



# The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

December 29, 2019

## Readings

*This week:*

Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14

Colossians 3:12–21

Matthew 2: 13–15, 19–23

*Next week:*

Isaiah 60:1–6

Ephesians 3:2–3a, 5–6

Matthew 2: 1–12

## Psalm

Blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways. (*Psalm 128*)

## Today

Today's presider is Fr. Xavier Lavagetto, O.P.

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

Wednesday, January 1, Solemnity of Mary (*Holy Day of Obligation*)  
Masses at STA: 7:15 a.m. and 12:00 pm (Latin/Gregorian)

## From Thomas Merton

We must all believe in love and in peace. We must believe in the power of love. We must recognize that our being itself is grounded in love; that is to say, that we come into being because we are loved and because we are meant to love others. The failure to believe this and to live accordingly creates instead a deep mistrust, a suspicion of others, a hatred of others, a failure to love. When a man attempts to live by and for himself alone, he becomes a little “island” of hate, greed, suspicion, fear, desire. Then his whole outlook on life is falsified. All his judgments are affected by that untruth. In order to recover the true perspective, which is that of love and compassion, he must once again learn, in simplicity, truth, and peace, that “No man is an island.”

--Preface to the Vietnamese edition of *No Man Is An Island*

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](http://www.thomasmerton.org).

# COMMUNITY NOTES

News Announcements Requests

## Human Concerns Committee sends thanks:

The Heart and Home women's shelter meal worked out really well on Thursday, December 19th. Thanks for your help and support for these ladies. Although I didn't count everyone present, there seemed to be a full group of guests.

Some ladies we have met before and several new ladies all appreciated the variety of delicious food and wanted me to convey their sincere thanks. The table was beautifully decorated for Christmas with four large poinsettias also donated by a parishioner.

A new date for our parish contribution will be chosen for January at University Lutheran.

--Terry Atkinson, Human Concerns Committee

## TMC donation envelope enclosed today:



Please use the envelope enclosed in this bulletin to make your monthly contribution to the support of the Thomas Merton Center.

Your dollars make possible the sponsorship of the 8:45 Sunday Mass, monthly contributions to Seton School (\$1,000) and the Ecumenical Hunger Program (\$40), spiritual education talks, retreats, and the publication of this bulletin. Lay-led, self-sustaining, self-generating—this is TMC. Thanks to all who contribute.

## Save February 8 for Rosemary Ellmer:

**Saturday, February 8, 3:00 p.m., at OLR Hall: The Future of the Church in the Light of the Clergy Abuse Scandals**, with Dr. Rosemary Ellmer.

A licensed clinical psychologist, Dr. Ellmer has worked for over 15 years at Santa Clara University both as an adjunct professor and a clinical psychologist and training director at the university's counseling center. She will share her frank reflections from the fields of psychology and theology on the current crisis facing the church.

At the request of Bishop P.J. McGrath, in the fall of 2018 she moderated the four diocese-wide listening sessions held to seek input from people in the pews on the pathway to reform and to listen to those victimized by clerical sexual abuse.

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.

## January Retreat on Thomas Merton in Danville:

Franciscan Spirituality:

“The Franciscan Heart of Thomas Merton,”

presented by Fr. Daniel Horan, OFM

January 24-26, 2020

at San Damiano Retreat

710 Highland Drive, Danville, CA

Most Christians know about and admire St. Francis; many are familiar with the spiritual writings of the American Trappist monk Thomas Merton. But few realize how much St. Francis and the Franciscan spiritual tradition influenced and informed Merton's life and writings. In this retreat Fr. Horan will pay particular attention to the way the Franciscan tradition shaped Merton's most famous contribution to spirituality: the idea of the “True Self.” He will also look at the Franciscan spirituality behind Merton's understanding of Jesus Christ and creation.

Daniel Patrick Horan OFM is an American Franciscan friar (of the Order of Friars Minor of Holy Name Province), Roman Catholic priest, theologian, and author. He is currently assistant professor of systematic theology and spirituality at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. He is a columnist for *National Catholic Reporter*.

**Cost:** \$250/private room; \$230/double per person. Registration online at [www.sandamiano.org](http://www.sandamiano.org) or call at (925) 837-9141.

