



Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 26, 2020

Readings

This week:

1 Kings 3:5, 7–12
Romans 8:28–30
Matthew 13:44–52

Next week:

Isaiah 55:1–3
Romans 8:35, 37–39
Matthew 14:13–21

Psalm

Lord, I love your commands. (*Psalm 119*)

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. 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, July 26, 1:00 pm, via Zoom

TMC (virtual) Coffee and Donuts
(Zoom link to meeting is on Page 2. [New Zoom meeting ID # is being used.](#))

Wednesday, July 29, 5:00 pm, via Zoom

TMC Racism Discussion Group (contact Bob Foley at bob.foley@gmail.com)

From Thomas Merton

A man who is not stripped and poor and naked within his own soul will unconsciously tend to do the works he has to do for his own sake rather than for the glory of God. He will be virtuous not because he loves God’s will but because he wants to admire his own virtues. But every moment of the day will bring him some frustration that will make him bitter and impatient and in his impatience he will be discovered.

He has planned to do spectacular things. He cannot conceive himself without a halo. And when the events of his daily life keep reminding him of his own insignificance and mediocrity, he is ashamed, and his pride refuses to swallow a truth at which no sane man should be surprised.

—*New Seeds of Contemplation*

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.

COMMUNITY NOTES

News Announcements Requests

TMC Coffee Hour invitation (via Zoom):

NOTE: The recurring standing TMC Coffee & Donuts Hour meeting has been renewed, and this is the new Meeting ID:

On Sunday, July 26, at 1:00 pm, please join the TMC Coffee and Donut Hour—via Zoom. Here is the **NEW** information: (no password necessary):

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83624814842>

Meeting ID: 836 241 4842

One tap mobile:

+16699006833,,81402157461#,,1#,158515# US (San Jose)

Or by telephone: +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Food distribution at St. Athanasius by Catholic Charities:

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County sponsors drive-through food distribution on the 2nd & 4th Saturday of the month from 10:00 am till noon at St. Athanasius Catholic Church, 160 N. Rengstorff, Mtn. View.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please contribute financially by going to www.CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/donate.

We can also use bulk supplies of sanitizers, alcohol wipes, C-95 masks, and nitrile gloves. We need volunteers to help make wellness calls and serve food.

TMC donates \$1000 to Innocence Project:

With a heightened awareness of the importance of actions to support the Black Lives Matter movement, the Board of TMC responded to a suggestion from the TMC ad hoc committee on Racism and White Privilege and voted to donate \$1,000 to the Northern California Innocence Project, based at Santa Clara University School of Law, in honor of Colin Kaepernick.

The work of the Innocence Network (ncip.org)—made up of 67 independent innocence organizations—often lays bare the reach and effects of systemic racism and white supremacy within the criminal justice system and our society at large. The Innocence Network joins the Black Lives Matter movement in condemning the senseless murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, and all Black individuals killed by police brutality...

As a coalition of organizations dedicated to freeing people incarcerated for crimes they did not commit, we affirm our commitment to combat white supremacy and anti-blackness in all forms and in all places. This includes in our own organizations, institutions, practices, and offices. The Innocence Network values racial equity and understands that we must first grapple with our own complicity before we can even begin to tackle racial justice at large. Finally, we acknowledge the unbelievable pain and burden this causes our clients and colleagues of color in the Network.

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 for that day's link to the YouTube channel.

Outdoor daily Mass:

Daily Mass is celebrated @ Saint Elizabeth Seton School Playground, Mon-Sat at 8:30 a.m. for an allowed number of 60 attendees. No prior sign-up is necessary.

- Upon arrival:
 - A. Sanitize your hands (bring your own sanitizer).
 - B. Cross off 1 # per person on the white board chart.
 - C. Sanitize your hands again.
- Bring and wear your face mask during the Mass.
- Bring and use your own chair or mat. No benches or chairs will be provided. (We will have special accommodations for those who might need it)
- Keep social distance (minimum of 6 feet) at all times.
- No daily missals will be provided.
- Holy Communion reception will be explained on site.

Black Lives Matter at Oakland parish:

The TMC faith-sharing group on racism and white privilege that meets on Wednesday afternoons has been impressed with the work of St. Columba Parish in Oakland: <https://stcolumba-oak.com/>.

St. Columba Catholic Church's mission is clearly stated on the website: "St. Columba is a community of believers in Oakland California who know "who and whose we are" (God's people). Through African-American traditions, we are moved by the Spirit to serve in this world today."

