



The Most Holy Trinity

June 16, 2019

Readings

This week:

Proverbs 8:22–31

Romans 5:1–5

John 16:12–15

Next week:

Genesis 14:18–20

1 Corinthians 11:23–26

Luke 9:11b–17

Psalm

O Lord, our God, how majestic is your name in all the earth! (*Psalm 8*)

Today

Today's presider is 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

Monday, June 17, 7:00 pm

Monthly Planning Meeting, Thomas House

From
Thomas
Merton

It is by the Holy Spirit that we love those who are united to us in Christ. The more plentifully we have received of the Spirit of Christ, the more perfectly we are able to love them: and the more we love them the more we receive the Spirit. It is clear, however, that since we love them by the Spirit Who is given to us by Jesus, it is Jesus Himself Who loves them in us.

--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

International Thomas Merton Society 16th General Meeting at Santa Clara University June 27-30

UPDATED

This biennial meeting carries out the mission of the ITMS to promote an understanding and appreciation of the multifaceted character of Thomas Merton and encourages study and research to make better known the unique contribution he has made to the literature of spirituality and to American literature and religious life.

This year's conference theme is "O Peace, bless this mad place," a line from a poem by Merton. Keynote speakers include Rose Marie Berger, Fr. Cyprian Consiglio, O.S.B. Cam., Robert Ellsberg, Ron Hansen, and Richard Rodriguez, a panel on Dan Berrigan, and many concurrent sessions on topics such as Merton and Racism, Merton and the Ignatian Tradition, Merton and Peace, Merton and Ecology. Sr. Kathleen Deignan, who has led several retreats for TMC in the past, will participate in a workshop, as will Morgan Atkinson, the filmmaker who has shown two of his films on Merton at TMC events.

Registration for the 3-day conference is open now at: merton.org/2019. Registration fee is \$350 for ITMS members (TMC is a member) or \$400 for non-members and includes 3 days of meetings and meals. Several members of the TMC Spiritual Education Committee will be attending.

Full day and half-day registration options are now available.

*Full day options for Friday \$110; Saturday \$110
Half day options are available for Thursday afternoon \$60; Friday morning \$60; Friday afternoon \$60; Saturday morning \$60; Saturday afternoon \$60*

The passes cover parking, lunch, as well as morning and afternoon snacks along with any conferences or talks during the covered period.

*Here is the link for full and half day registration:
<http://merton.org/2019/dayregistration.htm>*

The entire program is at <http://merton.org/2019>

In addition, the ITMS has sent out a request for volunteers to work at registration either June 26 or June 27th for 2.5 hours. In exchange, there is a full conference tuition reduction to \$235.

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

Also, ITMS has notified us that Fr. Cyprian's concert, 7:30 pm in Mayer Theater on Thursday June 27th will be open to the community without charge

Contact Anna Jaklitsch with questions or about how to volunteer: annajak14@yahoo.com or 650-327-0978.

Memorial for Tom Williams

There will be a funeral Mass for Tom celebrated Saturday, July 6, at 10:00 a.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 751 Waverley Street, Palo Alto, CA.

Fr. Larry Percell will be the presider.

Pictures from the Steps of St. Thomas Aquinas



Bishop Pierre DuMaine

The first Bishop of the Diocese of San Jose, Pierre DuMaine died on Thursday, June 13, 2019.

PRAY FOR US: Please remember in your prayers this week Denise Alongi, Rudy Bahr, 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 Leiningner, 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, Tom Williams and T. J. Wooten. **[Add or subtract names by e-mailing editor Kay Williams,**

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COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

The Hidden Cost of Happiness

[By: Mark Manson on Mark Manson February 20, 2014]

[There is some language in this article that some may consider offensive. However, the language flows with the article and emphasizes some key points - Editor]

Anyone who has ever taken an economics class has heard the phrase, “There’s no such thing as a free lunch.”

It means that *everything* has a cost, even if that cost is not always immediately apparent. To achieve anything, you must give up something else.

In today’s happiness-obsessed culture, most pursue just the opposite: we want to know how to be happy with no costs, all benefits. We want the rewards without the risks, the gain without the pain.

But ironically, it’s this unwillingness to sacrifice anything, to give up anything, that makes us more miserable. As with anything else, happiness has costs. It is not free.

And despite what *Cover Girl* or Tony Robbins or the Dalai Lama once told you, it’s not always easy breezy figuring out how to be happy either.

You Must Accept Imperfection and Flaws

Many people believe that if they just collect a house, a spouse, a car, and 2.5 children, everything will be “perfect.” Life has a checklist. You check each item off, you get to be happy and old for a couple decades, then you die.

But life doesn’t work that way. Problems don’t go away — they change and evolve. Today’s perfection becomes tomorrow’s swampy cesspool of shit, and the quicker we accept that the point of life is *progress* and not *perfection*, the sooner we can all order a pizza and go home.

Perfection is an idealization. It’s something that is approached but never reached. Whatever your conception of “perfect” is in your pretty little head, it is, in itself, an imperfect conception.

There is no perfect. There is only what you wish in your head.

We don’t get to decide what perfection is. We don’t know. All we can know is what is better or worse than what is now. And even then we’re often wrong.

When we let go of our conception of what is perfect and what “should” be, we relieve ourselves of the stress and frustration of living up to some arbitrary standard. And usually, this standard isn’t even ours! It’s a standard we adopted from other people.

Accepting imperfection is hard because it forces us to accept *that we have to live with things we don’t like*. We don’t want to give that up. We want to hold on to control and let the whole world know how Canadian democracy should be and why the season finale to *Breaking Bad* was

all messed up.

