



# Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 14, 2019

## Readings

*This week:*

Deuteronomy 30:10–14

Colossians 1:15–20

Luke 10:25–37

*Next week:*

Genesis 18:1–10a

Colossians 1:24–28,

Luke 10: 38–42

## Psalm

Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live. (*Psalm 69*)

## 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.

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, July 15, 7:00 pm TMC Spiritual Education Committee, Thomas House

### From Thomas Merton

One of our most important tasks today is to clear the atmosphere so that men can understand their plight without hatred, without fury, without desperation, and with the minimum of goodwill. A humble and objective seriousness is necessary for the long task of restoring mutual confidence and preparing the way for the necessary work of collaboration in building world peace. This restoration of a climate of relative sanity is perhaps more important than specific decisions regarding the morality of this or that strategy, this or that pragmatic policy.

*--Seeds of Destruction*

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*

## ***New parochial vicars in STA Parish:***

While the 8:45 Mass invites local priests, many retired, to preside at our Mass, the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish is staffed by diocesan priests who are assigned by the Bishop of San Jose Diocese to duty here. As you may have read in the parish bulletin, effective July 1 we have two new Parochial Vicars in our parish.

If you see Fr. Sev or Fr. Maurice at Mass or outside of Mass, please welcome them warmly to our parish.

Here are their email addresses:

- Fr. Maurice Igboerika, maurice.igboerika@dsj.org
- Fr. Sev Kuupuo, frsevkuupuo@gmail.com

A suitable welcome for the new parochial vicars is being planned at the Annual Parish Picnic, Sunday, September 15.

## ***TMC resource for funeral liturgies:***

The recent death of my husband Tom Williams was the occasion for me to turn to the TMC Liturgy team for help with Tom's Memorial Mass.

Maureen Locke, a member of the Liturgy team, was completely prepared to guide me through the steps I needed to take to plan the Mass liturgy, from choosing the readings and hymns, identifying family members to do the readings and intercessions (she presented me with several selections from which to choose), light the Paschal candle, bring up the Offertory gifts, and serve as greeters. Her thoughtful suggestions about what to display on the memorial table (pictures, Bible, etc.) prompted me to think about Tom and what mattered most to him. And during the Mass, she was at hand to give us the high sign when it was time to do the next action. (My less-than-churched Catholic kids really appreciated that guidance.)

## ***Meet for funeral planning:***

Maureen would like to work with anyone from the TMC community who is interested in preparing in advance for such a memorial/funeral liturgy. She has printed material--a check list with a full description of what each step entails, suggested readings and hymns, and examples of memorial displays. The Liturgy team would host a meeting for those of you who want to get a head start on planning your own or a loved one's funeral. This preparation is a gift to your children and other family members.

***If you are interested in learning more, please email Maureen Locke at mo.locke1@gmail.com.*** Believe me, you will be impressed and educated by Maureen's thorough outlines and grateful for her tactful, loving guidance.

--Kay Williams

## ***Raise your hand, please:***

Our 8:45 Sunday liturgies need a few more voices and attentive bodies!

The 8:45 Liturgy team is putting out the call for additional commentators--reading the introductory remarks before Mass begins and the announcements after Mass. Also needed are persons who monitor the weekly collection money and see it secured in the safe in the sacristy. Finally, the donated cans and boxes of food need to be taken over to St. Francis of Assisi Church in East Palo Alto after Mass.

These duties are required of each volunteer just once a month. Please consider which duty you would like. Full disclosure: The commentator/announcer should arrive 10 minutes before Mass begins. The collection monitor has to take a few minutes after Mass to place the money in the safe. And the food deliverer does need to be able to ferry the donations to East Palo Alto on Sunday following Mass. But only once a month!

Please contact Sally Benson and John Arnold (their emails are below.) You will be enriched by such service, so don't be shy. Raise your hand!

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Sally Benson, 408-972-5843, sallymbenson@gmail.com

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**Adult Education:** Jim Davis, 650-704-8002, Jim\_Davis@pacbell.net  
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**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, 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 or subtract names by e-mailing editor Kay Williams, kaywill@pacbell.net.]**

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.

