



# First Sunday of Lent

March 5, 2006

## Readings

*This week:*

Genesis 9:8-15

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:12-15

*Next week:*

Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18

Romans 8:31b-34

Mark 9:2-10

## Psalm

Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant. (*Psalm 25*)

## 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

O my God, I don't care about anything; all I know is that I want to love You. I want my will to disappear in Your will. I want to be one spirit with You. I want to become all Your desires and thoughts. I want to live in the middle of Your Trinity and praise You with the flames of Your own praise. O my God, knowing all this, why do You leave me alone in my selfishness and in my vanity and pride, instead of drawing me into the midst of Your love? My God, do not delay any longer to make me a saint and to make me one with You, and do not delay to live in me. And if it requires sacrifice, You will give me the courage to make all sacrifices. You will consume me in Your own immense love. So do not be afraid of my weakness, O God, because You can do everything. I believe in Your love above all things. I have forgotten everything else (that is, I want to). I live for Your love, if You will only make me live so.

—*Dialogues with Silence*

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*

### ***Friday film series:***

The Friday film series continues on March 10 with *Wet-back* (90 minutes, 2004), an award-winning film about five Nicaraguans, with no documents and little money, as they make their way north.

Films are at the Unitarian Hall, 505 E. Charleston.

There is discussion and socializing after each screening. Suggested donation is \$5-10.

### ***Speakers for Lent:***

The Adult Spiritual Formation team of the parish has been assembling some sterling speakers for Lent.

On Wednesday, March 8, at 7:00 pm at

OLR, **Rev. D. Andrew Kille** will speak on *Healthy Spirituality*. Rev.

Kille, a popular speaker with a PhD in Psychology and Biblical Studies from the GTU, is a Baptist minister. He is a private consultant on ecumenical and interreligious topics, and author of *Psychological Biblical Criticism* as well as several articles on psychology and the Bible.



On Friday, March 17, at 7:00 pm at St. Albert the Great, **Fr. Ronald Rolheiser** will speak on *Beliefs, Struggles,*

*Doubts: How Do We Sustain Our Faith?* Fr. Rolheiser is another popular speaker and writes an award-winning column on spirituality that appears in *The Valley Catholic* and more than fifty other publications worldwide. His latest book, *The Holy Longing*, has sold more than 75,000 copies worldwide.

### ***Vatican III at Stanford:***

As part of Professor Tom Sheehan's class *New Pope, New Church*, his Stanford students are putting on a Third Vatican Council, addressing issues in Catholicism ranging from the ordination of women priests, homosexuality, priestly celibacy, liturgy and ecumenism. The date is March 15, at 7:30 pm on the Stanford campus, and location is yet to be announced. Call Mary Coady ([650] 261-9155) for more information.

### ***Singles events:***

On Saturdays, Age of Aquinas a ministry of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish for singles 40+, sponsors a Shoreline/Baylands hike. Meet at the end of San Antonio Road at 9:00 am. Afterward, gather for coffee at Peet's in Charleston Plaza (Charleston and Middlefield).

### ***Justice speakers forum:***

Ascension Parish in Saratoga is sponsoring a Justice Speakers Forum based on the justice writings of Pope John Paul II. The next meeting is Monday, March 20, with Joseph Hastings, West Coast Director of Catholic Relief Services, speaking on *In the Words of John Paul II: Creating Networks of Peace*. Registration begins at 7:15 and the program is from 7:30 to 9:00 pm. Admission is free, though a \$5 free-will donation is suggested (refreshments will be served). Call Fr. Charlie at (408) 725-3939 for more info.

### ***Brian Steidle on Darfur:***

Ascension Parish (12033 Miller Avenue, Saratoga) also invites us to hear Brian Steidle on Tuesday, March 7, at 7:30 pm. A former U.S. Marine who recently spent six months as a ceasefire monitor with the African Union force in Darfur, he is an eyewitness to the genocide and comes with photos, story, and thoughts on how to end the ongoing genocide there. "According to Mr. Steidle, the State Department has ordered him on three occasions to stop showing his photos, for fear of complicating our relations with Sudan," says Nicholas Kristof of the *New York Times* (Sept. 18, 2005). For more info, call (650) 218-7028.

### ***Multifaith Voices on ending the war:***

March 18-19 marks the third anniversary of the Iraq war. With prayers and songs and the help of the Clarence the Camel puppet, gather with people of all ages and faiths to recommit yourself to the ways of life, truth and community in an interfaith service for peace on Saturday, March 18, 11:00 am, at All Saints' Episcopal Church, 555 Waverley, Palo Alto. Following the service attendees will march two blocks to join the anti-war rally at noon at Palo Alto City Hall Plaza. Sponsored by Multifaith Voices for Peace and Justice ([www.multifaithpeace.org](http://www.multifaithpeace.org)). Call (650) 569-3416 for info.