It is a vibrant parish, with many ministries and prayer and action events.

Take a look, participate, be educated and inspired.

PRAY FOR US: Please remember in your prayers this week Art Adams, Denise Alongi, Terry Atkinson, 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, Mercedes McCaffrey, Maureen Mooney, Susan Miller, Hayden Pastorini, Paul Prochaska, Bill Risch, Anne Rush, Priya Smith, Bernice Sullivan, Jean Vistica, Dolores Walsh, T. J. Wooten.

[Add/subtract names by e-mailing Kay Williams, kaywill@pachell.net]

COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

He goes and sells all that he has:

[By Deacon Greg Kandra, *The Deacon's Bench* blog, 7/25/20]

How much are you willing to give up for God?

That's really the question this Sunday — whether we realize it or not.

In Matthew's Gospel the last couple of Sundays, Jesus has been telling his listeners about the kingdom, comparing it to different ways of planting. But here, he tells us it is not just something small that grows; it is an unexpected treasure to be found, like a pearl. The one who finds something like that will sell everything to possess it.

That is God's kingdom on earth.

How much are we willing to give up to get it?

How far are we willing to go?

What will we sacrifice?

Considering this Gospel: selling all our possessions, literally everything we own, might not seem that practical.

But now might be a good time to ask: what things we possess are we willing to get rid of?

I'm not talking about the widescreen TV or that collection of cookware or the Playstation your kids can't live without.

What do we own that we can do without?

Maybe we own indifference.

Maybe we are holding on to selfishness.

Maybe we possess intolerance toward anyone who is different or harbor hate toward anyone we disagree with.

Maybe we just can't forgive.

Maybe we have a collection of grievances — whether against our friends, our family, our neighbors.

Maybe we have stored away years of anger. Bitterness. Hostility. Spite.

Start a clearance sale. Unpack those boxes. Sell what is useless — and invest in what is useful, a treasure that is beyond price: God's kingdom. That means the Gospel values that define us as Christians. Love for the Lord, love for your neighbor.

That is the lesson Jesus is teaching in this Gospel. We need to give up those things we possess that define us and protect us and wall us off from the world. Divest those things that are keeping us from discovering the kingdom of heaven, because they are grounding us too deeply in things of the world.

Right now, it is a world in crisis.

These last few months of the pandemic have taught us hard lessons about what we need, what we don't. What we possess, and what possesses us. We have been chal-

lenged to live, work and worship differently.

We have come to realize what we truly treasure.

I hope and pray we come to understand more deeply what lasts. What endures. What never grows old.

I hope, too, that this time has given us all a deeper appreciation for "the pearl of great price," that small object that is beyond price, the Eucharist.

Here and now, may we renew our love for that great gift.

May we take the precious time we have to give up what we don't need, so that we can possess what our hearts do need — so that we may face these challenging times in God's kingdom on earth with gratitude, with purpose, and with joy.

[Greg Kandra is a Roman Catholic deacon serving the Diocese of Brooklyn, NY. Author of *The Busy Person's Guide to Prayer*, he is an award-winning broadcast journalist and maintains *The Deacon's Bench* blog.]

Fr. Greg Boyle, S.J., on "Kinship" July 28:



St. Camillus Center for Pastoral Care in Los Angeles is presenting "Kinship: Pandemic, BLM, and Elections", a virtual gathering with Fr. Greg Boyle, S.J., on Zoom, Tuesday, July 28.

St. Camillus Center for Pastoral Care's Urban

Interfaith Chaplaincy Program in Los Angeles invites all to a gathering with Fr. Greg Boyle, S.J.

On Tuesday, July 28, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., Fr. Boyle will speak on "Kinship: Pandemic, BLM, and Elections," addressing the current pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement, and upcoming elections.

Participants are invited to join at 12:45 p.m. to prepare for the session, and to stay from 2:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. for conversation afterwards.

Participants can join this free event using **the Zoom ID 2966151726** and the password of 751605. (Go to zoom.us and "join a meeting". Put in the meeting ID & password.) For questions, please contact St. Camillus Center for Pastoral Care at 323-225-4461 x111 or at: info@stcamilluscenter.org

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Hidden cost of a border wall:

[By Gary Paul Nabhan, NCR, 7/25/20]

More than ever in recent history, the religious liberties of American citizens have been in the news lately, from government-enforced church closures to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's draft report of the Commission on Unalienable Rights. But from Texas to California, the faithful in Native American, Hispanic and Anglo-American border communities feel as though Homeland Security is running roughshod over their religious liberties and properties in its hell-bent attempt to finish border wall construction by November's election.

