



## 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 22, 2019

### Readings

*This week:*

Amos 8:4-7

1 Timothy 2:1-8

Luke 16:1-13

*Next week:*

Amos 6:1a, 4-7

1 Timothy 6:11-16

Luke 16:19-31

### Psalm

Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor. (*Psalm 113*)

### Today

Today's presider is Msgr. John Sandersfeld.

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

Sat, Sept. 28, 3:00 pm: "The Catholic Media Landscape Today", a talk by James Purcell, Chairman of the Board of *National Catholic Reporter*, St. Albert Hospitality Center, 1095 Channing Ave., Palo Alto. Wine/cheese reception following.

### From Thomas Merton

Those who are caught in the machinery of power take no joy except in activity and change--the whirring of the machine! Whenever an occasion for action presents itself, they are compelled to act. They cannot help themselves. They are inexorably moved, like the machine of which they are a part. Prisoner in the world of objects, they have no choice but to submit to the demands of matter. They are pressed down and crushed by external forces, fashion, the market, events, public opinion. Never in a whole lifetime do they recover their right mind! The active life! What a pity!

--*The Way of Chuang Tzu*

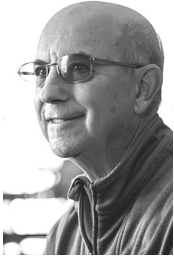
The Thomas Merton Center for Catholic Spiritual Development, P.O. Box 60061, Palo Alto, California 94306, was founded by a group of Roman Catholic lay persons in 1995, and incorporated in 1996, to offer Catholic liturgy, to augment, support and lead the development of ecumenical spirituality, and to 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

## **Catholic Media: a talk by Jim Purcell Sept. 28:**

There is a growing awareness of the role of some Catholic media in the U.S. that is presenting a traditional, anti-Vatican II, anti-Francis image of the Catholic Church. In an effort to educate the TMC community about this development, the Spiritual Education Committee of the Merton Center is presenting the following talk:



Jim Purcell, Chairman of the Board of the *National Catholic Reporter*  
"The Landscape of Catholic Media Today"

Saturday, September 28, at 3:00 p.m.  
St. Albert the Great Hospitality Center,  
1095 Channing Ave., Palo Alto.

Jim has a long resume of service to the Catholic Church, from priesthood in the 60s, through directing Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County in the 80s, membership in the Bishop's Administrative Council in the San Jose Diocese, president of HOPE Rehabilitation Services in the 90s, and VP of University Relations at Santa Clara University in the 00s. He is currently retired and consults to non-profits in strategic planning and fundraising. He joined the board of the NCR in 2015 and became chairman last year.

Jim will bring his knowledge of the current Catholic media world to this discussion, based on his experience over many years with the communication of Catholic values, initiatives, and organizations to the public. (As a footnote, Jim is the older brother of Larry Purcell, of the Catholic Worker House of Redwood City.)

Please join us for a stimulating educational discussion and guidance toward an action plan. A reception with wine and cheese will follow the discussion.

For information: contact Kay Williams, (650) 270-4188, [kaywill@pacbell.net](mailto:kaywill@pacbell.net).

## **Welcome new song leader today:**

We extend a warm welcome to Katya Lohngon, who will be leading the music this morning in concert with Mary Elaine McEnery at the piano. We're delighted to have them both with us to celebrate this liturgy.

## **Jim O'Brien has died:**

Jim O'Brien, 86, with his wife Janice, was one of the original founding members of the Thomas Merton Center. He died on September 17 in Nevada City, his current home, after a period of declining health.

## **Planning a funeral: October 12 workshop:**

How do you go about planning a Catholic funeral or memorial Mass liturgy? Don't wait till the death has happened and you or your family are faced with the event, suddenly realizing you or they want to gather together at a proper funeral service but don't know where to start.

The TMC Liturgy Committee, under the leadership of Maureen Locke, will offer a workshop on how you can think in advance about your own or a loved one's funeral/memorial Mass.