### ***Church leadership and ethics:***

Santa Clara University Lectures on Church Leadership, Ethics, & the Future begin on Tuesday, March 7, with a talk by James Keenan, S.J., 7:30-8:30 pm, in the Williman Room, Benson Memorial Center, Santa Clara University. Free and open to the public. For more information, call the Ignatian Center at (408) 511-1951. Fr. Keenan teaches at Boston College and is professor of moral theology at Weston Jesuit School of Theology.

## *Lent 2006—Living simply:*

Lent 2006. How to give meaning to a time we have been through so many times before? Fr. Mike Marini (today's celebrant) has written down some suggestions for our consideration:

"I'd like to get away from the narrow question of 'what am I doing for Lent?' and open us up to the wider question 'what will I do during this season to further my conversion to gospel living, i.e., living simply, living justly, living prayerfully?' . . .

"Living simply would mean doing without things. For instance, there's clutter in the closets of most of us. Things we don't use but think we might use some day. Paring things down to what we need AND use will free us from annoyances like trying to find stuff in the midst of a kind of plenty that has turned into clutter.

"This is the beginning of a lifelong commitment to live simply. In this kind of life, for example, you never get another pair of shoes without getting rid of a pair you already have.

"So what do you do with that pair of shoes and all the rest of the stuff you need to get rid of? That's where almsgiving or living justly comes in. What we are not using can be of use to others, especially those who have less than we do. So think of people you know personally, think of Catholic Charities, St. Vincent de Paul, and the whole array of nonprofits waiting for what you have so that it can give them to those who have not. Or you can have a garage sale and give your surplus away by giving the proceeds to an individual or charitable organization. . . .

"Prayer can be an accompaniment to this exercise—thanking God that we have what we need and asking for the grace to enrich the lives of others by giving away what we don't need."



So our theme for Lent 2006 is **Living Simply**—by using Fr. Marini's suggestions, but also perhaps by spending money more mindfully, by considering giving more volunteer time, by planning meals and shopping for food more carefully, by spending your time and energy nurturing people rather than things, and so on. The challenge for this Lent is to find ways to live more simply "so that others may simply live."



### *Operation rice bowl:*

The Rice Bowl that you'll be handed as you leave today is a symbolic representation of the small amount of food (often rice) on which many people in the world subsist each day. It signifies the hunger issues faced by our brothers and sisters around the world, and the hope of a better future. You can contribute to this future during Lent. If you give up a restaurant meal, place the savings in the rice bowl as a donation to Catholic Relief



Services (1.2 billion people worldwide subsist on less than \$1 per day). Or if you walk where you might otherwise have driven, donate the savings to the rice bowl (Americans contribute 25% of the world's greenhouse gases through their consumption of fossil fuels). On Palm Sunday we will offer our rice bowls at the offertory of the Mass.

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, Carol Locke, Judy Mendelsohn, Maureen Mooney, Stephanie Mullinex, Barbara Narewski, Joe Narewski, Lynne Owens, George Peinado, Nora Peniata, Ramona Rocha, Anne Rush, Dolores Walsh, Fr. Tenny Wright, and Rosamond, Chris and Janie (friends of Jean Gill).

### *Living simply so others may simply live:*

Albert Schweitzer was once asked why he traveled second class. "Because there is no third class," he reportedly replied.

For most of us, living on enough would mean living on less—fewer gadgets, fewer clothes, and an end to impulsive buying, for example. . . .

There are several arguments to be made in favor of scaling back. The first is that it is simply better for us. . . . A second case to be made for simpler living is that it is kinder to God's creation. . . . A third argument is that living more simply may enable people who are barely surviving to live. Simpler living does that, however, only if you take steps to transfer resources to people whose lives are at risk. Eating less and spending less on food might be good for your health. . . . But it isn't going to feed anyone unless, say, you contribute the amount saved to a good bank, a relief and development agency, or a group advocating for hungry people. The foundation for all three reasons is love for God and love for neighbor. Simpler living should not be an end in itself. As the millennium turned, almost 800 million people were chronically undernourished—living constantly without enough food. . . .

The point is not that a simpler style of life would eliminate hunger and poverty (it would not) but that a life given to God becomes focused on what God wills. Because God desires love and justice for the poor, we

### ***Living simply, continued:***

must desire the same. Because a life given to material excess violates God and those who lack the bare necessities, surrendering that life to God and by grace living a new way in Christ, is also what God desires. For most of us, that means, among other things, spending less time and money on ourselves and becoming far more generous to those who are impoverished. That would be at least one giant step toward addressing the scandal of hunger.

