



# Transfiguration of the Lord

August 6, 2006

## Readings

*This week:*

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

2 Peter 1:16-19

Mark 9:2-10

*Next week:*

1 Kings 19:4-8

Ephesians 4:30—5:2

John 6:41-51

## Psalm

The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth. (*Psalm 97*)

## Today

Today's presider is Fr. Michael Marini.

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

No meetings this week.

### From Thomas Merton

One of the great tragedies of the Christian West is the fact that for all the good will of the missionaries and colonizers, they could not recognize that *the races they conquered were essentially equal to themselves and in some ways superior.*

It was certainly right that Christian Europe should bring Christ to the Indians of Mexico and the Andes, as well as to the Hindus and the Chinese, but where they failed was in their inability to *encounter Christ* already potentially present in the Indians, the Hindus, and the Chinese.

It is my belief that we should not be too sure of having found Christ in ourselves until we have found him also in the part of humanity that is most remote from our own. Christ is found not in loud and pompous declarations but in humble and fraternal dialogue. He is found less in a truth that is imposed than in a truth that is shared.

—"A Letter to Pablo Cuadra," in *The Collected Poems of Thomas Merton*

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

### **Hidden Villa summer drivers needed:**

The St. Francis St. Vincent de Paul chapter in East Palo Alto needs camp drivers to ferry 36 children between EPA and Hidden Villa (Los Altos Hills) for the last two weeks of camp starting on August 7 and ending on August 18.

Each week four children need to be picked up at their homes to arrive at Hidden Villa at about 8:45 am. The pickup for the return to their homes is at 4:00 pm. The children stay overnight on Thursday so there is no Thursday evening or Friday morning pickup (the Friday return pickup is at 12 noon).

The hope is that one person will be able to drive either the four mornings for one week or the three evenings for one week. Also drivers for the overnight camp are needed. Three trips to the camp are on Monday, August 7, picking up in East Palo Alto at 9:15 am, 11:15 am and 1:15 pm. Two trips from the camp are pickups at 10:00 am at Hidden Villa on Friday, August 4, and Friday, August 17.

Call George Chippendale, 856-6350, or Ann Idzik, 493-7350, to learn more about this opportunity to help some neat children have a camp experience this summer.

### **PPJC summer film festival continues:**

War, Occupation and the Arts of Resistance, sponsored by the Peace and Justice Center ([www.peaceandjustice.org](http://www.peaceandjustice.org)), continues on August 16 with three half-hour films: *The World Says No to War* documents the massive protests of tens of millions of people throughout the world in opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Sounds and images from 16 countries show passionate and creative reactions to militarism and occupation.

*Standing with the Women of Iraq* interviews Iraqi women and shows some of the actions by Code Pink, Women in Black, and others who have been at the forefront of protests against the war.

*Empire and Oil* examines the recent history of the Middle East and the Iraq War in relation to the desire of Western powers to control "the greatest strategic prize in history."

### **Age of Aquinas hikes:**

Every Saturday in August, Age of Aquinas sponsors a hike and coffee. Meet at the Lakeside Cafe, Shoreline Park, Mountain View, at 9:00 am. For more info, contact Randy Jones at (408) 739-2881 or go to [www.paloaltocatholic.org](http://www.paloaltocatholic.org).

### **Reflections on two anniversaries:**

*Abridged from a paper—Blessed Are the Peacemakers—by Most Rev. Wilton D. Gregory, former president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Though published in 2003, it is still valid today.*

This week marks the anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the first and only use of nuclear weapons in war. Today, we are still confronting the grave moral issues raised by Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the subsequent development of nuclear arsenals, and the tragic history of war and violence of which they are a part. Our society is still recovering from and



seeking to respond to terrorist attacks and threats. Our nation is engaged in continuing military conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan. The United States and the world are urgently seeking to address effectively North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

This is a time to recall, reflect and act upon Catholic teaching on the ethical dimensions of war and peace, nuclear arms and terror. As Catholics, we have two landmark documents to draw upon in this task. Forty years ago, Pope John XXIII, in his encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, offered a fundamental framework for building a just peace. Twenty years ago, our Bishops' Conference, in *The Challenge of Peace*, offered criteria for applying that teaching to our own situation, particularly U.S. nuclear policy. . . . Cold War structures of sin may be gone, but we still must face the bold challenge posed by Pope John XXIII of building an international order based on the four pillars of truth, justice, solidarity and liberty. Communism and apartheid have collapsed, some dictatorial and authoritarian regimes have given way to freedom and democracy, and civil wars in several countries have

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### **Age of Aquinas ball game:**

