



First Sunday of Lent

March 10, 2019

Readings

This week:

Deuteronomy 26:4–10

Romans 10:8–13

Luke 4:1–13

Next week:

Genesis 15:5–12, 17–18

Philippians 3:17–4:1

Luke 9:28b–36

Psalm

Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble. (*Psalm 91*)

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, 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.



Daylight Saving
Time started
today!!

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, March 11, 7:00 p.m.

TMC Liturgy Committee, Thomas House Library

Thursday, March 14, 7:00 p.m.

TMC Board, Thomas House Library

From Thomas Merton

How is it that our comfortable society has lost its sense of the value of truthfulness? Life has become so easy that we think we can get along without telling the truth. A liar no longer needs to feel that his lies may involve him in starvation. If living were a little more precarious, and if a person who could not be trusted found it more difficult to get along with other men, we would not deceive ourselves and one another so carelessly.

But the whole world has learned to deride veracity or to ignore it. Half the civilized world makes a living by telling lies. Advertising, propagandas and all the other forms of publicity that have taken the place of truth have taught men to take it for granted that they can tell other people whatever they like, provided that it sounds plausible and evokes some kind of shallow emotional response.

--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.

COMMUNITY NOTES

News Announcements Requests

Heart & Home Collaborative dinner March 28: Lenten Morning of Reflection April 6:

Thursday, March 28 has been selected as our parish last meal of the Heart and Home Collaborative winter shelter season. The Human Concerns Committee is calling all parishioners who would like to contribute a little something homemade,--chili, soup, salad, cake, chicken dish, veggie dish--whatever you prefer.

It's a fun way to participate helping these ladies and everyone is welcome to stay and share the meal at the current site at Unitarian Universalist Church.

Give us a call so we can get plans underway! It's a great Lenten project for you and families. Call Terry 650-714-2131.

Thanks for your shoes:

We celebrate the Soles4Souls successful shoe collection for those in need around the world. Our recent parish Soles4Souls shoe collection in February yielded 353 pairs of shoes! Thank you, everyone, for your most generous effort digging out your unused shoes and brining them to our deposit boxes in the church vestibules. They will be distributed to people in need around the world.

Please check out their good work being done: <http://www.soles4souls.org/about-us>.

Apparently shoes are still being dropped at OLR which is much appreciated. Our very last pick up at the vestibule will be Monday March 11th. Thank you for contributing to the success of this event!

--The STA Human Concerns Committee

Go to Confession at STA during Lent:

Experience the healing and freedom of the Sacrament of Reconciliation here at STA church from 5 - 7 pm on March 13, 20, 27, and April 3, 10, and 17--that's every Wednesday during Lent. Also Saturdays, from 11:30 - 12 noon here at STA.

PRAY FOR US: Please remember in your prayers this week Denise Alongi, Rudy Bahr, George Bouchey, Tom Carmody, Kerry Carmody, George Chippendale, Mary Connors, Mike Cummings, Jim Davis, Ken Dias, Pat Dietrich, Dick Freeman, Fr. Thierry Geris, 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, Mary Rose McGuire, Maureen Mooney, Hayden Pastorini, Paul Prochaska, Anne Rush, Priya Smith, Bernice Sullivan, Jean Vistica, Dolores Walsh, and T. J. Wooten. **[Add or subtract names by e-mailing editor Kay Williams, kaywill@pacbell.net.]**

Save Saturday morning, April 6, from 9 am till noon at St. Albert the Great Hospitality Center, for a Lenten Morning of Reflection, led by Sr. Marilyn Wilson--a Sister of Charity of the Blessed Virgi Mary.

Sr. Marilyn is a an educator, spiritual director and retreat facilitator. She will lead us in an informal structure of prayer and contemplation as we approach Easter. All are welcome. Breakfast refreshments served.

Lenten Centering Prayer on Saturday morns:

Give yourself the gift of sacred time and space this Lenten season. Come to the Thomas House Library for this weekly one-hour prayer session on Saturday mornings during Lent from 9 -- 10 am. Dates are March 9, 16, 23, 30, April 6, 13.

All are welcome. Books on contemplation, centering prayer and the spiritual journey will be available. No registration needed and the session is free.

If you can't make all the Saturdays, come when you can. Facilitator is Pat Clough, Centering Prayer practitioner. Contact her at patclough@gmail.com if you have questions.

