kenya and his newest project. It's sure to be an interesting afternoon. Yummies provided as well.

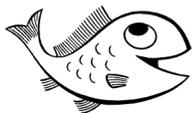
Kenya Help craft fair October 20:

Take the opportunity to visit the **Kenya Help Craft Fair** on Sunday, October 20, from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. in the Memorial Garden next to the church.

Margo McAuliffe found new crafts and old favorites during her summer visit to the Nairobi market. There are Nativity creche sets in multiple designs, woven baskets, wooden animals, ornaments, shopping bags, handbags, stone carvings and bowls. Your donation to Kenya Help is acknowledged when you find a craft item that you like, and it benefits the ongoing scholarship program of Kenyan-based NGO Empower the World, which supports African girls and boys in high school and university or professional schools.

Contact Margo: 650-322-0821, margo@kenyahelp.us.

Fish Fest Suppers resume October 18:



The STA Site Committee will resume the Friday Fish Fest dinners on October 18th. After the summer break, we hope parishioners will be ready for tasty fish filets, chips, and tangy cole slaw.

Take a break from kitchen duty and come October 18 at 6:00 p.m. for this traditional fish supper in the Thomas House in the friendly company of others in our parish.

Please, please RSVP to Helen Baumann, 650-327-9236, hbbbaumann@aol.com in advance. We need to be sure to have enough fish for all of you.

PRAY FOR US: Please remember in your prayers this week Denise Alongi, Rudy Bahr, George Bouchev, Tom Carmody, Kerry Carmody, George Chippendale, Mary Connors, Mike Cummings, Jim Davis, Ken Dias, Pat Dietrich, Dick Freeman, Deonna Gill, Emily Gill, Joanne Hasegawa, Fr. John Hester, Dean Judd, Hunter Kubit, Dick Jackman, Alicia Kot, Fr. Bill Leininger, Andre and Alyssa Lippard, Deacon Ysidro and Dolores Madrigal, Patricia Markee, Nancy Marty, Maureen Mooney, Hayden Pastorini, Alicia Placone-Combetta, Paul Prochaska, Anne Rush, Priya Smith, Bernice Sullivan, Jean Vistica, Dolores Walsh, and T. J. Wooten.
[Add/subtract names by e-mailing Kay Williams, kaywill@pacbell.net.]

CROP Hunger Walk Oct. 20 in Menlo Park:

A St. Thomas Aquinas Parish team has been created to support the CROP HUNGER WALK at Nealon Park, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. Walk with us, make a donation or both! Festivities begin at 1 pm; walks start at 2 pm. Walkers may choose a .6-mile, 1, 3 or 5-mile walk and enjoy a live band, food, and personal testimonies. Thanks to our parishioners who contributed a total of \$1,085 in 2018 and several parishioners who walked.

CROP Hunger Walk helps to provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs. From seeds and tools, to wells and water systems, to technical training and micro-enterprise loans, the key is people working together to identify their own development priorities, their strengths and their needs in partnership around the world.

CROP Hunger Walk is sponsored by Church World Service, a cooperative ministry of 37 Christian denominations. This ecumenical effort helps children and families in need to have food for today, while building for a better tomorrow. CROP Hunger Walkers, volunteers, and sponsors put their caring into action, raising funds to help end hunger and poverty at home in the US and around the world.

An important note: 25% of funds raised locally will be contributed to the Ecumenical Hunger Program in East Palo Alto for distribution to the needy in our local community.

For information, to register and donate, check the Crop Hunger Walk at <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/menloparkca> or contact our parish Human Concerns Committee at 650-714-2131.

Donate bath towels to Clara House:

Volunteers with Clara House in San Jose are providing showers for those without a home.

There is a need for bath towels which are provided for these showers; and then volunteers wash and dry them for the next guests.

I will be happy to collect them after our 8:45 TMC Mass on October 20 and 27.

Thanks, Rosana Madrigal de Beattie

TMC Board: Gerard McGuire, gerardmc@aol.com, 650-814-2223

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SpeakOut Committee: Diana Diamond, dianaldiamond@gmail.com

COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Seton School literary fundraiser October 30:

Award-winning author and educator Francisco Jiménez comes to Seton School, Wed., Oct. 30, 6:00-8:30 pm.