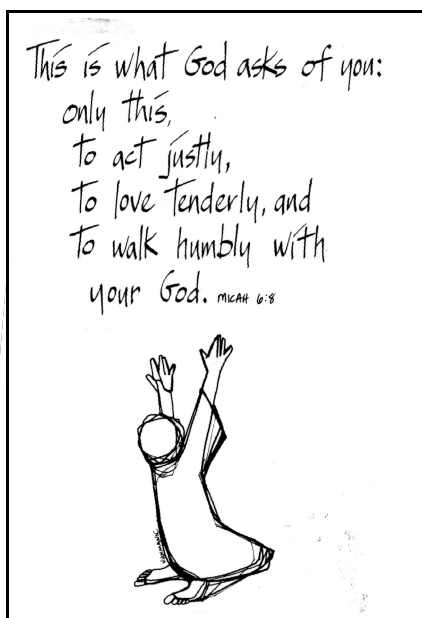
Friday, August 18, Age of Aquinas, a ministry of St. Thomas Aquinas parish to singles 40+, will go to a San Jose Giants baseball game. A Turkey Mike's BBQ at 5:30 pm—ballpark fare and vegetarian dishes—will be followed by the game at 7:00 pm. Wear dark blue and look for a group of similarly clad folks at a table along the third base line. Cost: General admission is \$9; parking is \$6, dinner is about \$8 and up. For more info, go to <http://paloaltocatholic.org/aofa.html> or contact Randy Jones, (408) 739-2881.

# COMMUNITY FORUM

*Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns*

## **Indigenous peoples day:**

This Wednesday, August 9, the anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki, is also the United Nation's International Day of the World's Indigenous People—to call attention to not only their existence but also their plight. Pope John Paul II spoke of our own indigenous people on a visit here in 1999: "If the Church in America, in fidelity to the Gospel of Christ, intends to walk the path of solidarity, she must devote special attention to those ethnic groups which even today experience discrimination. Every attempt to marginalize the indigenous peoples must be eliminated. This means, first of all, respecting their territories and the pacts made with them. Likewise, efforts must be made to satisfy their legitimate social, health, and cultural requirements. Since all people, whatever their race or condition, have been created by God in his image, it is necessary to encourage concrete programs, in which common prayer must play a part, aimed at promoting understanding and reconciliation between different peoples. These can build bridges of Christian love, peace, and justice between all men and women." The following Prayer for Healing for Injustice Against Indigenous Persons can be prayed this week: "Creator Spirit, gather us in as we ask God's forgiveness for the hurt and brokenness caused by our ignorance, fear, and prejudice. We celebrate God's grace as we realize our healed oneness. Creator Spirit, fill us anew with the breath of life in our depths and in the presence of all peoples. Amen."



This passage from Micah is a favorite of Edda Ritson's, a beloved member of the St. Ann community and the Thomas Merton Center, who died two years ago. Please come to the garden after mass and enjoy strawberries in her honor.

## **Reflections on two anniversaries, continued:**

ended. Nevertheless, global terrorist networks have demonstrated a capacity to inflict unimaginable horror, our nation is embroiled in conflict and nation building in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the chaos of failed states and fratricidal conflicts continue to take a terrible toll. We are increasingly interconnected through the process of globalization, yet we must still confront the moral scandal of a world divided between zones of prosperity and stability and zones of deprivation and conflict. . . .



The following questions are among those on which we and others within the Catholic community could reflect as we mark this anniversary and in the days ahead:

- ♥ How can we pursue the "peace on earth," based on "truth, justice, solidarity and liberty," envisioned by Pope John XXIII, in a world marked by deep divisions, systemic injustice and violence, and underdeveloped international institutions?
- ♥ How can we do more to develop the theology, spirituality and practice of peace called for in *The Challenge of Peace*?
- ♥ How can we reject the profane use of religion to justify violence and terrorism and instead, working with other churches and religions, reinforce the role of faith as a force for liberation and peace around the world?
- ♥ What more can be done to develop the tools of non-violent conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace building so that we can fulfill our obligation as citizens and as a nation to work for the avoidance of war?

Will our nation pursue unilateral approaches to a troubled and sometimes threatening world, or will it use its unique strength and influence to engage constructively with other nations in building up the United Nations and other elements of a strong international order envisioned in *Pacem in Terris*? . . .

*The Challenge of Peace* and *Pacem in Terris* call on us to make peacemaking a permanent commitment, an integral part of our Christian witness. This moment and these anniversaries provide an occasion to recover, renew and recommit to the challenge of peace, for much work remains to be done. This is a time not for new statements, but for new reflection, action, advocacy and urgency in the cause of peacemaking. . . .