**PRAY FOR US:** Please remember in your prayers this week Art Adams, Denise Alongi, Rudy Bahr, Char Buchholz, 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, Mercedes McCaffrey, 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](mailto:kaywill@pacbell.net)]

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# COMMUNITY FORUM

*Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns*

## **Reflection on the Seven Deadly Sins:**

### **Seven Deadly Sins:**

Wealth without work.	Pride
Pleasure without conscience.	Envy
Science without humanity.	Lust
Knowledge without character.	Anger
Politics without principle.	Gluttony
Commerce without morality.	Greed
Worship without sacrifice.	Sloth
<i>--Mahatma Gandhi</i>	<i>--Catholic Catechism</i>

Gandhi's reflection on sin helps us understand that not only is sin something that we do to other persons, but that sin is any action that is self-serving.

- Empires are built on the sin of amassing wealth and not distributing it to those who labor.
- Those who benefit from imperial greed do not reinvest what they have taken from the harvest; rather, they spend their wealth on pleasures.
- Science and knowledge serve the bottom line and do not lift the bottom.
- Politics and commerce only serve the interest of the elite few and do not build up the common good.
- The Empire is held together by a system of coercion and violence and by divisions fomented by those at the very top of society.

May our worship be authentic and filled with hymns prayers, sacred texts and rituals that open our eyes to the brokenness around us and stir us from our slumber into committing to do the work of healing and liberation.

*(taken from Fr. Jon Pedigo's weekly email. Fr. Pedigo is Director of Advocacy and Community Engagement at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County)*

## **Pilgrimages with Fr. George Aranha:**

Come join our former pastor, Fr. George Aranha, who will be hosting three upcoming Pilgrimages:

- Pilgrimage (11 days) to the Marian Shrines & Barcelona including Fatima, Avila, Loyola and Lourdes - October 5-15, 2020.
- Pilgrimage (12 days) to the Holy Land & Rome including a Papal audience February 1-12, 2021.
- Pilgrimage (12 days) to Eastern Europe, including Krakow, Prague, Vienna and Budapest Sept. 13-24, 2021

For general information and photographs:

<https://nativitypilgrimage.com>  
& [info@nativitypilgrimage.com](mailto:info@nativitypilgrimage.com).

For brochures and registration forms, please visit:

[www.SantaTeresaChurch.com/pilgrimage](http://www.SantaTeresaChurch.com/pilgrimage).

For more information and to register, please contact:

Jen Vazquez: [Jen@SantaTeresaChurch.com](mailto:Jen@SantaTeresaChurch.com)

## **"The Two Popes" movie review:**

What would it be like to listen in on a discussion between Pope Benedict XVI and his successor, Pope Francis? "The Two Popes" answers that tantalizing question -- with Anthony Hopkins and Jonathan Pryce in the key roles ...[T]his handsome movie captures the pageantry of the Vatican, and bores into the philosophical issues separating these two pontiffs: Benedict, a stern traditionalist, among those who allowed the Catholic Church's child-molestation crisis to fester; and Francis, a more worldly reformer, convinced the church must adapt to modern realities.

...Directed by Fernando Meirelles ("City of God") from a script by Anthony McCarten, "The Two Popes" goes back to Benedict's ascent after the death of Pope John Paul II in 2005, when some of the cardinals pushed for Bergoglio, who resisted the political aspects of being their champion.

Disillusioned by the church's direction, Bergoglio is ready to resign seven years later, when Benedict summons him to Rome, for an audience whose purpose leaves the cardinal confused. The two debate policy and theology -- the value of compromise and change versus principle and tradition -- before Benedict drops his bombshell: That he's planning to step down, and doesn't want Bergoglio to leave, which would be perceived as a sign of protest.

...Hopkins and Pryce spar elegantly, while Bergoglio fears the impact that Benedict's departure amid scandal would have on the institution. ...[T]his expands to Bergoglio's past, and the guilt associated with his time in Argentina under military dictatorship in the 1970s.

"The Two Popes" thus becomes, basically, two movies,...one more cerebral, much like a stage play about their private meetings and theological differences; the other a biography of Francis and what shaped him, illustrated by flashbacks in which he's played by Juan Minujin.

Given the deeply personal nature of the exchange of ideas, the "inspired by true events" description evokes more skepticism than usual, and indeed, the production notes refer to it as an "imagined" conversation. That doesn't necessarily undermine the broader points, but it does take something away from the smaller flourishes, like Benedict's German sense of humor (not much, he concedes) or Francis' impassioned pitch for soccer.