**Come Saturday, October 12, 10:00 a.m.  
to the Thomas House Living Room.**

Resource materials will be available (check lists, suggested Scripture readings and hymns), and guidance about including family members in the service. Identify what's most important to you and your family in this informal gathering of TMC members and friends.

## **What do Catholics think about climate change?**

[By Brian Roewe, NCR, 9/17/19]

Recent polling shows American Catholics largely in line with the nation overall in their views on climate change, including in political divisions.

Six-in-10 U.S. Catholics acknowledge the world is warming mostly due to human activity, according to a 2018 Pew Research Center survey.

Two thirds of Catholics believe climate change is "a very" or "the most" important problem facing the world, according to a May 2016 poll by Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.

Three fourths of Catholics, according to that same CARA survey, say society should do something to address climate change. The leading reasons: Creation has intrinsic value (37%), climate-caused destruction disobeys God's command to care for creation (36%), and destruction prevents people from experiencing creation (36%). Just one in five Catholics viewed the earth's destruction due to climate change as a sin.

More than two thirds of Catholics believe they have a moral responsibility to do what they can to combat climate change, the CARA study found. Contributing to that belief was knowledge of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* or having attended Catholic school or parish religious education.

Just 17% of Catholics believe God plays a role in changes in the planet's climate, according to CARA. That's fewer than U.S. adults overall (22%).

Broken down by political affiliation, 80% of Democrat-leaning Catholics say the earth is warming mostly due to human activities, like burning fossil fuels, according to a 2017 Pew survey. Compared to 78% of Republican-leaning Catholics, who said the planet was not warming because of humans. #

# COMMUNITY FORUM

*Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns*

## ***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. Over 5 million walkers have participated in more than 36,000 CROP Hunger Walks in the last two decades alone. 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.

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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/subtract names by e-mailing Kay Williams, kaywill@pacbell.net.]

## ***Homelessness not Trump simple:***

This past week President Trump visited the Bay Area, a goldmine for politicians in one of the wealthiest enclaves in Silicon Valley. While on his fundraising tour, Trump made several comments about homelessness that were very troubling for those who work with the unhoused population.

Trump said that homelessness is destroying cities and have ruined the “prestige” of living in Los Angeles and San Francisco. The president ominously said, “We’re looking at it (the crisis of unhoused persons living in cities)...and we’ll be doing something about it.”

Administration officials, according to the New York Times, have proposed razing tent camps and putting people into temporary facilities and “refurbishing government facilities.” Trump’s record of solving crisis situations, primarily how he dealt with the he border crisis by creating concentration camps has unhoused persons and their allies deeply worried.

Homelessness cannot be treated like a nuisance in which individuals are culpable for the lack of having a place to live. Homelessness is a symptom of a deeply flawed economic system. Studies as far back as 2001 from the Public Policy Institute indicated that California will experience a serious climb in homelessness because housing costs are too high.

A UCLA study in 2018 concurred the economic gap between household income and housing costs is, among other factors, the main reason why homelessness is such a problem in California. A recent study in Boston showed that homelessness among families rises when there is a drop in housing availability and a UCSF study says that mental health problems are often the consequence, not the cause of homelessness. When cities in the Bay Area, including here in Santa Clara County, have approached homelessness as a “nuisance,” the problems get worse.

Nuisance ordinances and policies make being homelessness unlawful and they give cities the ability to penalize those who feed unhoused persons in public areas. Some policies make it easy for landlords to evict tenants and allow them to refuse to renew leases which force more people onto the street.

Let us pray for unhoused leaders and their allies that they may find the strength to stand up against the ignorance and prejudice that have led to the proliferation of inhumane anti-homelessness laws that result in the deaths of many unhoused persons.

(Taken From Fr. Jon Pedigo’s weekly email. Fr. Pedigo is the Director of Advocacy and Community Engagement at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County.)

