



Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 20, 2019

Readings

This week:

Isaiah 62:1-5

Corinthians 12:4-11

John 2:1-11

Next week:

Nehemiah 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10

Corinthians 12:12-30

Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

Psalm

Proclaim his marvelous deeds to all the nations. (*Psalm 96*)

Today

Today's presider is Fr. Stasys Mikalonis.

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. Members of the Thomas Merton community plan 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 by check or cash, every Sunday there is a donation basket in the back of Church or by the coffeepot after Mass—or you can use the envelope in the bulletin the last Sunday of every month to mail your donation. Please do not put your TMC donation in the collection baskets passed during Mass (these are for parish contributions only).

Calendar

Monday, January 21, 7:00 pm

Spiritual Education, Thomas House

From Thomas Merton

The beginning of love is the will to let those we love be perfectly themselves, the resolution not to twist them to fit our own image. If in loving them we do not love what they are, but only their potential likeness to ourselves, then we do not love them: we only love the reflection of ourselves we find in them.

—*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 FORUM

I d e a s O p i n i o n s R e f l e c t i o n s C o n c e r n s

My last bulletin:

Both Kay Williams and I (Michelle Hogan) have been doing the Thomas Merton Center bulletin for more than 20 years, since TMC was formed. I have loved this ministry, as well as being a Commentator and a member of the Liturgy Team, but this is my last bulletin. Patricia Markee (who serves as a Lector and Communion Minister) and I have each lived alone since leaving home more than 50 years ago, but we're both entering "old age" now, and it's time to not live alone any more. Together we have bought a beautiful three-bedroom townhouse overlooking Santa Clara Valley in The Villages (where Msgr. Sandersfeld lives). I've just sold my Palo Alto condo (where I've lived for 43 years) and Patricia is in the process of selling her condo of 45 years. We know that we will dearly miss this community, but we'll be moving this week (January 25) and we're excited about the prospect of making new friends and discovering new activities. We hope you'll come down and see us in our new home, once we get settled!

Please remember in your prayers this week: Denise Alonghi, George Bouchey, Tom Carmody, George Chipendale, Mary Connors, Mike Cummings, Ken Dias, Pat Dietrich, Dick Freeman, Fr. Thierry Geris, Deonna Gill, Emily Gill, Jean Gill, Joanne Hasegawa, Fr. John Hester, Dean Judd, Dick Jackman, Hunter Kubit, 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.

A simple way to help homeless women:

In a parish tradition going back several years, the Human Concerns committee signed up our entire parish to provide another dinner for 15 people at University Lutheran Church on Friday, January 25.

This is a simple, personal, and fun way for us to help homeless ladies during these cold, wet winter months.

We are always welcome to stay, share the meal, and visit with the ladies.

Or a check written to the parish with Home and Heart on the memo line can be placed in the collection basket.

Contact Terry at (650) 714-2131 if you wish to contribute a home-made dish. Come join us!

Jim Davis writes:

Jim Davis writes "I am happy to report that my recovery from open heart surgery is progressing well and without complications. I am getting better every day. I am writing this to thank the many, many of you who supported me and my family during this ordeal, in case I don't get a chance to do so face to face. The kind well-wishes, cards, notes of encouragement, flowers, treats, visits, shared meals, blessings and prayers have been an essential part of my healing process.

"A special thank-you goes to the hospitality team for carrying on in my absence. I will always be grateful to you all.

"Thank you again from the bottom of my heart! (The area that was in the most distress but no pun intended)."

COMMUNITY NOTES

N e w s A n n o u n c e m e n t s R e q u e s t s

Reflections on peace, justice and hope from Martin Luther King, Jr.:

This season finds us a rather bewildered human race. We have neither peace within nor peace without. Everywhere paralyzing fears harrow people by day and haunt them by night. Our world is sick with war; everywhere, we turn we see its ominous possibilities. And yet, my friends, the Christmas hope for peace and good will toward all can no longer be dismissed as a kind of pious dream of some utopian. If we don't have good will toward everyone in this world, we will destroy ourselves by the misuse of our own instruments and our own power. Wisdom born of experience should tell us that war is obsolete.



Now let me suggest first that if we are to have peace on earth, our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation; and this means we must develop a world perspective. No individual can live alone; no nation can live alone, and as long as we try, the more we are going to have war in this world. Now the judgment of God is upon us, and we must either learn to live together as brothers and sisters or we are all going to perish together as fools.

