



# The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

June 14, 2020

## Readings

*This week:*

Deuteronomy 8:2–3, 14b–16a  
1 Corinthians 10:16–17  
John 6:51–68

*Next week:*

Jeremiah 20:10–13  
Romans 5:12–15  
Matthew 10:26–33

## Psalm

Praise the Lord, Jerusalem. Alleluia! (*Psalm 147*)

## Today

In this time of COVID-19 restrictions, we are not celebrating Mass at St. Thomas Aquinas Church at 8:45 as usual. When we are able to resume in-person liturgies, we will be starting our Mass at 9:00 a.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, located at Waverley and Homer Streets in 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. While we are sheltering-in-place, donations can be made through our website, [www.thomasmerton.org](http://www.thomasmerton.org). Click on the “Donate” tab to make a donation via credit card or direct deposit. Or you may mail your donation check to: TMC, P. O. Box 60061, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

## Calendar

Sunday, June 14, 1:00 pm, via Zoom	TMC (virtual) Coffee and Donuts (Zoom link to meeting is on Page 2.)
Monday, June 15, 6:00 pm, via Zoom	TMC Spiritual Education Committee
Wednesday, June 17, 5:00 pm, via Zoom	TMC Racism Discussion Group (contact Bob Foley at <a href="mailto:bob.foley@gmail.com">bob.foley@gmail.com</a> )

## From Thomas Merton

It seems to me that we have little genuine interest in human liberty and in the human person. What we are interested in...is the unlimited freedom of the corporation. When we call ourselves the “free world” we mean first of all the world in which *business* is free. And the freedom of the person comes only after that, because, in our eyes, the freedom of the person is dependent on money. That is to say, without money, freedom has no meaning. And therefore the most basic freedom of all is the freedom to make money. If you have nothing to buy or sell, freedom is, in your case, irrelevant. In other words, what we are really interested in is not *persons*, but *profits*...

As long as there was talk only of “rights,” and of “freedom” (concepts which imply *persons*), the Negro movement was taken seriously chiefly by crackpots, idealists, and members of suspicious organizations thought to be under direct control of Moscow, like the NAACP....*It was only when money became involved that the Negro demonstrations finally impressed themselves upon the American mind as being real.*

—*Letters to a White Liberal*, in *Ramparts*, December 1963

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

## TMC Coffee Hour invitation (via Zoom):

**NOTE:** This is our new dedicated TMC Zoom account log-in information.

On Sunday, June 14, at 1:00 pm, please join the TMC Coffee and Donut Hour—via Zoom. Here is the information: (no password necessary):

### Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81402157461>

**Meeting ID: 814 0215 7461**

One tap mobile:  
+16699006833,,81402157461#,,1#,,158515# US (San Jose)  
Or by telephone: +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)  
Questions: Call Kay Williams, 650-270-4188

## Update on help to Ecumenical Hunger Project:

EHP asked last week for a working frig for a family in need. We learned that this need has been filled by the generous donation of a new refrigerator for this family.

Fans are also needed. As the weather heats up, those who are quarantined or living in cramped quarters would really appreciate a fan, especially seniors and families with young babies. If you have an extra fan, email to [info@ehpcare.org](mailto:info@ehpcare.org) or call 650-323-7781. If no one answers, please leave a message and someone will get back to you. EHP is currently open Tues to Thurs, 9 am - 5 pm, barring any unforeseen incidents.

## Daily 8:30 am Mass to start June 15 at SAG:

Following the directives from the Diocese of San Jose, Fr. Stasys will start outdoor Masses on June 15.

There will be an 8:30 am Mass, Monday thru Saturday only, on the playground at St. Elizabeth Seton School, for the allowed 25 participants. Sign up the day before the Mass at <https://signup.com/go/BFXCBjR> (published in the parish newsletter of June 12).

Those who attend are asked to bring their own chair or blanket for sitting and their own sanitizer, to wear masks, and to observe social distancing of 6 ft. Holy Communion distribution will be explained on-site.

Set-up and take-down must be done by the presider only, as he is the 25th allowed participant.

Check [www.paloaltocatholic.net](http://www.paloaltocatholic.net) for up-to-the minute details.

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**Website:** Jim Davis, 650-704-8002, [james\\_davis@pacbell.net](mailto:james_davis@pacbell.net)

## Masses streamed from STA church:

1) **Parish Mass:** Attend Mass at 11:00 am, streamed from STA church every Sunday morning and celebrated by STA pastor Fr. Stasys Mikalonis or vicar Fr. Sev Kuupuo: <https://dsj.zoom.us/j/759166471>

2) **Stanford Catholic Community:** Attend Mass at 4:30 p.m. every Sunday, streamed from STA church and celebrated by the Dominican priests of the Stanford Catholic Community (including Fr. Xavier Lavagetto, who has celebrated the TMC Mass once a month for several years): go to [www.stanfordcatholic.org](http://www.stanfordcatholic.org) for that day's link to the YouTube channel.

