



14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 8, 2007

Readings

This week:

Isaiah 66:10–14c

Galatians 6:14–18

Luke 10:1–12, 17–20

Next week:

Deuteronomy 30:10–14

Colossians 1:15–20

Luke 10:25–37

Psalm

Today

Let all the earth cry out to God with joy. (*Psalm 66*)

Today's presider is Msgr. Eugene Boyle.

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, July 9, 7:30 p.m.

Liturgy Committee (location TBA)

Thursday, July 12, 7:30 p.m.

TMC Board, Thomas House basement hall

From Thomas Merton

If we are called to the place in which God wills to do us the most good, it means we are called where we can best leave ourselves and find Him. The mercy of God demands to be known and recognized and set apart from everything else and praised and adored in joy. Every vocation is, therefore, at once a vocation to sacrifice and to joy. It is a call of the knowledge of God, to the recognition of God as our Father, to joy in the understanding of His mercy. Or individual vocation is our opportunity to find that one place in which we can most perfectly receive the benefits of divine mercy, and know God's love for us, and reply to His love with our whole being.

That does not mean that our individual vocation selects for us a situation in which God will become visible to the eyes of our human nature and accessible to the feelings of our heart of flesh. On the contrary, if we are called where we will find Him, we must go where flesh and blood will lose Him, for flesh and blood cannot possess the Kingdom of God (I Corinthians 15:50). God sometimes gives Himself to us where He seems to be taken away.

— *No Man Is An Island* (1955)

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

Welcome new TMC Board members:

Newly elected members to the TMC Board were welcomed at the May meeting and officially took their seats. Mary Coady and Judy Creek were re-elected to Board membership, and Mary Dowley and Patricia Markee began their first terms. This brings the current Board membership up to the nine members called for in the By-laws. In case you don't keep a list of Board members by your phone, here they are:

Mary Coady	Ed Hannibal	Patricia Markee
Judy Creek	Anna Jaklitsch	Henry Organ
Mary Dowley	Barbara Kent	Kay Williams

As stewards of TMC, these individuals are ready for your ideas and suggestions on liturgies, policies, programs, and events that TMC does or might do. Speak to any one of them; most are usually available after the 8:45 a.m. Mass each Sunday morning.

Anna Jaklitsch and Kay Williams are co-presidents, Ed Hannibal is treasurer with Judy Creek being book-keeper, and Barbara Kent is secretary.

TMC Board meetings are held the 2nd Thursday of each month, at 7:30 p.m., in the basement hall of the Thomas House. All are welcome to attend and participate in the discussion. If you have a topic that you would like to bring for formal Board discussion, please contact co-presidents Anna Jaklitsch or Kay Williams (see page 4 for their contact information).

Spiritual Education preview for fall:

Saturday, September 15, 10 am—2 pm, Palo Alto Foothills Park: day of recollection with Sr. Kathleen Deignan, an educator, theologian, composer, and performer, professor of religious studies at Iona College in New Rochelle, New York, where she founded and continues to lead the Iona Spirituality Institute. She has written numerous articles on the legacy of Thomas Merton. She recently edited *A Book of Hours*, by Thomas Merton (reviewed July 6 in *National Catholic Reporter*).

Thursday, October 4, 7:30 pm, OLR Hall—a visit with Ibrahim Issa, co-director of Hope Flowers School in the West Bank near Bethlehem, an independent Palestinian school where peace and democracy education flourish among the Christian and Muslim students. (Co-sponsored with Creative Health Network and other multi-faith organizations.)

Sign up for STA parish eBulletin:

Want to know the latest parish news? Subscribe to the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish eBulletin, sent out each Friday a.m. with last-minute, late-breaking updates on parish events. The STA parish eBulletin is an initiative of our parish Communications Board, <http://paloaltocatholic.org/faire/CommComm.htm> whose ministry it is to improve communications in St. Thomas Aquinas parish.

If you are interested in receiving the eBulletin on a weekly basis, send an email request to ebulletin@paloaltocatholic.org. You will be added to "PaloAltoCatholic-EBulletin@googlegroups.com" which is used to send out the Bulletin each Friday morning. Comments on the eBulletin are welcome and encouraged. Please send to ebulletin@paloaltocatholic.org.