... *MLK, Jr, continued:*

It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. We are made to live together because of the interrelated structure of reality. Now let me say that the next thing we must be concerned about if we are to have peace on earth and good will toward men is the nonviolent affirmation of the sacredness of all human life. Every person is somebody because they are a child of God. And so when we say “Thou shalt not kill,” we’re really saying that human life is too sacred to be taken on the battlefields of the world. . . . And when we truly believe in the sacredness of human personality, we won’t exploit people, we won’t trample people with the iron feet of oppression, we won’t kill anybody.

If there is to be peace on earth and good will toward all, we must finally believe in the ultimate morality of the universe, and believe that all reality hinges on moral foundations. As we once again stand after the Christmas season and think of the Easter season to come, the two somehow go together. Christ came to show us the way. Men love darkness rather than the light, and they crucified him, and there on Good Friday on the cross it was still dark, but then Easter came, and Easter is an eternal reminder of the fact that the truth-crushed earth will rise again.

I still have a dream today that one day justice will roll down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream. I still have a dream today that in all of our state houses and city halls men will be elected to go there who will do justly and love mercy and walk humbly with their God. I still have a dream today that one day war will come to an end, that men will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, that nations will no longer rise up against nations, neither will they study war any more. I still have a dream today that one day the lamb and the lion will lie down together and every man will sit under his own vine and fig tree and none shall be afraid.

—All quotes taken from MLK’s “A Christmas Sermon on Peace,” Ebenezer Baptist Church, December 24, 1967

Board: Gerard McGuire, gerardmc@aol.com, 814-2223
Bulletin: Michelle Hogan (January 20), 468-3386,
myhogan@comcast.net
Kay Williams (January 27), 679-9015, kaywill
@pacbell.net
Finance: Helena Wee, 520-7556, shwee@sbcglobal.net
Hospitality: Jim Davis, 328-2584
Liturgy: John Arnold, 325-1421, jsaoso@comcast.net
Sally Benson, (408) 972-5843, red5@svpal.org
Needs Net: Roberta Kehret, 494-1488, robkehr@yahoo.com
Spiritual Education: Mary Coady, 261-9155, Jim Davis, 328-2584

Entertaining angels on the border:

By Caroljean Willie, January 14, 2019, in globalsistersreport.org. Willie is a Sister of Charity who has a Ph.D. in Multicultural Education and extensive experience working cross-culturally in the U.S., the Caribbean and Latin America.

Spending time on the U.S./Mexican border in Texas working with those seeking asylum during the Advent season was, perhaps, one of the best preparations for Christmas. In the eyes of the men, women and children seeking shelter, I could see so clearly the face of Jesus whose parents, Mary and Joseph, were also seeking a place of refuge. Hundreds of parents pouring into shelters



Central American migrants who were dropped off at a bus station in El Paso, Texas, line up for food December 25, 2018, as they wait for transportation to emergency shelters.

daily, fleeing hunger and violence, seek only a place to raise their children in peace—a place where there is enough food to eat and opportunities to learn. They have walked for days and months, sacrificed all they have ever known out of love for their children, only to end up crammed into detention centers sleeping on the floor. Their stories tear at your heart. I found myself continually asking, “How can we treat people like this?” . . . I don’t have any answers because I don’t understand. I keep wondering if others really knew their stories if it would make a difference. For that reason I feel compelled to share just a few of the stories shared with me:

Fernanda is 22 and has an infant. She fled from Honduras after watching her 23-year-old husband killed in front of her with threats that she would be next.

Katerina left Guatemala with three children to protect them from the violence all around her. She knew that if she did not leave, her young sons would be forced to become gang members or be killed. . . .

Guadalupe traveled months from her native Guatemala with a 5-year-old, a 2-year-old and a 7-month-old in order to escape violence and provide a better future for her children. It was difficult to communicate with Guadalupe because she spoke so little Spanish. Her first language is Mam, one of more than 20 indigenous languages in her country.

These, and so many others, are not coming because they want to leave their homelands, but because they do not see any other way of protecting their families. All of

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Entertaining angels, continued:

them are asylum seekers and are being released from detention centers to reunite with family or friends in the United States (while their cases are pending).

