



15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 16, 2006

Readings

This week:

Amos 7 :12-15
Ephesians 1:3-14
Mark 6:7-13

Next week:

Jeremiah 23:1-6
Ephesians 2:13-18
Mark 6:30-34

Psalm

Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation. *Psalm 85*

Today

Today's presider is Fr. George Aranha.

The Thomas Merton Center community worships and celebrates Sunday liturgy each week at the regularly scheduled 8:45 a.m. 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

Sunday, July 16, after all Masses
Monday, July 17, 7:30 pm

Open House at Homer House next door
Spiritual Ed. Team, STA

From Thomas Merton

... To really know our "nothingness" we must also love it. And we cannot love it unless we see that it is good. And we cannot see that it is good unless we accept. . .our moral and metaphysical helplessness before God.

To love our "nothingness" in this way, we must repudiate nothing that is our own, nothing that we have, nothing that we are. We must see and admit that it is all ours and that it is all good: good in its positive entity since it comes from God: good in our deficiency, since our helplessness, even our moral misery. . .attracts to us the mercy of God. To love our nothingness we must love everything in us that the proud man loves when he loves himself. But we must love it all for exactly the opposite reason.

... The humble man loves himself, and seeks to be loved and honored, not because love and honor are *due to him* but because they are *not due to him*. He seeks to be loved by the mercy of God. . . He begs for a share in what everybody else has received. . . to be filled to overflowing with the kindness and mercy of God.

—*Thoughts in Solitude*

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

Flower power needed:



The altar is bare! During these summer weeks of Ordinary Time, after the lilies are gone and the roses are withered, we need to soften the altar at St. Thomas Aquinas Church with greenery and blooms of the season. Could you help with this necessary and graceful task? We need a couple of people who could share the duties of purchasing flowers and potted plants and arranging them on the altar each week during the summer. With enough helpers, the duty would be reduced to once a month. Basic instruction will be given; the parish pays for the flowers and plants. Flowers need to be in place by the start of 7:30 a.m. Sunday Mass. The need is pressing! Please don't be shy! Come forward to help provide this important act of stewardship for our STA Mass communities. Please contact: Sally Benson at (408)-972-5843 or email her at red5@svpal.org.

Summer retreats:

Presentation Center in the Santa Cruz Mountains above Los Gatos is offering several retreat opportunities this week:

July 22: *Soul Visioning: Discovering Your Soul through Artwork.* Explore what makes your heart sing and solidify the vision for your life and soul, with Suzanne Coll, OD Consultant and Intuitive Coach.

July 17-24 (also three dates in August): *Eight-Day Guided Imagery and Music Retreat* with Dominican sister Joan King and her retreat staff. Call (415) 924-9252 for more information about this retreat.

Vallombrosa Center, 250 Oak Grove Avenue, Menlo Park:

July 21-23: *Women Searching, Women Connecting* A retreat for women led by Ursula Caspary-Frankel, MFCC; Jack Frankel; and Monica Barnes. This retreat will look at our sense of belonging, our connections, all that unites us and divides us in this fear-

Please remember in your prayers this week Elaine, Msgr. Gene Boyle, Tom Carmody, Chloe Chang, Joanne Claus, Mary Connors, Ken Dias, Joanne Hasegawa, François Jamati, Joseph Kehret, Alicia Kot, Joan Kuhn, Kami Ladd, Chris Lippart and family, Carol Locke, George Locke's nephew George, Judy Mendelsohn, Maureen Mooney, Stephanie Mullinex, Joe Narewski, Lynne Owens, George Peinado, Nora Peinata, Ramona Rocha, Anne Rush, Dolores Walsh, Virginia Worthington, and Rosamond, Chris, and Janie, friends of Jean Gill.

Open house today at Homer House:

The St. Thomas Aquinas Site Committee is happy to invite all parishioners to an open house of the renovated 2 story apartment building at 423 Homer Ave., next to the church. Coffee and sweet breads will be offered before and after each Mass at Homer House. This property belongs to the parish but has been vacant for several months while much needed repairs and upgrades were done. Suitable tenants must be found for each of the two apartments in the building, but while the building is empty, come and see it. Perhaps you know someone who might be interested in renting an apartment in this desirable location in downtown Palo alto. If so, contact the parish office.



PP&J summer film festival:

The Peninsula Peace & Justice group, of which our parish is a member, is sponsoring a Summer Film Festival of twelve films—on War, Occupation, and the Art of Resistance—on four Wednesday evenings at the Unitarian Universalist Church, Palo Alto. The sliding scale donation is \$5-15.