Please remember in your prayers this week Elaine, Chloe Chang, Joanne Claus, Mary Connors, Ken Dias, Barbara Jane Ferrall, Joanne Hasegawa, Dick Jackman, François Jamati, Joseph Kehret, Alicia Kot, Kami Ladd, Carol Locke, Mercedes McCaffrey, Eileen McNevin, Maureen Mooney, Stephanie Mullenix, Joe Narewski, Dorothea Nudelman, Hank Okonski, Lynne Owens, Hayden Pastorini, George Peinado, Ramona Rocha, Anne Rush, George Schardt, Dolores Walsh, and T. J. Wooten. [Add or subtract names by e-mailing the Bulletin editors: Jane Bahr, Michelle Hogan, Kay Williams.]

TMC library is growing:

Have some "spirit" books you have read and wish to share? Donate them to the TMC Library which will open this fall. Roberta Kehret, our volunteer librarian, asks that you NOT give them up at summer garage sales. Instead, please bring them to Mass with you and place them in the metal cabinet downstairs in the Thomas House after Mass. Roberta will direct you.



TMC Needs Net:

[Cut out this reminder and post it on your refrigerator] Do you or someone you know need a helping hand—a last-minute ride, a cat-sitter, help with a computer problem, or the like? Perhaps you know of someone who is too shy to ask for help. That's the time to cast the TMC Needs Net and catch some help for that sudden problem: Roberta Kehret, 494-1488, robkehr@yahoo.com.

Please join us for coffee, juice and pastries after Mass in the Memorial Garden next to the church. If this is your first time at this Mass, or you are visiting today, you are especially encouraged to stop by the garden; we'd like to get to know you. The coffee and doughnuts are free; just come and enjoy. If you want to know more about the Merton Center, ask around at coffee, or contact one of the people listed on page 4.

COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Why bottled water?

[TMC member Richard Placone brings this information to the attention of the membership for proposed action.]

Bottled water manufacturers' marketing campaigns capitalize on isolated instances of contaminated public drinking water supplies by encouraging the perception that their products are purer and safer than tap water. But the reality is that tap water is actually held to more stringent quality standards than bottled water, and some brands of bottled water are just tap water in disguise. What's more, our increasing consumption of bottled water—more than 22 gallons per U.S. citizen in 2004 according to the Earth Policy Institute—fuels an unsustainable industry that takes a heavy toll on the environment.

Fossil fuel consumption. Approximately 1.5 million gallons of oil—enough to run 100,000 cars for a whole year—are used to make plastic water bottles, while transporting these bottles burns thousands more gallons of oil. In addition, the burning of oil and other fossil fuels (which are also used to generate the energy that powers the manufacturing process) emits global warming pollution into the atmosphere.

Water consumption. The growth in bottled water production has increased water extraction in areas near bottling plants, leading to water shortages that affect nearby consumers and farmers. In addition to the millions of gallons of water used in the plastic-making process, two gallons of water are wasted in the purification process for every gallon that goes into the bottles.

Waste. Only about 10 percent of water bottles are recycled, leaving the rest in landfills where it takes thousands of years for the plastic to decompose.

The next time you feel thirsty, forgo the bottle and turn to the tap. You'll not only lower your environmental impact but also save money—bottled water can cost up to 10,000 times more per gallon than tap water. And because the U.S. EPA's standards for tap water are more stringent than the FDA's standards for bottled water, you'll be drinking water that is just as safe as, or safer than, bottled. If, however, you don't like the taste of your tap water or are unsure of its quality, you can buy a filter pitcher or install an inexpensive faucet filter to remove trace chemicals and bacteria. If you will be away from home, fill a reusable bottle from your tap and refill it along the way; travel bottles with built-in filters are also available. Finally, limit your bottled water purchases for those times when you're traveling in countries where water quality is questionable.

—*Greentips Online*, June 2007

Consideration of bioethics:

In the summer of 2003, the renowned bioethicist Daniel Callahan testified before President George W. Bush's Council on Bioethics, which was gathering material for a report on stem-cell research. Stem-cell research holds a therapeutic promise so enormous that even some pro-life advocates support it, despite its use and destruction of embryos. The scientists on the council, like most of the researchers who testified that day, seemed to feel an obligation to move ahead with it. Would Callahan, one of the founders of the field of bioethics, go against the grain of this consensus?

... The seventy-three-year-old Callahan was emphatic: It is a mistake, he told the council, to think that we have an obligation to pursue stem-cell work—or medical research generally, for that matter. Medical progress is certainly an important social good, but it must be weighed against competing social goods, such as education or decent housing. What's more, Callahan insisted, many of the diseases that stem-cell research might address, like cancer and heart disease, are illnesses of the old, and we must ask whether extending the human life span by a few more years through new treatments for these diseases is worth the cost.

