



# 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

November 12, 2006

## Readings

*This week:*

I Kings 17:10-16  
Hebrews 9:24-28  
Mark 12:38-44

*Next week:*

Daniel 12 1:3  
Hebrews 10:11-14, 18  
Mark 13:24-32

## Psalm Today

Praise the Lord, my soul! *Psalm 146*

Today's presider is Fr. Daniel Kiriti.

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

Today, Sunday, November 12, 7:00 p. m. Fr. Daniel Kiriti speaks, St. Albert the Great Hospitality Room

Monday, November 13, 7:30 p. m. Liturgy Team, Location TBD

## From Thomas Merton

... Democratic society is founded on a kind of faith: on the conviction that each citizen is capable of, and assumes, complete political responsibility. . . democracy assumes that the citizen knows what is going on, understands the difficulties of the situation, and has worked out for himself an answer that will help him to contribute, intelligently and constructively, to the common work (or "liturgy") of running his society.

For this to be true, there must be a considerable amount of solid educational preparation. . . A genuine formation in those intellectual and spiritual disciplines without which freedom is impossible.

There must be a completely free exchange of ideas. Minority opinions, even opinions which may appear to be dangerous, must be given a hearing, clearly understood and seriously evaluated on their own merits. . . Religious beliefs and disciplines must be respected. The rights of the individual conscience must be protected against every kind of open or occult encroachment.

... One cannot expect this to be realized in all the citizens of a democracy. But if it is not realized in a significant proportion of them, democracy ceases to be an objective fact and becomes nothing but an emotionally loaded word.

What is the situation in the United States today?

—*Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*

# Community Notes

*News Announcements Requests*

## **Fr. Kiriti speaks today, November 12:**

Fr. Daniel Kiriti is visiting from Kenya this month. **Come for a conversation with him today, November 12, 7:00 p.m., at St. Albert the Great Hospitality Room.** Hear about his parish work, the orphanage—especially the littlest resident Toleo, who



was left on the doorstep last summer in a brown paper bag—and the high school students, especially the girls, who are eagerly anticipating the opening of the first year of the new girls' high school. Fr. Kiriti hopes to see many friends, old and new, at this meeting.

## **Gift cards benefit Fr. Kiriti's girls' school:**

For the person who doesn't need anything, in the way of material gifts for the coming holidays, consider purchasing a gift card that benefits the St. Francis Xavier Parish School for Girls, currently under construction. Gift cards are available for each donation of \$10 or more and include the story of the dream for the school and photos of the construction in progress. Contact Margo McAuliffe, 650-322-0821, [margomc2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:margomc2@sbcglobal.net).

You can also start—and perhaps finish—the rest of your holiday shopping right here. Fr. Kiriti has brought purses and shopping bags and greeting cards and other gift items made by local Kenyans. You will find them for sale in the Memorial Garden after

## **Age of Aquinas Thanksgiving plan:**

Any of you who are on your own for the holiday are invited to join Age of Aquinas, a Bay Area group for Christian singles 40+, for *Thanksgiving Dining Out*, Thursday, November 23, 2006, at David's Restaurant, 5151 Stars and Stripes Ave, Santa Clara, CA 95054. No host.

RSVP to [age-of-aquinas@paloaltocatholic.org](mailto:age-of-aquinas@paloaltocatholic.org), or by phone to Randy Jones (408) 739-2881 before Wed. Nov. 22.



Please remember in your prayers this week Elaine, Msgr. Gene Boyle, Chloe Chang, Joanne Claus, Mary Connors, Ken Dias, Joanne Hasegawa, François Jamati, Joseph Kehret, Alicia Kot, Joan Kuhn, Kami Ladd, Carol Locke, Maureen Mooney, Stephanie Mullinex, Joe Narewski, Hank Okanski,

Lynne Owens, Hayden Pastorini, George Peinado, Nora Peinata, Ramona Rocha, Anne Rush, Norm & Jane Shirle, Dolores Walsh, and T. J. Wooten.

Add or subtract names from this list by e-mailing the three Bulletin editors: Jane Bahr, Michelle Hogan, Kay Williams. See page 4 for e-mail addresses.

## **Thanksgiving giving:**

Thanksgiving is coming! Those of us blessed with abundance look forward to sharing at this time of year. Our partnership with East Palo Alto Saint Vincent de Paul provides an opportunity for us to share our fortune. Here are ways you can help: **Sorting and packing boxes** will start on Friday, November 17th at 6:30 pm and continue on Saturday the 18th, at 9 am at Saint Francis Church Hall, 1435 Bay Road, East Palo Alto. **The boxes will be delivered** to the families starting at 12pm on Saturday, November 18th. If you would like to make a contribution, checks can be sent to Saint Vincent de Paul, 1425 Bay Road, East Palo Alto 94303 or placed in the collection basket at Sunday masses.