Collecting books for Seton School:

Our parish collection for new books for Seton second grade books will be held on March 16-17. Your generosity in past years has provided a package of 5-7 books for each student to keep and use at home during the summer weeks. These emerging readers benefit from this educational opportunity inspiring them to read, learn and share these books with others while maintaining skills during their school break.

Any cash donations may be given to a Human Concerns rep after each mass that weekend. We are happy to shop for you! If you prefer to have fun shopping yourself, new books at second grade level may be placed in the collection boxes at each church site that weekend. You will see lots of smiling faces in photos of the handing-out event come June.

-- The STA Human Concerns Committee

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COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Nonprofits support family reunification:

[By Jessica Kantrowitz, *Sojourners*, 3/4/19]

Saturday evening, March 2, a story broke on *The Washington Post* that 29 parents were at the U.S. border with legal advocates, reapplying for asylum and attempting to get back the children that had been taken from them into U.S. custody. At the same time, Glennon Doyle and her nonprofit group Together Rising sent out an email giving more background on how those 29 parents were found and brought together to the border. Two of Together Rising's board members, Liz Book and Glennon's sister Amanda Doyle, were there with the families and sending live video updates. Initially, they were told that there was no capacity to process the asylum seekers — but around 8 p.m. Saturday they began allowing all 29 parents and their families to enter....

Many of the parents, like José Ottoniel, from the tiny town of San Rafael Las Flores, Guatemala, said they had been pressured into signing deportation papers after being separated from their children, before they could begin their asylum claims. When he returned home after being deported in June, Ottoniel was told that his 10-year-old son, Ervin, was still in the United States at a shelter.

Together Rising is unusual in the nonprofit world in that it is entirely volunteer run, with no overhead costs, so that 100 percent of donations go directly to the people for whom they were raised. The group is also striking in that instead of soliciting large amounts from wealthy donors, money comes in mostly small donations, but from many people. For this particular project — reuniting asylum-seeking families who had been separated from their children — 77,000 people donated \$4.2 million after a “love flash mob” last May. Since then, Together Rising has partnered with organizations such as the Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights, RAICES (Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services), and KIND (Kids In Need of Defense) to provide legal services and support to children and families.

Saturday night's action at the border was the result of intense, on-the-ground work organized and funded by Together Rising and Al Otro Lado, along with Matthew 25 Southern California, ACLU, Families Belong Together, and clergy partners.

I spoke by email Saturday night with two of Together Rising's volunteers, Katherine Oelrich Welch and Gloria Goeres. Katherine is the Stewardship Team Lead and Operations Manager for Together Rising ... Gloria is Together Rising's Program Manager and also on the Stewardship Team, and the two told me about how Together Rising initially got involved in the work.

"When Glennon first read about families being separated at our Mexican border by our government, she immediately knew this was an issue Together Rising needed to become involved in," they told me via email. "... Together Rising raised over \$4 million that was distributed to organizations well established in the immigration field so these organizations had ample resources to work toward reunification of all separated families."

'Our next goals are: get them across, get them out of detention and in with sponsored families, [and] once they are with their sponsored families, safe environments, we can unite their children with them.'

Liz Book and Amanda Doyle, who were both at the border during the weekend's work, are both lawyers, though they don't specialize in immigration. Rather, Oelrich Welch and Goeres said they were there as representatives to show solidarity and accompany the families.

In a video update Saturday evening, before the families had been allowed in, Amanda Doyle described how the decision was made to bring the families back to the border:

“We’re here today because there are 29 ... families who had an impossible decision to make, and that was, ‘Do I leave my child in the U.S. and never see them again, or do I stay here in this country that is so dangerous for my child that I left everything to escape and give them a better life?’ So we said, ‘You don’t have to make that choice’”

She also stressed that, even after the families had been allowed in, that pressure was still needed. In another update late Saturday night, Amanda outlined the next steps for the families:

There's a few things that can happen next, which we're going to keep you informed of. We are not going to forget these people until we know that these things happened. They could be separated inside the abyss that is ICE until they get to the other side in the U.S. They could be separated, they could be detained, [but] the coalition of the groups we have been working with has found sponsors for all of those families so that they should not be detained, they should be kept together as family units, and placed with the sponsors ... Our next goals are: get them across, get them out of detention and in with sponsored families, [and] once they are with their sponsored families, safe environments, we can unite their children with them.