# COMMUNITY FORUM

*Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns*

## ***One U.S. Catholic bishop joins global faith leaders speaking against war with Iran:***

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Two Catholic bishops are among nearly 200 faith leaders calling on President Donald Trump's administration to pursue diplomacy to resolve conflicts with Iran.

Bishop John Stowe of Lexington, Kentucky, bishop-president of Pax Christi USA, and Bishop Marc Stenger of Troyes, France, co-president of Pax Christi International, were among the signers of a statement released July 8.

The statement was developed by the National Council of Churches and Sojourners, a Washington-based Christian organization that addresses social justice concerns.

"A United States war with Iran would be an unmitigated disaster, morally and religiously indefensible; U.S. faith leaders must be among the first to rise up, say 'No!'—and call for better, more effective and life-saving ways forward," the statement said....

The leaders also called on the Trump administration to end "harsh and punitive" trade sanctions against Iran and if necessary, establish safeguards for shipping in the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman.

Tensions between the U.S. and Iran heightened in May and June as several seagoing oil tankers were the subject of sabotage and attacks in the Gulf of Oman. Trump has accused Iran of being behind the attacks and British security officials said they are "almost certain" that Tehran instigated them.

Global observers have said Iran's economy has taken a deep hit because of economic and trade sanctions put in place since the U.S. withdrawal in May 2018 from a multilateral agreement that limits the ability of Iran to develop nuclear weapons. Trump has said since that the withdrawal from the so-called P5+1 pact, the world is a safer place.

Despite the U.S. withdrawal, France, the United Kingdom, Russia and China, plus Germany, remain parties to the deal even though Iran has announced that it has surpassed some of the agreement's limits placed on uranium enrichment.

In mid-June, Archbishop Timothy Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services made a similar appeal in a letter to U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. The correspondence from the chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee for International Justice and Peace outlined the Catholic Church's long-held stance that has preferred dialogue and engagement as the best actions to resolve political stalemates.

Other signers of the new statement include Patrick Car-

olan, executive director of the Franciscan Action Network; Lawrence Couch, director of the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd; Loreto Sr. Teresia Wamuyu Wachira of Kenya, co-president of Pax Christi International; Sr. Carol Zinn, a Sister of St. Joseph, executive director of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious; Jim Wallis, president of Sojourners; and Jim Winkler, president and general secretary of the National Council of Churches. In addition, more than 90 women religious signed the statement.

## ***The long haul of justice:***

[By Kaitlin Curtice, *Sojourners*, 6/12/19]

...The long haul work of justice, of making things right in a world where things have gone wrong, is work that lasts throughout the centuries. For prophets must recognize that the dreams we work toward probably won't be realized while we are still living and breathing.

Perhaps prophets realize that our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, foster children, our students, they are the ones who carry forth the work that we could only hope to finish. They are the ones who will realize the dreams of God in a hurting world....

In a 2018 HuffPost article, Mychal Denzel Smith commented on the famous Martin Luther King quote, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice," sharing the vision the sentiment quote was born from: a longer sermon delivered by abolitionist Theodore Parker. This is what Parker said:

*I do not pretend to understand the moral universe. The arc is a long one. My eye reaches but little ways. I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by experience of sight. I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure it bends toward justice.*

Smith's piece touches on a really important aspect of this quote, that the work of justice must be active and consistent, and that it won't happen unless we work toward it happening.

Just as the "long arc of justice" is never-ending, we must also understand that justice work is not linear; it moves in and around us in a way that we cannot fully understand.

And as we work, we remember that empire and white supremacy have long goals of their own, and these goals constantly work to dismantle justice at every turn. The work of genocide, assimilation, and oppression last for centuries. Our vision of a just world must last longer and be even more sustainable...

It is up to us.

And we are in it for the long haul.