For further information please call George Chippendale at 856-6350 or Ann Idzik 493-7350.

## **Food closets in need!:**

During November and December, the holiday months and the cold months, we are encouraged to bring more non-perishable food and drop it in the baskets in the vestibule of the church. Staple items are especially welcomed: cereals, canned soups, fruits and vegetables, pasta, rice, beans, canned meat and the like. Let's make the Thanksgiving baskets for hungry neighbors plentiful.

## **Network Catholic Social Justice Lobby:**

*NETWORK sends the following message:*

**Congress wasn't working - we now have a change!** Thanks to all of you for getting out the vote, and voting for the common good. This election has shown that politics is not separate from faith, as spiritual convictions lead people to vote for candidates who are authentic in their concerns about poverty, creation, unity, peace, and human rights. This election, along with our Declaration of Independence, also reminds us that Congress is elected "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

However, elections are just the first step. Now our representatives must demonstrate that they've heard that people are hungry for policies that promote the common good. We need to do our part to make sure they don't forget why we elected them.

NETWORK will continue to send weekly e-mail legislative updates when Congress is in session. You can sign up to receive these updates, if you have not already done so, by going to <http://capwiz.com/networklobby/mlm/signup/>.

We look forward to working with you and the 110th Congress!

# Community Forum

*Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns*

## **John Dear, S.J., on the road to peace:**

*Abridged from Why I'm going to the SOA protest by Fr. John Dear, printed in National Catholic Reporter, 11/7/06.*



Each year around Nov. 16, nearly 20,000 people gather at Fort Benning, Ga., outside the gates of the notorious "School of Americas." The school has trained some 64,000 Central and South Americans, many of

whom have gone on to commit murder and torture as members of Latin American death squads -- a sinister distinction that has earned the place the more infamous title, the "School of Assassins." The yearly protests are by now as rooted as the Georgia pines and have the Pentagon on the defensive. The Pentagon's first official response was a PR move. A name change came down. They now call the place "The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation."

The name has changed, but nothing else. The place still trains the aristocracy's thugs to brutalize the campesinos. There soldiers enroll in such courses as Counterinsurgency, Psychological Warfare, Military Intelligence and Interrogation Tactics. There soldiers study how to target Latin American educators, union organizers, catechists, student leaders, human rights workers, priests and nuns.

I've gone four times already and was arrested with thousands of others in 1998 and 1999. But why go again? What good comes of it? I'm going for several reasons.

"Every known terrorist training camp must be shut down," said George W. Bush. I'm going to demand just that. The SOA brings no democracy to our sisters and brothers in Latin America. It brings only death. A truly democratic institution would ensure the well-being of every adult and child through only nonviolent methods. A school promoting democracy would teach nonviolence and proudly embrace the name "Institute of Nonviolent Cooperation."

I'm going because some months ago I visited Colombia, where I witnessed the sinister fruits of the SOA. There I met Jesuits who suffer under daily death threats because they publicly work for human rights. There I met hundreds of mountain villagers who sur-

**"Every known terrorist training camp must be shut down," said George W. Bush**

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## **Spiritus Christi Church, Rochester, N.Y.:**

*While at the 30th Annual Conference of Call To Action in Milwaukee last weekend, I attended a beautiful liturgy presented by Spiritus Christi Church of Rochester, New York. Here is a little of their story, as excerpted from their brochure and from National Catholic Reporter, January 27, 2006.*



Thirteen hundred people gathered at Salem United Church of Christ on December 24, 1998 to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. It was also the birth of Spiritus Christi Church. All who came were members of Corpus Christi Church of Rochester, New York, and they had experienced extraordinary events in the past four months.

Although the parish was deeply involved in works of justice and service to the poor, the Vatican had trouble with three practices dear to the heart of Corpus Christi parishioners: the prominent role of women on the altar, the blessing of gay unions and the offering of Communion to those who were not Catholic. Fr. Jim Callan, administrator for twenty-two years, was removed on August 13. Subsequently, Mary Ramerman, 15 years the associate pastor, was fired without any benefits, and ultimately, on December 14, six other staff members were abruptly fired. These were the "saints", the people who had devoted their lives to serving the poor: the director of the Prison Ministry, the director of Dimitri Recovery House, the family minister, the Adult Education director, the hospitality minister, and the volunteer staff resident of Pearl House, the Prison Ministry's home for women ex-offenders. All were fired without any benefits. The following night, an ad hoc group raised over \$30,000 to support the fired staff.