But life will never conform to all of our desires. Ever. And we will always be wrong about something, in some way. Ironically, it’s the acceptance of this that allows us to be happy with it, allowing us to appreciate the flaws in ourselves and in others. And that, my friends, is a good thing.

You Must Take Responsibility For Your Problems

Blaming the world for our problems is the easy way out. It’s tempting and it can even be satisfying. We’re the victims and we get to be all emo and indignant at all of the terrible injustices that have been inflicted upon us. We wallow in our imagined victimhood so as to make ourselves feel unique and special in ways in which we never got to feel unique and special anywhere else.

But our problems are not unique. And we are not special.

The beauty of accepting the imperfection of your own knowledge is that you can no longer be certain that you’re not to blame for your own problems. Are you really late because of traffic? Or could you have left earlier? Is your ex really a selfish asshole? Or were you manipulative and overly demanding towards him? Is it really the incompetence of your manager that lost you your promotion? Or was there something more you could have done?

The truth is usually somewhere around “both,” — although it varies from situation to situation. But the point is that you can only fix your own imperfections and not the imperfections of others. So you may as well get to work on them.

Sure, shit happens. It’s not your fault a drunk driver hit you and you lost your leg to a botched surgery. But it’s your responsibility to recover from that loss, both physically and emotionally. So get recovering.

Blaming others for the problems in your life may give you a smidgen of short-term relief, but ultimately it implies something entirely insidious: that you are incapable of controlling your own fate. And that’s the most depressing assumption of all to live with.

You Must Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway

Bravery is not the absence of fear. Bravery is feeling the fear, the doubt, the insecurity, and deciding that something else is more important.

If we identify with our moment-to-moment emotional states and sensitivities, our happiness will surge and crash like a deregulated Wall Street derivatives orgy. For those of you who don’t know anything about Wall Street, that’s really bad. We want sturdy, resilient hap-

BLESSING OF MEN ON FATHERS' DAY

Loving God,
In your wisdom and love you made all things.
Bless these men
That they may be strengthened
In their Christian faith.
Let the example of their faith and love shine forth.
Grant that we, their sons and daughters,
Wives and friends,
May honor them always
With a spirit of profound respect.

piness. Not derivatives orgies.

True, long-lasting, kid-tested-and-mother-approved happiness is derived not from our immediate emotional states — being *constantly* giddy is not only impossible, but it would be unbearably annoying — but rather is derived from the deeper values we define for ourselves. Our Ultimate Life Satisfaction™ is not defined by *what* we do and what happens to us, but *why* we do what we do and why it happens to us.

You Must Find a Deeper Purpose to Your Actions

A better way of saying this is you must *choose what is motivating you*. Is it something superficial and external or something deeper and more meaningful?

Being motivated by money for the sake of money leads to unstable emotional regulation and a lot of obnoxious and superficial behavior. Being motivated by money so that one can provide a good life for their family and children is a much sturdier foundation to work with. That deeper purpose will motivate one through the stress and fear and inevitable complications that a more superficial motivation would not.

Being motivated by the approval of others leads to needy and unattractive behavior. Being motivated by the approval of others because you're an artist and you want to construct art that moves and inspires people in new and powerful ways is far more sustainable and noble. You'll be able to work through disapproval, embarrassments, and the occasional disaster.

How does one find their deeper purpose? Well, it's not easy. But then again, robust and resilient lifelong happiness isn't easy either. (What, you mean nobody ever told you that?)

A large chunk of my book is about finding a deeper purpose in our lives. But here's a hint: it has something to do with growth and contribution. Growth means finding a way to make yourself a better person. Contribution means finding a way to make other people better. Look for ways that you can integrate those into your motivations.

There's nothing wrong with sex, money, and rock and roll (hey, preaching to the choir here). But the sex needs

to be motivated by something deeper than sex, the money needs to be motivated by a value more sustainable than simply money, and the rock and roll needs to just fucking rock. Find a way to slide growth and/or contribution under them and bam — you get the best of both worlds.

You Must Be Willing to Fail and Be Embarrassed

In my book on dating, I wrote, "You cannot be a powerful life-changing presence to some people without being a complete joke and embarrassment to others."

Interestingly, this has become probably the most quoted line from the book and the one I get emailed about the most often.

The beautiful thing about humanity is the diversity of life values. When you live out your values and let them motivate your actions and behaviors, you will inevitably clash with those whose values contradict your own. These people will not like you. They will leave nasty anonymous comments on the internet and make inappropriate remarks about your mother. Anything you do that's important will inevitably be accompanied by those who wish for you to fail. Not because they're bad people, but because their values differ from yours.

(OK, some of them are fucking awful people.)

As someone much wiser than me once said, "Haters gonna hate."

In any venture, failure is required to make progress. And progress, by definition, is what drives happiness — the progress of ourselves, the progress of others, the progress of our values and what we care about. Without failure, there is no progress and without progress, there is no happiness.

Relish the pain. Bathe in the scorn. One of the most important skills in life is not how to avoid getting knocked down, but rather learning how to stand back up. Haters gonna hate.

*Mark Manson is the author of
Everything Is F*cked: A Book About Hope.*

I AM

I was regretting the past and fearing the future.

Suddenly my Lord was speaking.

"My name is I AM."

He paused. I waited. He continued.

"When you live in the past, with its mistakes and regrets, it is hard. I am not there. My name is not I Was.

When you live in the future, with its problems and fears, it is hard. I am not there. My name is not I Will Be.

When you live in this moment, it is not hard. I am here.

My name is I AM."

- Unknown