## Thanks to altar flower artists:

As you view the livestreamed Masses from STA, please offer virtual thanks to Margie Harrington, who is making sure there are vases with flowers placed on the altar each week.

## Chris Lundin memorial:



Chris and Nora Lundin

Chris Lundin died suddenly on June 4. His life was dedicated to STA Parish as musician, liturgist, social justice leader. (Chris helped TMC many times with audio needs for speaker events.) Read about Chris here:

**Link:** <http://www.paloaltoonline.com/obituaries/memorials/christopher-michael-lundin?o=6286> (from the Palo Alto Weekly and Palo Alto Online)

A funeral Mass for Chris will be livestreamed on Saturday, June 20, at 10:30 am on YouTube. The link is: <https://youtu.be/-u53IYA9njw>. (Look also for the link on [www.paloaltocatholic.net](http://www.paloaltocatholic.net).) Private interment will be the same day at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Los Altos.

**Support for Nora Lundin:** If you would like to support Nora Lundin, her daughters have set up a Meal Train plan for her during this time of navigating Chris's death: <https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/mnmng86>. This is a way to volunteer to bring a meal or give a gift card for a meal, offering the comfort of a meal as a gift of love. Instructions are contained on the Meal Train page.

**Information:** Kerry Lundin at: [kerrylundin@gmail.com](mailto:kerrylundin@gmail.com).

**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, Susan Miller, Hayden Pastorini, Dick and Jeanne Placone, 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)]

# COMMUNITY FORUM

*Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns*

## ***When will the US bishops address the evil of systemic racism head-on?***

[by Daniel P. Horan, *National Catholic Reporter*, 6/10/20]

The time for niceties is long over and the choreography of oblique critique is beyond tiresome. The urgency of the moment demands honesty; therefore I will be blunt: The 2018 U.S. bishops' conference document "Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love — A Pastoral Letter Against Racism" has effectively proven to be a worthless statement. And nothing has made that clearer than the events over the last few weeks following the modern-day lynching of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia and the police murders of Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky, and George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Last year, not long after the pastoral letter was released, I wrote about many of the text's stark inadequacies, something likewise noted in other venues such as the Pax Christi USA and Sisters of Mercy websites, and by Fordham University theologian Fr. Bryan Massingale in, among other places, interviews last week with *America* and *Commonweal* magazines.

I conceded in last year's column that the bishops and their advisers may have meant well, even said many good things, but nevertheless failed to do what was required of them in addressing the evil of systemic racism head-on.

Instead of speaking the uneasy yet necessary whole truth, the bishops' document contorts into passive voice and platitudes of kindness; it speaks of the sin of racism, but never names the sinner. While the title of the recent pastoral letter is an improvement on that of its 1979 predecessor — "Brothers and Sisters to Us" — its content makes no discernable progress in addressing the persistent and systemic evil of racism and the white supremacy of the church and this nation that perpetuates it.

Over time, I have recognized my obligation to acknowledge the multitude of unearned privileges from which I benefit — as a cisgender white man, an ordained member of a religious order, a documented citizen of the United States, a nondisabled and neurotypical individual, someone with a private college education and graduate degrees, among others — so I can gain perspective, orient myself to the task of self-education about racial injustice, do my part from my particular location to dismantle white supremacy.

I have learned a lot, but I know I have much more work to do. And because of this ongoing experience of learning and growing, which has often been painful and uncomfortable as it has been enlightening, I feel that I can both empathize with and offer constructive critique to the bishops with whom I share fraternity as a brother priest.

The church in the U.S. needs a document that does not spare the feelings or prioritize the comfort of white people like me. The reality of racism requires an honest acknowledgement of the basic truth that racism is a white problem and progress will only be made when church leaders accept and preach this fact. As Massingale stated frankly in his *Commonweal* interview, "If it were up to people of color, racism would have been over and done, resolved a long time ago. The only reason that racism continues to persist is because white people benefit from it."

So why haven't the U.S. bishops collectively done their pastoral duty to address this pervasive social sin? According to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' website, there are currently 427 active and retired bishops in the United States. Of that number, according to the conference's own data, only 13 of the active and retired bishops are of African descent. This statistic is important for several reasons.

First, when taken with the similar disproportionately small number of Latino bishops and bishops of Asian descent, the vast majority of American bishops are white. As an overpoweringly white group, they are shielded from the full truth of their complicity and privilege by the very mechanism and logics of white supremacy.

Second, those bishops from minoritized communities are likely to be, historically speaking, disinclined from correcting their white episcopal brothers on these matters, given the overwhelmingly white space the U.S. bishops' conference represents.

