



Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 19, 2016

Readings

This week:

Zechariah 12:10–11; 13:1

Galatians 3:26–29

Luke 9:18–24

Next week:

1 Kings 19:16b, 19–21

Galatians 5:1, 13–18

Luke 9:51–62

Psalm Today

My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God. (*Psalm 63*)

Today's presider is Fr. Jack Izzo, S.J.

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 20, 7:00 p.m. TMC Spiritual Education Committee, Thomas House

From Thomas Merton

Only when we see ourselves in our true human context, as members of a race which is intended to be one organism and "one body," will we begin to understand the positive importance not only of the successes but of the failures and accidents in our lives. My successes are not my own. The way to them was prepared by others. The fruit of my labors is not my own: for I am preparing the way for the achievements of another. Nor are my failures my own. They may spring from the failure of another, but they are also compensated for by another's achievement. Therefore the meaning of my life is not to be looked for merely in the sum total of my own achievements. It is seen only in the complete integration of my achievements and failures with the achievements and failures of my own generation, and society, and time....

—*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

Volunteer to help at 8:45 Mass:

The Liturgy Committee is putting out a red carpet to welcome volunteers!

Imagine yourself striding into church and taking up your position as a **greeter**: coming 15 minutes early, handing out bulletins with a smile, and then taking your seat in a pew. All this exertion is necessary only once a month.

Or if you like being behind the scenes, follow that carpet up to the altar and be a **sacristan**: arrive 15 minutes early, gather the linens and vessels that are used during Mass, place them on the altar—and this also only once a month. Both these essential tasks have easy instructions to follow and willing friends to walk you through them.

Inspired to step forward? Contact John Arnold, 325-1421, jsaoso@comcast.net, or Sally Benson, 408-972-5843, sallymbenson@gmail.com.

Volunteer to bring donated food to EPA:

Fred Dietrich has been taking food to the St. Vincent de Paul food closet in East Palo Alto, run by George Chippendale, for many years, and he would like to let someone else do the job. He usually goes after Mass on Sunday, but there are many cars parked there then, so it gets tricky to park and unload food. It would be good to have a couple of people—or even four—take up this work so volunteers could be scheduled for once-a-month duty. Please contact George Chippendale to find out the particulars: 650-856-6350, grchippendale@yahoo.com.

Drivers to Hidden Villa camp needed:

One only has briefly to drive through Hidden Villa Summer Camp, just 10 miles and 25 minutes from East Palo Alto, to marvel at the vision Frank and Josephine Duvenek had in starting a multicultural summer camp on their ranch 70 years ago. It gets the children away from unhealthy situations in their neighborhood to a camp community where having fun is a daily criterion.

One missing link every summer is transportation. Volunteers are needed mostly to drive 3 day campers from East Palo Alto to camp.

The first camp session starts June 20 and the last session ends August 19. Call George Chippendale, (650) 856 6350, for further information and to schedule some days of driving.

Bulletin submissions must be e-mailed by Thursday noon or phoned by Thursday, 9:00 pm. Kay, kaywill@pacbell.net, (650) 270-4188. Michelle, myhogan@comcast.net, (650) 493-8452.

Garden planting June 25:

The STA garden work day is set for Saturday, June 25, from 10 am till 12:00. We will be planting Peter Pan agapanthus and azaleas in front of the Thomas House and the church. If many hands are available, it will not be too much for any one individual.

Bring your gardening gloves, a trowel and/or spade, clippers, a knee cushion, and a favorite gardening. We will provide cold drinks and rest periods in the shade.

Please contact Vicki Sullivan, vickisullivan@comcast.net, or Anna Jaklitsch at annajak14@yahoo.com, (650) 327-0978, to let us know we'll have a team.

Fr. Kiriti's new email address:

If you are in email contact with Fr. Kiriti in Kenya, do not use his Yahoo address any more. His email has been hacked. He has now established a new email address: kiriti1963@gmail.com.

Catholic co-op selling local produce:

Subscribe to the community-supported agriculture (CSA) program offered by NanoFarms, a Catholic workers' co-op offering boxes of freshly picked sustainably grown and pesticide-free vegetables and fruit for delivery in San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties from May to December. The boxes cost \$30 a week and contain between 11 and 14 vegetables, fruits and herbs each week.

The produce comes from fields at St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park. One of the founders of NanoFarms is Fr. George Schulze, S.J., who teaches at the Seminary. Fr. Lawrence Goode, the pastor at St. Francis Parish in East Palo Alto, also helped get NanoFarms started.

NanoFarms is a profit-based workers cooperative. It is an effort to apply the Catholic social justice and economic principles of distributism to modern-day income disparity.

To order, call (650) 817-8801, or email to NanoFarm-USA@gmail.com, or go to nanofarms.com to sign up for a box of organic, nutritious produce.