Professor Francisco Jiménez emigrated with his family from Tlaquepaque, Mexico to California and worked alongside his parents in the fields of California. With no English and a fear of being sent back to Mexico, his books beautifully unfold his inspiring and thought-provoking journey. He is currently a professor at Santa Clara University. His son Miguel Jiménez will interview him.

◆ 6:00P pm: wine reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres and a student-led tour of the school.

◆ 7:00 pm: a conversation on stage with Francisco Jimenez.

Purchase Your Tickets: <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4332873> or www.setonpaloalto.org. Please call Carmel if you have any questions: (650) 326-1258. OR: from TMC member Barbara Kent, after Mass today and next Sunday.

A prayer tool that might help you pray:

“Pray As You Go” is a daily prayer session, designed for use on portable devices, to help you pray whenever you find time, but particularly whilst travelling to and from work, study, etc.

A new prayer session is produced every day of the working week and one session for the weekend. It is not a 'Thought for the Day', a sermon or a bible-study, but rather a framework for your own prayer.

Lasting between ten and thirteen minutes, it combines music, scripture and some questions for reflection.

The aim of “Pray As You Go” is to help you to:

- * become more aware of God's presence in your life
- *listen to and reflect on God's word
- *grow in your relationship with God

It is produced by Jesuit Media Initiatives, with material written by a number of Jesuits, both in Britain and further afield, and other experts in the spirituality of St Ignatius of Loyola. Although the content is different every day, it keeps to the same basic format.

Look up “Pray As You Go” on your iPhone or iPad and download the app.

Please join us after Mass in the Thomas House for coffee and donuts. We especially encourage newcomers or those passing through town to stop by for food and fellowship.

Let us pray -- for voice and action:

[By Meghan J. Clarke, *US Catholic*, Oct. 2019]

A teaching evaluation once observed that I was “not afraid of silence” in the classroom. In reality, learning to be comfortable with silence was the hardest classroom management tactic for me to master. Spiritually, teaching has helped me begin to appreciate the role of silence in both prayer and moral theology. Silence as prayer—in all its relational and contextual complexity—can help us approach God and find spiritual clarity to speak in the face of unspeakable injustice.

Open discussions are crucial for teaching ethics. Yet the silence between asking a question and a student responding feels as if it is suspended in time. Despite the palpable anxiety, anticipation, and tension, I learned that only by resting in this silence can a thoughtful discussion emerge. Embracing silence allows questions to fill the room and new, unexpected insights to be shared. It also helps us recognize that sometimes words just fail. Accepting a place for silence in developing moral discourse has taught me to embrace a new kind of silence in prayer.

Growing up, I had a complicated relationship with silence. On the one hand I was taught that silence in prayer was a mark of humility and listening for God. “We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature—trees, flowers, grass—grows in silence,” urged St. Teresa of Calcutta. This vision helped me develop attentiveness to the presence of God in all of creation. Nevertheless, I struggled to find the silence.

On the other hand, my grandparents and parents taught me that silence in the face of injustice is complicity. In middle school my failure to be silent in the face of racism led to intense bullying. Silence would have been easier, but it also would have been tacit acceptance of racial slurs against other students. For a long time, even silence in prayer felt like an abdication of the injunction to “speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy” (Prov. 31:9).

In class shared silence sometimes allows students to open up about their own experiences and personal spirituality in ways that are a witness, not mere discussion. When students share their experiences of racism and discrimination, it isn't a discussion point or anecdote. Out of silence we are all invited to be present, and oftentimes this active silence is recognition that words fail to address the shared experience. I hope this dynamic of silence and presence helps move students to find their voice and speak up on behalf of themselves and others.

Spiritually, revelations of the inhumane treatment of

Pray, continued on page 4.

What will the Amazon synod do for the Church?

[By Kevin Clarke, *US Catholic*, Oct., 2019]

The Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region was controversial long before this fall. Self-described orthodox Catholics have worried over its potential impact far from the Amazon. One of the issues to be discussed at the synod is the acute shortage of priests in the nine countries that make up Amazonia.