By Christmas Eve 1998, many people had decided they wanted to form a new community that would be inclusive. The New Faith Community held its first weekend Communion Services on February 13-14, 1999. Over 1100 people attended. (Ten days later, the diocese declared that the members of the new community had "excommunicated themselves.") By August, the community had made three major decisions: to raise the tithing from 12% to 15%; to name the community Spiritus Christi Church; and to begin the first outreach, Grace of God Recovery House. A house was purchased and over \$80,000 was raised for the new ministry in just three months.

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Please join us for coffee, juice and pastries after Mass 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. If you want to know more about the Merton Center, ask around at coffee, or contact one of the people listed on page 4.

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vived the massacre of their villages -- and their loved ones. Their blood stains the hands of death squads, soldiers and paramilitaries -- trained by the U.S. at the SOA.

There I saw our nation's participation in the stealth of Colombia's natural resources and the assassination of those who get in the way. Over the last 20 years, some 200,000 Colombians have been killed. Thirty political assassinations a day take place -- an astounding figure that leaps from the statistics file into my heart.

I'm going to the SOA protest because it's one of the best organized and more hopeful events in the church and the country. And it's one of the best examples of active nonviolence in our history. Its founder, my friend Fr. Roy Bourgeois, and his team, took the movement directly to South America this year and convinced the governments of Venezuela, Argentina, Uruguay and Bolivia not to send their troops to Georgia. And pressure grows in Congress for legislation that will put the SOA out of business.

I'm going to the SOA protest because Jesus himself was a victim of arrest, imprisonment and torture. And he died at the hands of imperial death squads. As one trying to be his follower, I want to side with him as he sides with the victims of the U.S. empire around the world -- from El Salvador to Colombia to Iraq. And I go to the SOA protest because I'm haunted by Ignacio Ellacuria and the other Jesuit martyrs of El Salvador. I worked with them for several months in 1985, four years before they were assassinated. They sent me and a few other young U.S. Jesuits to work in harassed refugee camps. Death squads lurked about, and on the occasions they approached, I went out to greet them. Perhaps the conspicuous presence of a North American would avert violence. And so when they appeared, I hauled my trembling bones to the gate, all the while U.S. aircraft crisscrossed the sky and unleashed bombs in the near distance. Through my fear, I managed to learn a thing or two about faith, hope and love. It was the suffering people, and most of all the steadfast Jesuits who taught me best.

Fr. Ellacuria, a renowned theologian, philosopher, and university president, said "if you [want] to promote the reign of God, you have to stand up publicly, actively, against the anti-reign. You can no longer say you are for peace and justice unless you publicly, actively stand up against war and injustice." Turns out it's what Gandhi had taught decades earlier: "Non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as co-

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The parish also voted to adopt a statement of identity: "We are a Christ-centered Catholic community reaching beyond the boundaries of the institutional church to be inclusive of all."

There remained the question of how to ordain women. A group of twenty-five people studied the issue for two years, then sponsored an international women's ordination conference in July 2000. The following year Mary Ramerman was ordained by Bishop Peter Hickman of the Ecumenical Catholic diocese, representatives of Spiritus Christi, and the Catholic and interfaith clergy from around the world. Nearly 3000 people were in attendance at Eastman Theatre. Denise Donato was ordained in 2003.

Both women are married mothers of three.

**... a Christ-centered Catholic community reaching beyond the boundaries of the institutional church to be inclusive of all.**

Rev. Ramerman explains, "even though I wasn't the assigned leader from the diocese, [after Fr. Callan was removed as pastor of Corpus Christi parish] people saw me as the leader. I think I realized probably for the first time that the possibility of

ministry in the church is a privilege doled out by men to women. If you are working for a benevolent pastor who is comfortable with women, you can do a lot of things: preach, visit the hospital, etc., but if that pastor changes, all of a sudden you can be told your only job is to carry the little water vessel up to the sanctuary." Approachable and confident, Mary loves celebrating Mass, preparing homilies, counseling parishioners, making hospital visits. Spiritus Christi has continued its tradition of ministry to the poor. It sponsors a parish home for ex-offender women and their children, a 24/7 home for men in recovery from alcohol and drug addiction, a health center which serves people who lack health insurance, the Chiapas Mission which supports coffee growers and a credit union in that state in Mexico, and a mission in Borgne, Haiti which funds a health clinic, mill, credit union, water purification and educational programs.

— submitted by Jane Bahr

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