## ***Catholic bishops issue action alert on Middle East:***

*On August 1, the U.S. Catholic bishops issued an action alert on the Middle East, abridged below. For the full story, go to <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/mideastind.htm#general>.*

Background: The current cycle of violence in the Middle East was precipitated by provocative acts by Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, including cross-border attacks and abductions against Israeli military personnel and rocket attacks against Israeli civilians. Israel has a right to defend its citizens, but its military response has been disproportionate and indiscriminate in some instances, endangering Palestinian and Lebanese civilians and destroying civilian infrastructure. . . . USCCB position: The Holy Father, the Holy See, the USCCB Committee on International Policy and the local Church in the Holy Land have spoken out on the human and moral dimensions of the continuing crisis in the Middle East. In a letter to all members of Congress, Bishop Thomas Wenski, Chairman of the USCCB Committee on International Policy, called on the United States to exercise greater leadership. Bishop Wenski urged the U.S. to work to end the current cycle of violence, condemn all attacks on civilians, secure an effective and immediate ceasefire, open humanitarian corridors, oppose disproportionate and indiscriminate actions, and move toward negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians to advance a two-state solution and ensure the independence of Lebanon.

Action requested: 1. Call the White House comment line at (202) 456-1111, asking the President to support an immediate ceasefire. . . .2. In home district congressional visits during the August recess, use the additional talking points below.

- The horrific cycle of violence in the Middle East is destroying the lives of innocent people on all sides of the conflict as well as the hopes for the necessary negotiations and accommodations that could lead to a just peace. . . .The Catholic community is deeply and urgently concerned about the human costs, the moral implications and future consequences of these unfolding events.
- The USCCB condemns the terror and provocative acts of Hamas and Hezbollah that precipitated the crises. . . .
- Israel clearly has a right to defend itself, but. . .Israel's right to self-defense "does not exempt it from respecting the norms of international law, especially as regards the protection of civilian populations." . . .

For further info, contact Dr. Stephen M. Colecchi, Director, Office of Int'l Justice and Peace, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, (202) 541-3196 or [scolecchi@usccb.org](mailto:scolecchi@usccb.org), or Tina Rodousakis, Catholic Relief Services, (410) 951-7462 or [troudousakis@crs.org](mailto:troudousakis@crs.org).

## **Prayer for Peace in the Holy Land**

Give us ears to hear, O Lord,  
to hear the cries of a people living under occupation,  
of farmers whose land has been taken,  
of parents whose children have been killed or wounded,  
of faithful Muslims and Christians barred from worshiping in  
the Holy City.

Hear our prayers for justice and peace for the Palestinians.

Give us ears to hear, O Lord,  
to hear the voices of those who bear the scars of the Holocaust,  
Of mourners grieving the deaths of those killed in recent conflicts,  
of those who seek new ways of bringing reconciliation,  
Of those whose bright hopes for a "promised land" have ended in despair.

Hear us as we pray for security and peace for the people of Israel.

Eternal God, merciful and compassionate,  
we pray for the people of Israel and Palestine.  
Surround them with the prayers of their sisters and brothers  
around the world,  
strengthen them to witness fearlessly for justice and peace.  
We pray for the Jews of Israel and the Jewish settlers  
We pray for the Muslims of Israel and Palestine,  
We pray for all the children of Abraham—Christian, Jewish,  
and Muslim—  
that justice and peace shall clasp hands and the "Holy Land"  
become truly holy.

—Adapted from "A Service of Prayer for Peace in the Middle East," from a service at Hunter Presbyterian Church, December 19, 2000, <http://www.pepm.org/Prayer>

## ***Declaration of peace:***

The Declaration of Peace is a nationwide campaign to establish by September 21 a concrete and rapid plan for peace in Iraq, including a timetable for withdrawal of troops; a peace process for security, reconstruction, and reconciliation; and the shift of funding for war to meeting human needs. More than forty national anti-war, peace, and justice organizations are participating together in the Declaration of Peace movement. You can sign the Declaration of Peace—and take tangible, non-violent action to end this war and to declare a new era of peace and justice—by going to <http://declarationofpeace.org/sign-the-declaration-of-peace>.

Board: Anna Jaklitsch, 327-0978, [annajak@accesscom.com](mailto:annajak@accesscom.com)

Kay Williams, 328-2781, [kaywill@pacbell.net](mailto:kaywill@pacbell.net)

Bulletin: Michelle Hogan (August 6), Kay Williams (August 13)

Finance: Ed Hannibal, 321-0203, Judy Creek, 493-5371

Hospitality: Jim Davis, 328-2584, George Locke, 854-1539

Liturgy: John Arnold, 325-1421, [jsaoso@earthlink.net](mailto:jsaoso@earthlink.net)

Sally Benson, (408) 972-5843, [red5@svpal.org](mailto:red5@svpal.org)

Membership: Mary Washburn, 327-3915

Spiritual Education: Mary Coady, 261-9155, Jim Davis, 328-2584