—*How Much Is Enough?: Hungering for God in an Affluent Culture*, by Arthur Simon. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003.

### ***Immigrants gain the pulpit:***

Wading back into the growing debate over illegal immigration, Cardinal Roger M. Mahony [of the Los Angeles Archdiocese] on Tuesday denounced what he called “hysterical” anti-immigrant sentiment sweeping California and the nation. In an interview on the eve of Ash Wednesday, Mahony said he planned to use the first day of the Lenten season to call on all 288 parishes in the Los Angeles Archdiocese, the nation’s largest, to fast, pray and press for humane immigration reform. U.S. Roman Catholic bishops support proposals for a guest-worker program, legalization of undocumented immigrants and more visas for migrants’ families. Mahony also criticized efforts by the Minuteman Project and other immigration control groups to police the border, saying that such efforts were a misguided reaction to national security concerns. . . .

As spiritual leader of the 5 million-member archdiocese, Mahony adds a powerful voice to what has become an acrimonious debate over illegal immigration, coming as the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee takes up a series of proposed immigration controls this week. In his most forceful comments to date, Mahony said he would instruct his priests to defy legislation—if approved by Congress—that would require churches and other social organizations to ask immigrants for legal documentation before providing assistance and penalize them if they refuse to do so. . . .

—By Teresa Watanabe, *Los Angeles Times*, 3/1/06

### ***Diane Rejman on Vietnam visit:***

Sunday, March 12, at 7:00 pm at the First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 1140 Cowper St., Palo Alto, Diane Rejman, who just returned from a trip to Vietnam with Global Exchange, will show her slides and discuss the trip. The group met with many individuals and groups, and one member of the group, Susan Schnell, was awarded the Vietnamese Medal for Peace and Friendship Among Nations.

### ***“Affluenza”:***

The things we want are not necessarily bad. . . . The problem is that the desire to have more of the things we want is addictive. It can begin to define life and its aspirations, and soon take control. . . . Behind this culture of mammon lies a widespread myth that God and life in God are nice but largely irrelevant. . . . The problem is not that we’ve tried faith and found it wanting, but that we’ve tried mammon and found it addictive, and as a result find following Christ inconvenient. . . .

Jesus wants to transform our purpose in life from one of getting to one of giving. . . . We are called to see creation through the eyes of God, as an awesome miracle unfolding before our eyes. . . . Our stewardship involves the whole of life—anything and everything that has been entrusted to us. . . . Most of the time the way we follow Christ is by serving others. . . .

—*How Much Is Enough?*, by Arthur Simon

Zen teaches that we should sit in meditation as if a samurai were standing in front of us with sword upheld, ready to kill us with a single stroke. In this way, we constantly face death. And the time comes when, liberated from the fear of death, we are filled with enlightenment and joy. The point is clear: When we empty ourselves of our fears—fear of failure, fear of loss, fear of criticism—we become free to do what needs to be done in life. The purpose of Lent is the same thing. Is you Lent freeing you from the fears that are holding you back from living life to its fullest? Fear is what we should be giving up for Lent.

—Sr. Joan Chittester

### ***Catholic worker house:***

Larry Purcell writes from the Catholic Worker House for troubled teens in Redwood City that life has been “electric” for the past several months. “. . . On March 1st our fourth teen arrived from a battered women’s shelter (there is only one in the entire county). . . . As I work with these teens, I see them as victims of our way of life. Our life is fast. Our families are being pulled apart. Money is valued more than spirit and people. . . . And poor people at home and abroad are used so that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.” Larry’s needs for March are food, a microwave, a DVD player, blankets, full-time live-in workers and a dentist to take a few cases a year. Call (650) 366-4415 to help out.

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Board: Anna Jaklitsch, 327-0978, annajak@accesscom.com  
Kay Williams, 328-2781, kaywill@pacbell.net  
Bulletin: Michelle Hogan (March 5 and 19); Jane Bahr (March 12);  
Kay Williams (March 26)  
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  
Sally Benson, (408) 972-5843, red5@svpa.org  
Membership: Mary Washburn, 327-3915  
Spiritual Education: Mary Coady, 261-9155, Jim Davis, 328-2584

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Newsletter submissions must be e-mailed by Friday noon or phoned by Thursday, 9:00 pm. For Kay, e-mail kaywill@pacbell.net or phone 328-2781; for Michelle, myhogan@earthlink.net or 493-8452; for Jane, BahrJunior@comcast.net or 967-8246.