. . . On good days the migrants come [to our center] with nothing but the clothes on their back and an address and phone number of someone willing to pay for a bus or plane ticket to their destination. On other days, Border Patrol simply drops hundreds of people off at the bus station without notifying the centers. This creates situations of utter chaos and overwhelms people already traumatized.

The centers are staffed mostly by lay and religious volunteers who have come from all over the country to help. Religious sisters from multiple congregations have responded generously. . . . At one center I worked with sisters from six different congregations coming from Pennsylvania, Iowa, South Dakota, Ohio, New York and California. Those who speak Spanish interview people to determine what their needs are and where they are going. Others call the families and/or friends who will provide the bus or plane tickets. Those who do not speak Spanish are also essential, as meals need to be prepared and served, donated clothes need to be sorted, “to-go” bags containing sandwiches, drinks and snacks need to be prepared for the travelers, and transportation is needed to be arranged to the airport and bus station.

Despite months of travel and days and weeks in detention centers, the people I met offered nothing but smiles and gratitude for the little we could do for them. They readily volunteered to sweep and mop the floors, cut up veggies for soups, do the dishes and any other task needed. As they left for the next part of their journey, they hugged the volunteers and thanked them for their help. There was no bitterness or anger, just gratitude. I asked myself many times over if I could respond with smiles and thanks if I had endured what they had.

As I continue to reflect on the coming of Jesus this holiday season, I keep seeing the faces of those I had encountered: Johanna, Edgar, Felix, Jaime, Elena, Amanda and so many more. Jesus’ parents, too, sought shelter and safety. I pray daily that each of them has reached their destination safely.

“Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing so people have entertained angels unaware.”

This quote has taken on such meaning in my life. I pray that I may continue to be open to entertaining the angels who have entered and will continue to enter my life. I pray also for our country whose attitudes and policies cause such pain and grief to so many. Jesus has come and continues to come daily. What more am I being called to do and how will we as a country respond to the Christ child among us?

Polarization can bring about real political change:

By Nathan Schneider, January 14, 2019, at americamagazine.org. Schneider is a reporter and professor of media studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

A few weeks after the inauguration of President Trump, I picked up George Lakey at the airport. I sighed when I saw him. For me, those were days of dismay—some students had been in tears during class, while others celebrated in MAGA hats, and every news cycle seemed to further entrench the paralyzing tale of a disconnect between the dueling headspaces of U.S. politics. But George, fresh off his flight, counteracted me with a smile. “Exciting times, aren’t these?” he said.

. . . George’s new book, *How We Win*, is a manual for practical activism, full of stories from his decades of practice, together with conversations with younger activists. It refutes the politics of reaction—whether the right- or left-wing kind—with a politics of possibility and with vigorous, nonviolent conflict. . . . Mr. Lakey explains what we are up to: Fixing polarization is, indeed, our job. The job of the middle class, as he puts it, is to keep the peace by managing the relationship between the working and owning classes. . . .

The history that Mr. Lakey has lived through taught him the limitations of good order. Over and over, he saw necessary change happen during tumult; tranquility, on the other hand, often kept unjust conditions stuck in place. The 1950s, which many Trump voters regard as when America was especially great, was the last gasp of legal segregation. . . . As for those who long for the comparatively low-drama Obama years, they excuse that president’s deftness in presiding over an ever-expanding list of unauthorized pseudo-wars, widening wealth inequality and deportation levels that even President Trump has yet to reach.

Times of polarization bear unique opportunities for significant change. The 1930s saw militant leftist labor organizing and Nazis rallying at Madison Square Garden, but out of that mess we got the eight-hour workday, Social Security and rural electricity. The 1960s pitted generations against each other over a brutal foreign war and unrest at home, but all that troublemaking finally did away with explicit racism in our laws (despite middle-class pleas for more orderly patience) and led to a dramatic expansion in many women’s options for how to live their lives. These were concessions that the ruling order would never have given without being forced.

. . . We seem to be on the precipice of real change, for better or worse. The military establishment cries recklessness, but with troop withdrawals from Syria and Afghanistan, the endless war on terror may finally be ending. Ineffectual, incrementalist centrism is giving way to calls for the kind of universal medical system that is long overdue. . . . Criminal justice reform is beginning to happen at last, even over the objections of the Senate majority leader. American empire and American capitalism are in flux like they haven’t been for decades. Where these pliable times take us depends on the movements we can build. Old limits on our imaginations have turned imaginary.