Furthermore, it is not the responsibility or obligation of persons of color generally, and the bishops and conference staffers of color specifically, to educate the majority white episcopate. It's the responsibility of white people to educate themselves about racism and white supremacy. And engaging, citing, teaching the work of experts on racism — especially experts of color in and outside the church — is an absolute necessity.

Third, according to U.S. bishops' conference data, there are approximately 37,302 ministerial priests in the U.S., and of that number only 250 are identified as African American. That means that African American priests

account for 0.7% of the total number, a startling statistic that further reveals the hegemony of white experience, perspective and culture in ecclesiastical leadership at the parish, diocesan and national levels.

Fourth, while the numbers alone do not account for (and never justify) white normativity in the U.S. church, the fact that there are hundreds upon hundreds of white bishops who determine policy, vote on the content and lan-

*(Continued on page 5)*

## ***San Jose churches prep for post-COVID future:***

[By J.D. Long-Garcia, *America Magazine*, 6/11/20]

It is not uncommon to see a Tesla or a Lexus among the cars in line for food donations at parishes in the Diocese of San Jose, Calif., according to the Rev. Jon G. Pedigo, director for advocacy and community engagement of Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County.

Catholic Charities is coordinating weekly food “Drive Thru” to address needs during the Covid-19 pandemic. Together with parish chapters of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, they sometimes feed as many as 1,000 families in 90 minutes, Father Pedigo told America. The collaboration with parishes reaches 50,000 people every week.

“What we’re helping to do is set up an infrastructure,” he said, noting volunteers register those who come for follow up calls. Catholic Charities is pivoting from relief to recovery.

The goal is to move from the food program to person-to-person care, and Catholic Charities bands together with other nonprofit agencies to offer comprehensive service. They are piloting a program at Our Lady of Refuge to bring together accompaniment teams that serve clients for 120 days, helping them navigate available resources. The program brings parishioners from wealthy and low-income parishes together.

“Once you are at the table with a fellow person of faith and you have the *encuentro*, there’s a mutual transformation,” Father Pedigo said of the encounter. “We’re creating a network of people to see each other. We’re never going to go back to the same siloed lives we had before. The questions and conversations will be different.”

Santa Clara County is in California’s Bay Area, which has the highest income inequality in the state. Billionaires live next to the poor in Silicon Valley. “Shelter in place has caused an even greater disparity,” Father Pedigo said.

While California put in place a moratorium on rent, many families had been living paycheck to paycheck before that pandemic and will be unable to pay back rent once it comes due, he said. Some families share apartments with more than 12 to 20 people living together, meaning “they don’t have a safe place to shelter in place,” he said.

Recently, Bridget Balajadia, project manager with Catholic Charities, met a man who rents a corner of a shed for \$200 a month. The man, who is over 65, shares the shed with three other men. The state moratorium on rent does not protect people in his situation. “I just need a job,” the man, an immigrant from Vietnam, told Ms. Balajadia. He had worked in factories all his life. “There are so many people that we aren’t even

aware of,” she said.

Catholic Charities clients are struggling with fatigue, increased anxiety, financial trouble and childcare, Ms. Balajadia said. Some parents are no longer able to work because their children are home. Suicide rates have also increased during shelter in place, she said. In Walnut Creek, doctors are reporting more suicides than Covid-19 deaths. Santa Clara County has also seen an increase in fentanyl overdoses during the pandemic.

While some in Silicon Valley ruminate about working from home going forward, Ms. Balajadia said low-income workers in supportive industries would suffer for it. “All of those people won’t have jobs to return to if people stay remote,” she said. “The disparity is going to get even bleaker.”

In Gilroy, St. Mary Church feeds 3,000 families a week through St. Joseph Family Center, the pastor, Rev. Michael Hendrickson, told America. That includes curbside pickups and a team that drops off food boxes at family homes. “That’s the biggest impact—preventing mass starvation,” he said.

Rental assistance is another great need, Father Hendrickson said. “Once the moratorium on evictions is lifted, it’s going to be really bad,” he said. “If you can’t work from home, it’s so much worse,” he said, explaining that many of his parishioners work in service, food processing and retail industries....

The financial impact of the pandemic led the Diocese of San Jose to reduce operating expenses, including voluntary retirements, reduced hours and layoffs, though a spokesperson would not say how many people were affected. But, at least for the time being, there are no plans to close any of the 26 elementary schools or six high schools.

Principals and teachers have increased their hours during the pandemic, said Caroline Sliney, associate superintendent....Access to online education has been an ongoing concern in some families, Ms. Sliney said. Some students do their homework, including essays, on their phones. Some parents have to figure out how to schedule video conferences for themselves as well as a number of children....Educators strive to build relationships with both students and parents, she said. Those relationships were crucial for remote learning.