PRAY FOR US: Please remember in your prayers this week, Denise Alongi, George Bouchey, Tom Carmody, George Chippendale, Sr. Fran Ciluaga, Mary Connors, Mike Cummings, Ken Dias, Fr. Thierry Geris, Deonna Gill, Emily Gill, Joanne Hasegawa, Dean Judd, Michael Kiriti, Hunter Kubit, Dick Jackman, François Jamati, Alicia Kot, Fr. Bill Leininger, Andre and Alyssa Lippard, Deacon Ysidro and Dolores Madrigal, Mary Rose McGuire, Maureen Mooney, Hayden Pastorini, Paul Prochaska, Anne Rush, Priya Smith, Bernice Sullivan, Jean Vistica, Dolores Walsh, Kay Williams, and T. J. Wooten.
[Add or subtract names by e-mailing Bulletin editors: Michelle Hogan, Kay Williams. See listings below.]

COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Ordinary goodness and our spiritual journey:

[By Oblate Fr. Ron Rolheiser, president of the Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio, Texas.]

The spirituality writer, Tom Stella, tells a story about three monks at prayer in their monastery chapel. The first monk imagines himself being carried up to heaven by the angels. The second monk imagines himself already in heaven, chanting God's praises with the angels and saints. The third monk cannot focus on any holy thoughts but can only think about the great hamburger he had eaten just before coming to chapel. That night, when the devil was filing his report for the day, he wrote: "Today I tried to tempt three monks, but I only succeeded with two of them."

There's more depth to this story that initially meets the eye. I wish that, years ago, I had grasped how both angels and great hamburgers play a role in our spiritual journey. You see, for too many years, I identified the spiritual quest with only explicit religious thoughts, prayers, and actions. If I was in church, I was spiritual, whereas if I was enjoying a good meal with friends, I was merely human. If I was praying and could concentrate my thoughts and feelings on some holy or inspiring thing, I felt I was praying and was, for that time, spiritual and religious; whereas if I was distracted, fatigued, or too sleepy to concentrate, I felt I had prayed poorly. When I was doing explicitly religious things or making more-obvious moral decisions, I felt religious, everything else was, to my mind, mere humanism.

While I was not particularly Manichaeian or negative on the things of this world, nonetheless the good things of creation (of life, of family and friendship, of the human body, of sexuality, of food and drink) were never understood as spiritual, as religious. In my mind, there was a pretty sharp distinction heaven and earth, the holy and the profane, the divine and the human, between the spiritual and the earthly. This was especially true for the more earthy aspects of life, namely, food, drink, sex, and bodily pleasures of any kind. At best, these were distractions from the spiritual; at worst, they were negative temptations tripping me up, obstacles to spirituality.

But, by stumbling often enough, we eventually learn: I tried to live like the first two monks, with my mind on spiritual things, but the third monk kept tripping me up, ironically not least when I was in church or at prayer. While in church or at prayer and trying to force mind and heart onto the things of the spirit, I would forever find myself assailed by things that, supposedly, had no place in church: memories and anticipations of gatherings with friends, anxieties about relationships, anxieties about unfinished tasks, thoughts about my favorite

sports teams, thoughts of wonderful meals with pasta and wine, of grilled steaks and bacon-burgers, and, most pagan of all, sexual fantasies that seemed the very antithesis of all that's spiritual.

It took some years and better spiritual guidance to learn that a many of these tensions were predicated on a poor and faulty understanding of Christian spirituality and of the real dynamics of prayer.

The first faulty understanding had to do with misunderstanding God's intent and design in creating us. God did not design our nature in one way, that is, to be sensual and to be so rooted deeply in the things of this earth, and then demand that we live as if we were not corporeal and as if the good things of this earth were only sham and obstacles to salvation, as opposed to being an integral part of salvation. Moreover, the incarnation, the mystery of God becoming corporeal, sensual, taking on human flesh, teaches unequivocally that we find salvation not by escaping the body and the things of this earth but by entering them more deeply and correctly. Jesus affirmed the resurrection of the bodily, not the flight of the soul.

The second misunderstanding had to do with the dynamics of prayer. Initially, in its early stages, prayer is about focus and concentration on the sacred, on conversations with God, on trying to leave aside, for a time, the things of this world to enter into the realm of the sacred. But that's the early stage of prayer. Eventually, as prayer deepens and matures, in the words of John of the Cross, the important things begin to happen under the surface and sitting in chapel with God is not unlike sitting down with someone you sit down with regularly. If you visit someone on a daily basis you won't each day have deep, intense conversations; mostly you will talk about everyday things, family concerns, the weather, sports, politics, the latest TV programs, food, and so on – and you'll find yourself looking at your watch occasionally. It's the same with our relationship to God. If you pray regularly, daily, you don't have to agonize about concentrating and keeping the conversation focused on deep, spiritual things. You only have to be there, at ease with a friend. The deep things are happening under the surface. #

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