## ***Disrupt to head off climate disaster:***

[By Bill Mitchell, *National Catholic Reporter*, 9/13/19]

Mary Robinson, the former Irish president who has focused on climate change for the past decade, says the best way to prevent a climate catastrophe is disruption — disruption in the form of lawsuits, protests, family interventions, shareholder challenges and disinvestment in fossil fuels coupled with investment in renewable energy.

Speaking to an overflow crowd of more than 400 students and others at Boston College Sept. 11, Robinson delivered an urgent call to action laced with insistent hope.

"Every day, the news on climate change gets worse," she said, citing the latest readings of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere of 415 parts per million. The last time greenhouse gases reached that level was some 3 to 5 million years ago, before humans are believed to have first shown up on earth.

Since the world's governments have failed to take the steps outlined in the Paris agreement and the UN's 2030 report, Robinson argued that the time has arrived to replace voluntary measures with insistence on "full implementation of both."

But how to achieve the political will, globally, to achieve that? And how to avoid despair in the meantime?

"People in all walks of life need to take three steps," Robinson said. They include:

▼ **Make it personal:** "Everyone needs to do something personally — energy conservation, a change in eating habits — make it personal and do something. Then you own the issue."

▼ **Get angry and take action:** "Get angry with those who have more power and responsibility," especially executives in the fossil fuel, agriculture and transportation industries. Pressure them to do something.

▼ **Imagine the sort of world** we'd have if we can achieve a significant slowing of global warming.

By way of further encouragement, she said psychologists report that "climate action is the best way to get over climate anxiety."

In order to move people to take action, she said, we need to learn how to discuss the topic more effectively.

"I'd been aware that climate scientists are not good about communicating climate change," she said. "Either they talk about it in such scary ways that they frighten people or in such a dense way that nobody understands what they're talking about."

Although some analysts suggest avoiding terms such as "climate crisis" and "climate emergency," Robinson said she's decided the time has come to use precisely those words in place of "climate change."

Most important in climate communications, she said, is

telling the stories of people who've responded to enormous climate challenges with concrete steps aimed at addressing them.

That approach forms the backdrop for her 2018 book, *Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience, and the Fight for a Sustainable Future* and the framework for a podcast she's doing with Irish author and comedian Maeve Higgins called *Mothers of Invention*

The podcast carries a tagline of "climate change is a man-made problem — with a feminist solution," a manifesto Robinson softened a bit by telling the audience she includes women in the term "man-made" and many men in feminist solutions.

Robinson left the Irish presidency in 1997 to become the United Nations' high commissioner for human rights and, in 2007, a member of The Elders, the group of world leaders formed by Nelson Mandela on his 89th birthday. In 2010, she founded the Mary Robinson Foundation — Climate Justice.

During a Q&A, a Boston College student drew sustained applause when she asked Robinson if she would join a student effort to persuade the school to divest its holdings in fossil fuel companies, a demand the school has rejected.

Robinson, a former chancellor of the University of Dublin, sidestepped the request to join the students' campaign. "Since I do have a microphone in my hand," she added, she called for investment in clean energy sources as well as divestment in fossil fuel companies. "I would like to encourage Boston College to move in that direction as quickly as possible."

Another student, referencing Robinson's discussion of President John F. Kennedy's leadership in putting a man on the moon, asked if she envisioned another individual playing a similar role in galvanizing action on the climate crisis.

"One 16-year-old has done more than anybody I can think of," Robinson said of Greta Thunberg, the Swedish teenager who has focused attention on the issue across the globe. She credited Thunberg with empowering young people to speak out — and go on strike on behalf of the climate — "without seeking anyone's permission."

Stressing the importance of intergenerational solidarity on the issue, she said she knows someone who is the head of a fossil fuel company — Robinson didn't name him — who has finally decided to do something about the damage his firm has caused.

The impetus? His teenage daughter, who, according to Robinson told him: "Daddy, you are responsible for destroying this world."

[Bill Mitchell is NCR's climate editor. His email address is [bmitchell@ncronline.org](mailto:bmitchell@ncronline.org). Follow NCR's climate tracker at [@NCRclimate](https://twitter.com/NCRclimate).]