Shot in Rome and Argentina, the movie conveys the romance and higher ideals associated with the Catholic Church, while grappling with the larger issues of its role in modern society that have been so fundamental since Francis' election....

## *A merry, white Christmas?*

[By Fr. Terrance W. Klein, *America*, 12/23/19]

Sometimes Christmas is not what it is supposed to be. Neither merry nor white. If the world is full of joy, we cannot see it. Peace eludes earth, and we cannot hear the angels sing.

On Christmas morning 1928 they discovered their infant son, born earlier that December, dead in his crib of what would come to be known as sudden infant death syndrome, or SIDS. Born Ellin Mackay, the infant's mother was Catholic. The father, Irving Berlin, was a Russian-born Jew, the son of an orthodox cantor.

Like so many other songs that he wrote, the melancholy words and melody of "White Christmas" percolated for some time before Mr. Berlin found a purpose for them: "Holiday Inn," a movie about "a retired trouper who buys a farm, and when farming doesn't work out, turns the farm into an inn that is open only on holidays." It would star Paramount's newest sensation, the crooner Bing Crosby.

"Holiday Inn," which premiered in August of 1942, was a hit but as for the score's centerpiece, the tune in which Berlin had invested so much hope, the collective silence was deafening. The *New York Times* review mentioned "White Christmas" only in passing, calling it "tender"; the *Herald Tribune* called it "tuneful"; and *Variety* failed to mention it at all.

In Irving *Berlin: New York Genius* (2019), biographer James Kaplan notes that Mr. Crosby's Decca recording of the song entered the Lucky Strike Hit Parade in the spring of 1942 at number 10 but stalled at two. Then, quite unexpectedly

"White Christmas," which Berlin had deliberately chosen not to promote at the outset, preferring to wait until the commencement of the holiday season (in those sweetly innocent times, after Thanksgiving), started to sell like crazy, on record and in sheet music. By mid-September, "our number one song without any plugs." By the first week of October it stood at the top of the Hit Parade, and—with recordings by the Freddy Martin Orchestra and Dinah Shore joining Crosby's—Billboard proclaimed "White Christmas" "one of the most phenomenal hits in the history of the music business."

Why did "White Christmas" smash the charts? And in the summer of 1942? Because America had been plunged into war the previous December. Her prospects on the battlefield were grim. That summer thousands of young Americans found themselves half a globe away from home, facing a Christmas that most likely would not be merry and quite certainly would not be white. The song spoke to the G.I.s and to their

families at home.

Mr. Kaplan asks, What makes "White Christmas" so great and so strange? Dozens of writers have poured thousands of words into analyzing the bridgeless 54-word chorus of this seemingly simple tune. "People read a lot of things into that song," Berlin himself said, "that I didn't put there."

*I'm dreaming of a white Christmas  
Just like the ones I used to know  
Where the treetops glisten, and  
Children listen to hear  
Sleigh bells in the snow  
I'm dreaming of a white Christmas  
With every Christmas card I write  
May your days be merry and bright  
And may all your Christmases be white.*

The genius of Irving Berlin was to understand that sometimes Christmas is not what it's supposed to be. It is neither merry nor white. Beyond the commercial schmaltz, sometimes Christmas is but a dream. It does not fulfill our hopes and expectations.

We figure that there must be something wrong with us. Maybe we do not deserve a merry Christmas. We are tempted to write the day off as a delusion, the story of Christ being no surer than that of Santa.

It is true that Christmas, "just like the ones I used to know," is subject to chance. Death, depression or the countless demands of life may reduce these days to a dark, dreary dream.

Yet for eyes of faith—and for those willing to pray for such vision—this is not what matters. The Christ Child of the Gospels was born into our darkness, into the poverty of our hearts and into the vulnerability of our families.

As St. Luke stresses, unlike the mighty Caesar Augustus, Jesus will have no armies, no wealth and no earthly power. Only heavenly hosts and shepherds, from life's periphery, will ponder his birth. St. Mathew, with the slaughter of the innocents, reminds us that the blood-thirsty have already marked this boy for death.

We make Christmas into something it is not and wonder why it disappoints. "Dreams are toys," and we are always ready to pack them away for another year, maybe merry, maybe white. Christmas is not a dream. Christ was born mid our night, and "the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Is 9:1).

[Klein is a priest of the Diocese of Dodge City and author of *Vanity Faith*.]