Some of the scientists on the council seemed fairly stunned that Callahan would suggest fixing public education instead of attempting to cure cancer, or would de-prioritize research on treatments for diseases afflicting the elderly. After all, here was a founding father of bioethics, an elected fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Science, the recipient of numerous honorary degrees, a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize—in short, someone who should be able to understand how crucial their research is—and he was calling it comparatively unimportant.

... Indeed, for nearly forty years Callahan has been writing and lecturing about medicine's need to accept human finitude and recognize competing moral and social-justice claims. Almost every one of the shelf full of books he has published since the early 1970s has explored these themes in one way or another. Whether he is stressing the social implications of bioethical decision making, the need to emphasize caring rather than curing, or the importance of foundational questions of meaning over questions of procedural justice, Callahan has sought to explore the folly of what he calls the "gospel of medical progress"—namely, the idea that

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medicine brings the good news of liberation from death and dying. If it is possible to speak of modern idolatry, Callahan says, medicine's spurious promise of an infinitely postponed mortality is it.

... A good place to start [learning more about Callahan's work] is with his 1990 critique of the American health-care system, *What Kind of Life*, a book that contains most of the recurring themes in Callahan's work. In it, he sets out systematically to demythologize medicine by showing how, distracted by the "glamour" of curing patients, medicine has lost sight of the surpassing importance of caring for the sick and vulnerable. Callahan reminds us that the suffering caused by sickness and death can be reduced but never overcome, and that the best that medicine can do is to be committed unequivocally to care. He is eloquent about what caring requires. "At the center of caring," he writes, "should be a commitment never to avert its eyes from, or wash its hands of, someone who is in pain or is suffering, who is disabled or incompetent, who is retarded or demented; that is the most fundamental demand made upon us." ...

Throughout his career, Callahan has sought to shine a light on the role of illness and death in human life, and to bring these difficult topics into our public conversation about health care and the human being. No one has done more to show us the problems that arise when we fail to do this. When we do not confront the proper place of illness, suffering, and death in human life, we too easily succumb to the dangerous illusion that, through technology, we can become as gods. It was precisely this conversation that Callahan was trying to spark in his testimony before the President's Council in 2003. To assume that if we do not conduct stem-cell research, then the blood of those who die will be on our hands—an argument, he told the council, that molecular biologist and Nobel laureate Joshua Lederberg had made to him about medical research generally—is to surrender to the fantasy that we are god-like in our powers. This danger was what he was urging the President's Council to discuss, and what the scientists in the room seemed not to comprehend.

Perhaps their incomprehension reflected a discomfort at the religious implications of what they were hearing. The fact is, though Callahan understands himself as a secular ethicist, others may not. In the words of Gilbert Meilaender, who is a member of the President's Council and sympathetic to Callahan, "Dan raises what are essentially religious questions." (It should be noted that Meilaender is not "persuaded that Dan's secular answers go as deep as the questions he's raising.") ...

Given Callahan's background as a deeply committed Catholic and his decade-long engagement with the best of the Catholic intellectual tradition, it is not hard to see the soil from which some of his deepest convictions grew. His insistence that death "is an enemy but not the enemy," his conviction that the "flight from dependency is a flight from humanity," his belief that caring is at least as important as curing—all were nurtured by his Catholic past, even if that is not what sustains them any longer.

Toward the end of *The Troubled Dream of Life*, Callahan warns that it is not enough to provide compelling arguments about the proper understanding of illness, aging, and death in human life; we also need new images of human mortality. We need the right image because in confronting our mortality we are dealing with a level of consciousness that is "deeper than that which can be wholly influenced by our logic and arguments."

—excerpted from an article in *Commonweal*, June 1, 2007, by Paul Lauritzen, ethics professor at John Carroll University.

Preachers all:

In today's gospel, the new, empowered preaching teams sent out by Jesus must have been excited as a tent preacher at a revival.

The little girl in the front row clutched her mother's arm as the dramatic preacher's tempo and volume increased. He flailed his arms about and his message was heating up to fever pitch. Wild-eyed, the preacher lurched from side to side, dragging the long cord that led up to his lapel microphone. In his excitement he tripped on the cord and ended up down on one knee, tangled in the wire.

As he struggled to get loose and regain his footing the frightened little girl whispered to her mother, "If he gets loose will he hurt us?"

Jesus sends all of us out to preach and proclaim the Good News. He empowers us to do more than we ever imagined. We don't have to perform; we only need to be the example of love that we already are.

—Dick Folger, *Celebration*, July 2007