July 19 at 7:30 pm, three one half-hour films featuring independent filmmakers.:

The Real Face of the Occupation: How the U.S. military occupation looks from the other end of the gun barrel.

Dance of Death-the American Military in Iraq: Lambs led to the slaughter or centurions for the Empire?

The Art of Resistance: the invigorating impact of artists and cultural performances in resistance to war.

John Duryea in Oaxaca:

and Eve Duryea in Oaxaca on page 3 of this bulletin. For the full text of this report go to www.duryea.tirfing.com and click on [trip report](#).

To order the book of John's pictures of hikes go to www.lulu.com/content/212010.

To order a DVD of a conversation with John go to www.lulu.com/content/240083.

To see pictures of the upstairs apartment they have prepared as a rental go to www.paginaprodigy.com/evedebona.

Community Forum

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

John Duryea at 88:

In January, 2006 Gladys Low, Sören Tirfing, Ragni and Marc Pasturel spent 5 days in Oaxaca, Mexico to celebrate John Duryea's 88th birthday.

Marc writes: We presented him with a book of his mountain photos and a video by about 50 Palo Alto friends wishing him a Happy Birthday. This was a moving experience for both John and Eve.

We also video-recorded an 80 minutes interview of John. I expect you'll find it an enchanting throw-back to the sermons that fed your soul some 40 years ago and seem so current today. How enlightening and refreshing to hear from a learned old man ready to die that he no longer tries to tell what's right and wrong, doesn't know, and is at peace with what's coming.

"Juanito", as Eve affectionately addresses him now, is aging gracefully despite severe physical handicaps in sight and mobility. It is understandably difficult for this cultured man to let go of the pleasure of reading. He now has great hopes that books-on-tape from the local Anglophone library will bring him a much-needed diversion.

Walking the bad sidewalks and traffic-intensive streets of Oaxaca is difficult and risky. But John is resolute about walking, albeit very slowly. He ventures outside with the help of his "third leg," but he doesn't need it inside where there are no steps on the ground floor.. He uses taxis whenever he feels "shaky". Their house is close to the taxi-and-bus central but getting out of taxis is painful and awkward.

Hearing is also declining. It's difficult for John to take part in a group conversation, especially in a noisy restaurant. John's first experience with hearing aids in California was not successful and now he does not think it's worth the money for another attempt.

The most exciting part of being with John again is to experience his sharp mental abilities. Seeing him navigate the many streets of Oaxaca for the benefit of all around, including Eve, reminded me of his extraordinary knowledge of the mountain geography and trails. While he has trouble participating in a group conversation, Eve frequently taps his encyclopedic knowledge by asking him a question pertinent to the discussion. His retrieval is quick and to the point. I strongly encourage you to view the video interview of him.

Another trait is his increased gentleness. He calls Eve a tender "Sweetheart" and often reaches out

Let's have a revolution! by Anne Lamott:

Leave your cellphone, bring some fruit, and protest—with kindness—what has happened to our country.!

I'm drawn to almost any piece of writing with the words "divine love" and "impeachment" in the first sentence. But I know the word "divine" makes many progressive people run screaming for their cute little lives, and so one hesitates to use it. Also, we all know that there isn't going to be an impeachment any time soon.

However, maybe there is the chance of a calm, polite revolution, and perhaps in lieu of "divine love" we could use the idea of simple "kindness." Consider, just for the sake of argument, how good people, in a democracy that has been taken over by cold, rich, scary, armed white men, might proceed.

Good people who have watched their country's leaders skid so far to the triumphal right would have to do something. I mean, wouldn't they? Am I crazy? Otherwise, those people's children will ask them someday, when we are all living in caves, "What did you do to try and save us?" And the children will be so angry, and they are so awful and unpleasant when they are mad, even in the dark. I, for one, do not want to answer that I did nothing, or that I ranted and flailed, showing up to support my own interest groups, candidates and concerns.

Instead, I think we should lay down our differences, and have a revolution. I am wondering if July 16 works for everyone. [It's pretty close to Bastille Day, July 14]

In this revolution, there will not be any positions except kindness, and libraries. We will not even have a battle cry, as that can lead to chanting, and haranguing: Hey, hey, ho, ho, all that chanting's got to go! We would simply look one another in the eyes, shake our heads, and say, "This just can't be right." We will not try to figure out what it all means: Iraq, Guantánamo, Abu Ghraib, Terri Schiavo, abortion rights, the Downing Street Memo, domestic spying, immigration, the Kyoto Accords, the Geneva Connections, Tom DeLay -- none of it. We all know what kindness means, and I think we can all agree that libraries are sacred, and our revolution will decree that we will fight tooth and nail for these things, politely.