No matter that Pompeo pontificated on July 16 that religious freedoms and properties of American citizens and faith communities were foremost among all unalienable rights. Pompeo went so far as to claim that the U.S. serves as a powerful example to the rest of the world in the way our government heeds such rights for our diverse communities.

So let me take you to a "litmus test" of our government's commitment to protect the religious practices, places of worship and cultural properties of deep spiritual significance to the "three nations" in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands: Indigenous First Nations, Mexican and U.S. citizens with deep roots in this dry but divinely beautiful landscape.

At Quitobaquito Oasis in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument on the Arizona-Sonora border, Jesuit Padre Eusebio Kino offered the first known Palm Sunday celebration in the region in 1698, using local palms and spring water for the blessings on that spring day.

Kino was likely aware that the place was already sacred to the Tohono O'odham, Hia-Ced O'odham and Quechan dwellers who had cemeteries, shrines and ceremonial grounds there. It is hard not to stand in reverence of the only pools of potable spring waters in any direction for 20 miles, especially in a cactus-studded landscape that receives less than 4 inches of rain in an average year.

The tall saguaro cactus that stood silent, perhaps absorbing Kino's prayers that spring morning, are considered "sacred persons" who give their fruit to the O'odham for fermenting a sacramental wine used in rain-bringing ceremonies.

The inextinguishable right to continue to harvest saguaro fruit for their ceremonies was granted to the O'odham more than two centuries later, when President Franklin Roosevelt declared part of the O'odham homelands Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in 1937. Since that time, the Tohono and Hia-Ced O'odham, descendants of Kino's hosts, have continued their ceremonies at Quitobaquito — now recognized by the National Park Service as a traditional cultural property of the O'odham, even though it has been split in half by the borderline. Nevertheless, Border Patrol continued to let O'odham harvesters wander up and even across the border near Quitobaquito to obtain cactus fruit through the 1950s, recognizing their rights

as a transborder tribe.

All this has changed in the last year, as Homeland Security's border wall construction director Paul Enriquez has claimed that an emergency proclamation by President Donald Trump authorizes him to waive more than 40 federal and state laws to maintain security at the border by building the monstrous 30-foot wall with 24/7 lighting atop it.

Not only is the wall being built within 20-30 yards of the sacred springs and oasis at Quitobaquito, but groundwater pumping from new wells needed to mix concrete and control dust are drying up the springs and killing seven species of ceremonial plants used in both Native American and Catholic rituals.

The Customs and Border Protection contractors have killed or mutilated thousands of highly protected and sacred saguaros along the borderline, and then allegedly attempted to sell their parts into the "black markets" in rural Arizona towns.

The wall also blocks an ancient holy pilgrimage route between the Valley of the Sun near Phoenix and sacred salt deposits along the shores of the Sea of Cortez that pilgrims continue to ritually run to this day, in much the same way that the Camino de Santiago in Europe has been used for centuries.

If it were only one spiritual tradition, one faithful culture, one sacred sanctuary being defiled at the border by Homeland Security, perhaps Enriquez could argue that this was an unfortunate but necessary diversion from the federal government's commitment to religious liberties.

But from the La Lomita Chapel in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, and the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo near the New Mexico-Texas border, to the Border Church worship in Friendship Park south of San Diego, Customs and Border Protection has shown wanton disregard for the religious liberties and properties that Pompeo claims should be given utmost respect.

The Healing the Border Project hosted by the Indigenous Alliance Without Borders has called for a Senate field hearing and for an intertribal and interfaith leaders meeting with Enriquez to halt and reverse border wall construction wherever the spiritual practices of Native American and Hispanic border dwellers have been disrupted.

All people of faith stand to lose if Homeland Security continues to pretend that it has exceptional authorization to violate religious liberties and destroy centuries-old sanctuaries of worship, whether indoors or out in the sacred wilderness.

[Gary Paul Nabhan is an Ecumenical Franciscan brother, a Wild Church Network leader, alumni of the Center for Action and Contemplation, and author of a forthcoming book from Fortress Press, *Jesus for Farmers and Fishers*. He has lived and worked on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border in Indigenous communities for four decades.]