A proposal that has been kicked down the road for years is the ordination of what are known as *viri probati*, a Latin expression best translated as “family men of virtue.” Some view it as an opening for the wider church to begin accepting married men for the priesthood. (News flash, it already does in a number of traditions united to Rome.) Worse, they suspect the crashing of the male celibate priesthood by male not-so-celibates could be a vanguard move to women’s ordination.

These anxieties are confounding to the bishops and laypeople who actually live in the Amazon, who are acutely aware of the spiritual devastation the priest shortage is causing. Many Amazon communities may not see a priest more than two or three times a year.

But the synod’s working document, building on the agenda set out in the pope’s 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si’* (On Care for Our Common Home), actually devotes most of its ink to different crises of the Amazon—the unique fragility of its ecology and a related threat to the self-determination of its indigenous people. And the Amazon bishops’ intervention on these matters could not be more timely.

Brazil is the region’s geographic and economic giant. A friend to extractive industries of just about any sort, its populist president, Jair Bolsonaro, promises to overturn decades of environmental policy, rolling back prohibitions built into the 1988 constitution that sought to protect and empower indigenous people and restrain over-exploitation of the fragile rainforest ecosystem. The indigenous reserves created under that constitution have helped Brazil’s indigenous population rebound after centuries of decline. Now they are under existential threat again.

Within weeks of Bolsonaro’s swearing in, Brazil’s satellite-based DETER system—Deforestation Detection in Real Time—reported an 88 percent increase in deforestation in June 2019 compared to the same month in 2018. Trees were being axed at an even more torrid rate the following month, and on July 23 Emrya Wajãpi, leader of the indigenous Wajãpi people, was stabbed to death by gold miners illegally working in the protected reserve of the Wajãpi community.

Bolsonaro has made a particular goal the weakening of indigenous people’s territorial claims, perceiving them as barriers to development and their claims to tribal land and esteem for the sacredness of creation as backward and irrelevant.

Revisiting the historical sins of the past is bad enough, but the kind of accelerated development Bolsonaro seeks is not just a threat to indigenous people. Opening up the region to greater forest clearing for farming, grazing, or the ecological ruinous lumber and mining industries will mean more rainforest loss than the Earth can stand.

The Amazon region has been called the lungs of the world for good reason: Its forests remain a final refuge for a disproportionate percentage of the planet’s surviving biodiversity and a vast reservoir of carbon. Preventing deforestation in the Amazon is fundamental to any hope of combating climate change.

Allowing Brazil’s indigenous people to maintain control of their land and their destiny is not just a matter of geopolitical and historical justice. It is not just the minimum the church demands to protect their human dignity. It is not fair to burden them so, but it is the stewardship of indigenous people that offers the best chance for the preservation of this essential ecosystem, a final stand protecting the rest of the world from the worst impacts of climate change and greed. #

[Kevin Clarke is the chief correspondent for *America* magazine and author of *Oscar Romero: Love Must Win Out* (Liturgical Press).

(Pray, continued from page 3:)

migrants in detention centers at the border have made it difficult for me to pray. On social media I frequently see new investigative reports couched with the simple, agonizing prayer: May God have mercy on us. How can I pray for mercy while children remain in lice-infested cells without proper bedding or supervision? I believe in a God who forgave the individuals and the system that sentenced Christ to death on a cross. I search for a way to pray that God has mercy on us, yet I am rendered silent.

As a nation, “they know not what they do” does not apply. We know what we are doing and it continues. The asylum process and foreign policy are complicated. The basic human rights of migrants being held in detention camps are not.

As I still myself to pray, I am brought back to my experience at Golgotha in Jerusalem. I had no thoughts or words. I approach the cross in silence, embracing all the anxiety and tension of that moment. As I read story after story of abuses at the border, the spiritual silence of the cross helps me focus on the crucified peoples today. This silence in prayer, I hope, will lead to voice and action on behalf of justice and solidarity.

[Meghan J. Clark is an associate professor of theology at St. John’s University in New York. She is author of *The Vision of Catholic Social Thought: The Virtue of Solidarity and the Praxis of Human Rights* (Fortress)]