Mostly we will show up and say things like, "Giving India massive nuclear assistance? I don't know -- that just can't be right." "Madge, maybe I'm nuts, but John Bolton, at the U.N.? Can that be

John Duryea at 88, continued:

to gently rest his hand on her shoulder. My sense is that it is the consequence of his increasing physical dependency and end-of-a good-life peace.

John does not want to reach a very old age, say 100. In Eve's words "he's just starting to forgive the doctor who resuscitated him from his cardiac arrest". He seems prepared to die with a serenity that is exemplary to us all.

When asked what he misses the most of life in America, John replied with an emphatic: "My friends!!!....". After our first evening together he made the observation to Eve that he'd felt for the first time that their new house of a few months finally felt like "home".

After 5 years and 5 residences, John and Eve are now settling into a spacious house they own and have extensively and very nicely remodeled. Their street is called "street of the little birds" (Calle Pajaritos), a 2-block long wide drab street with a few phlegmatic ragged dogs including one calling the shots from a rooftop across the street. The neighbors should be happy because No. 207 with two freshly painted stories is a definite improvement to the neighborhood.

Adjustments to the local culture is still at hand. It is difficult to accept that Mexican would-be friends do not reciprocate with an invitation to their home after seemingly enjoying themselves at parties you organize in your home. The question of one's acceptance in one's new environment is always a big one for a lone immigrant. This feeling of isolation is offset however by four good women friends, two of them Mexicans:

Eve's first Spanish teacher, a Mexican and her Swiss husband made John & Eve honorary grandparents of their son Mateo. John's only priestly function in Oaxaca was to baptize Mateo and bless the mother after delivery.

a Zapotec Indian carpet weaver of a nearby village has allowed an intimate friendship across the cultural divide,

a Canadian Jungian analytical psychologist has provided precious coaching given her experience of Oaxaca,

an American retired ex-journalist and ex-art dealer turned writer. We met her at a restaurant one-candle birthday dinner and enjoyed her company very much.

On the morning of our departure John walked half an hour to our hotel in order to be with us until the end. Eve, in the midst of remodeling, was busy managing her crew of workers. As we were talking about John's genealogy at the breakfast table, Ragni encouraged him to record his memoirs. Then Gladys had the idea of a recording for the benefit of the 50 whose greetings we had recorded as

Let's have a revolution, continued:

(Continued from page 3)

right?" We would all show up [to commemorate] Bastille Day, propelled by the ferocious, heartbroken belief we've carried since childhood, that America is a republic, of 50 states, united and humane. It would be nice if everyone would turn off his or her cellphone and also, I thought we could all wear green -- not because we have an environmental position we are pushing, but because trees, grasses and the natural world are just so incredibly beautiful and precious.

Additionally, it would be great if everyone could bring a bit of fruit to share, and maybe a few dollars, in case one runs into someone desperately poor. Fruit is a nice touch. Apples, oranges, it doesn't matter, and it would not be mandatory that you bring any fruit at all. Maybe we'd sing "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." No offense in that, really, is there? But we won't sing that if it is going to stir up a lot of debate and screeds and distraction.

We will show up and foment a loving revolution, wearing green: I just looked up "foment," to make sure that this is what I meant. It comes from the Latin "fomentum," which means a warm poultice. One of the definitions is to apply a warm cloth, dipped in warm water or medication, to a body that needs healing; and that is exactly what I meant. I'm thinking noon-ish.

—Abridged from an essay by Anne Lamott, March 29, 2006. Submitted by Barbara Kent.

a wonderful birthday present to John. We decided we had the time to implement it immediately.

Stay tuned to be able to watch and hear John not only express his appreciation but comment on a broad number of topics: how he views his and Eve's expatriation to Mexico, the history of three generations of his ancestors, religion, John Paul II and Benedict XVI, how reading C.S. Lewis in his late thirties triggered his liberation from the rigid Catholic doctrine, the Bible, the Nicene Creed, his brush-off of the Intelligent Design fundamentalist concept, his approach to daily meditation, and his acceptance of dying.

—Abridged from a report by Marc Pasturel to Palo Alto friends of John Duryea.

There is an abbreviated report of a visit with John

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