“We were able to be successful because of the network we had already established,” Ms. Sliney said. “We of course want our kids back to school, but we have to do that safely,” she said. The last day of class is June 4 and schools are already preparing for both online and in-person classes next fall.

“Our goal is to stay as creative and innovative as possible and be there for what our kids need,” Ms. Sliney said. “As much as it has been challenging, the spirit of community has been really beautiful.”

[J.D. Long-Garcia is a senior editor at America.]

*(Horan, continued from page 3)*

guage of teaching documents, and offer statements that are supposed to speak for the American Catholic community writ large contributes to the maintenance of the status quo and is likely to consciously or unwittingly prioritize white comfort over the safety and experience of communities of color.

It is this last point that is worth reflecting on for some time. The U.S. bishops' conference, despite best intentions, refused to engage in the long overdue self-criticality required to make real progress in addressing racism.

The reason the 2018 pastoral letter fails at addressing racism in a meaningful way is that it is presented in such a manner that the majority of white bishops, priests, religious and laity in the U.S. could feel good about "doing something" while also never having their comfort and worldview challenged in a substantive fashion.

Yes, we can all agree that racism is sinful and an evil to be rejected, but what about the source and perpetuation of structures and institutions of racial injustice? What about naming and challenging those who, like the enormous majority of priests and bishops in the U.S., including me, benefit from the continuation of systemic racism?

This is something Massingale touches on in his interview with *Commonweal*. He explains: "The document was written by white people for the comfort of white people. And in doing so, it illustrates a basic tenet of Catholic engagement with racism: when the Catholic Church historically has engaged this issue, it's always done so in a way that's calculated to not disturb white people or not to make white people uncomfortable."

The detrimental consequences of prioritizing the comfort of white people over addressing the hard truths of racial inequality and injustice is something that many writers have considered in recent years, including in important works by George Yancy, Ijeoma Oluo and Robin DiAngelo, among others.

Within an ecclesial context, I was reminded of something St. Óscar Romero of El Salvador once preached: "A church that doesn't provoke any crises, a gospel that doesn't unsettle, a word of God that doesn't get under anyone's skin, a word of God that doesn't touch the real sin of the society in which it is being proclaimed — what gospel is that?"

Romero eventually understood the stakes of proclaiming uncomfortable truths mandated by the Gospel and he paid the price with his own blood. Comparably, the risk to the majority white episcopate in the U.S. is far less dire. Still the fear of retaliatory anger, the withholding of financial contributions by wealthy benefactors, the perception of succumbing to "identity politics" or, worse in some circles, "political correctness" drives the promulgation of nonthreatening statements that move the hearts of no one.

I agree with Massingale that the 2018 document "really is woefully inadequate to the challenge of the time." What

the outrage, mobilization and protests of recent weeks have shown is that this may be a kairós moment, a divinely appointed time for putting into action real Gospel convictions about justice.

Some, like Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso, Texas, have recognized this. But most others still haven't. If now isn't the time, when is?

The U.S. bishops' refusal to risk discomfort or take on a share of the pain of racial injustice means that they — as an overwhelmingly white ecclesiastical body — are forcing people of color to, as Oluo says, "continue to bear the entire burden of racism alone."

This sort of behavior is what the Catholic tradition calls sin. And what is currently presented by the U.S. bishops as a pastoral letter on racism is, at the very least, indicative of a sin of omission. Which is why it is beyond time for the bishops to acknowledge what Catholic leaders, religious, laity and institutions have done and have failed to do when it comes to racism; to call out their own complicity and participation in unjust structures; and to risk making themselves vulnerable and other white Catholics uncomfortable as an authentic start to a meaningful pastoral document.

*[Daniel P. Horan is the Duns Scotus Chair of Spirituality at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, where he teaches systematic theology and spirituality. His recent book is Catholicity and Emerging Personhood: A Contemporary Theological Anthropology. Follow him on Twitter: @DanHoranOFM.]*

### ***STA exterior renovation has begun:***



The team from Teevan has put up the scaffolding around STA church. Helen Baumann reports that there will be no scaffolding on the front. Ladders will be used so that there is complete access to the church at all times.

This renovation is fully funded by the Mary Baracci Restricted Bequest.

The project will cost \$337,200. Teevan is a company which specializes in the restoration of historic buildings and will provide ongoing maintenance of the exterior for 15 years. Fr. Stasys is extremely grateful for Mary's generous legacy, and also for all the faithful stewards working to get this project done!

***Thanks also to the Garden Groomers*** (a cadre of 10) who cleaned up the church garden beds on June 6. Vicki and Larry Sullivan deployed the volunteers, who raked leaves, picked off dead leaves, and generally fluffed up the grounds.