## ***Pope appoints women to Congregation:***

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope Francis named six superiors of women's religious orders, a consecrated laywoman and the superior of the De La Salle Christian Brothers to be full members of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

Previously, the members had all been men: cardinals, a few bishops and several priests who were superiors of large religious orders of men. The Vatican confirmed that this is the first time that women have been appointed to the congregation, according to Christopher Lamb of *The Tablet*.

The women named members by the pope were announced by the Vatican July 8: Sisters Kathleen Apler, the U.S.-born superior of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul; Yvonne Reungoat, superior of the Salesian Sisters; Françoise Massy, superior of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Mary; Luigia Coccia, superior of the Comboni Sisters; Simona Brambilla, superior of the Consolata Missionary Sisters; Rita Calvo Sanz, superior of the Company of Mary Our Lady; and Olga Krizova, general president of the Volunteers of Don Bosco, a group of consecrated laypeople.

Brother Robert I. Schieler, the U.S.-born superior of the De La Salle Christian Brothers, also was named a full member of the congregation along with the priests who are superiors general of the Jesuits, the Discalced Carmelites, the Augustinians, the Scalabrinians, the Capuchins and the abbot president of the Subiaco Cassinese Benedictine Congregation.

The new members announced by the Vatican also included five bishops and four cardinals: Cardinals Angelo De Donatis, papal vicar for Rome; Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life; Luis Ladaria Ferrer, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; and Ricardo Blazquez Perez of Valladolid, Spain.

--Cindy Wooden, *Catholic News Service*, 7/8/19

## ***How we know God intends to be fair:***

[By Terrance Klein, *America*, 7/10/19]

Ethics should be taught and studied, but education alone can't ensure ethical living. That's because doing good and avoiding evil isn't something that we learn by way of commandments and concepts, at least not primarily. Better to say that living ethically is written into our core as human beings. We possess a conscience, a God-given ability to discern good from evil.

Sister Jeanne, a character from Alice McDermott's novel *The Ninth Hour* (2017) explained this in way that her parochial school students could understand.

"WHO'S THE DUMBEST BOY IN YOUR CLASS?"

she once asked us...." And if the teacher's dividing up sweets and gives him only one while everyone else gets two, what will he say? He'll say it's not fair, won't he? If you call him out playing ball when everyone can see he's safe by a mile, what will he say—dumb as he is in school? He'll say, it's not fair, see? And how does he know? Did he learn what's fair from a book? Did he take a test? No, he did not."

In our daily living, ethical concepts and commandments don't much come to mind. We simply see someone in need and we respond. Or we don't. Another example. We know what we're about to say is something that we wouldn't want said to us or about us, yet we say it all the same. This knowledge didn't come from a textbook or a classroom.

It's not that the Church's teachings, civil laws and education don't play a critical role in the formation of our consciences. They do. The point is that all mentally healthy humans have a conscience. Wherever life puts us, however poorly we've been raised, we know the difference between fair and unfair, between kind and unkind, between good and evil....

Sadly, an obsessive concentration upon commandments and concepts leads too many of us to think of morality as a list of things we've done wrong or as actions we must not take. This is surely true, but the deeper truth, which the Church and her Gospel teach, is that living rightly is more about what we should do, what we fail to do, than what we must not do.

To preach Jesus is primarily to preach a path, a call to action, not ethical precepts. We can declare precepts to be fulfilled, but Christ is a path, leading us all the way home. This is why a truly good confession should contain more sins of omission than commission. The things we could have done and didn't.

Once again, Sister Jeanne has a way of putting it:

"Sister Jeanne believed that fairness demanded... chaos be righted. Fairness demanded that grief should find succor, that wounds should heal, insult and confusion find recompense and certainty, that every living person God had made should not, willy-nilly be forever unmade.

You know what's fair and what isn't, don't you?" Sister Jeanne would ask the sick child, the grieving orphan, Sally herself when she was old enough to understand the question. And us.

"And how do you know?"

Sister Jeanne would put a fingertip to the child's forehead, to the child's beating heart. "Because God put the knowledge in you before you were born. So you'd know fairness when you see it. So you'd know He intends to be fair."