Together Rising is continuing to raise funds to support the families and their sponsors, including the medical costs for a woman who is seven months pregnant and was having preterm labor pains as she waited to cross the border. #

View from Rome:

[By Christopher Lamb, *The Tablet*, March 9, 2019]

During one of Australia's major talk show programmes, it was not a bishop or priest who attempted to make sense of the devastating impact of the conviction of Cardinal George Pell for child sex abuse offences.

Instead, it was a US-based rabbi, Shmuley Boteach, a regular visitor to Australia. Speaking to ABC's *Q&A*, he said the country has been "deeply traumatised" by the news about Pell in a way few are recognising.

He could have widened that diagnosis to the whole Church: when one part of the body suffers, every part suffers with it. "I was Michael Jackson's rabbi," Boteach explained. "If you think it's easy for me to now see the kind of accusations that were made in the past, but now seem more corroborated by a new documentary. This is painful as heck."

After news of Cardinal Pell's conviction, a HBO documentary on Jackson, *Leaving Neverland*, was broadcast, in which two men, Wade Robson and James Safechuck, accuse the global superstar of sexually abusing them for many years, starting when they were young boys.

Both Pell and Jackson are iconic figures and, to their supporters, the claims that they abused children are almost unthinkable. The cardinal, of course, maintains his innocence and is appealing the verdict, while Jackson is no longer alive to defend himself.

But one thing we know about the high-profile revelations of alleged abuse in recent years is that status and achievement have no bearing on whether or not someone is likely to harm children.

Jimmy Savile was for years feted as a national treasure in Britain. In Rome and at high levels in the Vatican there is still a belief that Pell simply "couldn't have done it". They are hopeful that the conviction will be overturned on appeal.

At one level this is understandable, given the cardinal was convicted of serious offences in a cathedral sacristy after Sunday Mass, but there also appears to be a mistaken view that the cardinal's appeal will be a rerun of his trial. Appeal court judges will instead be examining whether the jury was "unreasonable" in reaching its verdict.

Some in Rome point to the fact that one of the two choirboys Pell was found guilty of abusing denied he had been molested. That's not uncommon: for years, Wade Robson denied being abused by Jackson, who was acquitted in a sex abuse trial in 2005. It was after

becoming a father that Robson started to find his voice. Processing the trauma of Pell's conviction will be slow and painful for the Australian Church, and for the wider Catholic community. It will involve denial, disbelief, anger and a deep sense of betrayal.

As Lent began this week, Pope Francis advised people to give up gossiping, pointing out that "we are experts in finding the bad things in others and not seeing our own".

There is scientific evidence behind this gospel-rooted teaching to show that only seeing the faults of others is a major driver of the world's most intractable conflicts. A 2014 study in the journal, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, identified a trend called "motive attribution asymmetry", whereby groups tend to believe that their opponents are motivated by emotions that are the opposite of their own. The research was based on 3,000 people, including Israelis and Palestinians, and Republicans and Democrats. It showed that people in opposing camps believe that "my group" is motivated by love and "they" are only motivated by hate. This makes negotiating agreements between them much harder. The research also showed that when people were offered financial incentives to accurately evaluate an opponent's motive, the bias was reduced.

One of the tragedies of the clerical sexual abuse crisis is that an increasing number of people outside the Church and civil authorities may start to attribute hateful intentions to Catholic individuals and institutions, and that some Catholics will be tempted to do the same in reverse. The Pope's Lenten message urges Catholics to follow Jesus' command to pull the plank out of their own eye before observing the speck in someone else's.

Was he "Hitler's Pope" or "righteous among the gentiles"? Pius XII's wartime record has been hotly disputed for years, but this week Pope Francis announced that the Vatican secret archives will be opened, making it easier for historians to assess his legacy. "The Church is not afraid of history," the Pope explained when announcing his decision.

It's significant that while Francis accepts that this may lead to Pius XII being subject to "appropriate criticism", he believes that "serious and objective historical research" will exonerate him of the more serious charges that have been laid against him. While it is clear that Eugenio Pacelli did not speak out against Nazi atrocities, there is also evidence he helped save many individual Jews.

For Francis, it is better to know the truth about Pius XII's actions than to preserve a sanitised version of history. It could be that he recognises that, more than ever, the Church needs credibility and transparency. #