



30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 28, 2018

Readings

This week:

Jeremiah 31:7-9

Hebrews 5:1-6

Mark 10:46-52

Next week:

Deuteronomy 6:2-6

Hebrews 7:23-28

Mark 12:28b-34

Psalm

The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy. (*Psalm 126*)

Today

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 am parish Mass at St. Thomas Aquinas Church. Members of the Thomas Merton community plan 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 by check or cash, every Sunday there is a donation basket in the back of Church or by the coffeepot after Mass—or you can use the envelope in the bulletin the last Sunday of every month to mail your donation. Please do not put your TMC donation in the collection baskets passed during Mass (these are for parish contributions only).

Calendar

No meetings this week. November 1 is All Saints Day; see parish bulletin for Mass times.

From Thomas Merton

It is all too easy to look at the saints as extraordinary heroes. But Thomas Merton, in No Man Is An Island, reminds us to seek the glory of God in the ordinary:

It is supreme humility to see that ordinary life, embraced with perfect faith, can be more saintly and more supernatural than a spectacular ascetical career. Such humility dares to be ordinary, and that is something beyond the reach of spiritual pride. Pride always longs to be unusual. Humility not so. Humility finds all its peace in hope, knowing that Christ must come again to elevate and transfigure ordinary things and fill them with His glory.

—walktheway.wordpress.com

COMMUNITY NOTES

News Announcements Requests

Shultz to speak in Seton fundraiser:

Thursday, November 8, beginning with a wine reception at 6:00 pm and talk at 7:15 pm, The Honorable George Shultz will be in conversation with Professor Philip Taubman at St. Elizabeth Seton School, 1095 Channing Avenue. Taubman is writing the official biography of former Secretary of State Shultz. This is a fundraiser for St. Elizabeth Seton School, and you can get tickets at www.brownpapertickets.com or by calling (650) 326-1258.



Hennessy books still available:

There are still autographed copies of *Dorothy Day: The World Will Be Saved by Beauty* by Kate Hennessy available for purchase for \$12. See Jim Davis after Mass in the Thomas House if you'd like a copy.

Seton School library needs volunteers:

Seton School turned its library into offices about a year ago, and the library books still need to be cataloged before being installed in other classrooms. Vicki Sullivan is looking for volunteers to help with this project on Mondays and Fridays, 9:30-11:30. You can contact her at (650) 740-0124, or e-mail vickisullivan@comcast.net.

Blankets? Sleeping bags?:

Do you have any blankets or sleeping bags that need a new home? Our parish, through the Human Concerns Committee, will be collecting them for reuse by homeless people who come to St. Francis of Assisi church in East Palo Alto, to our parish St. Vincent de Paul, and to the Opportunity Center in Palo Alto.

Throughout the month of October, boxes will be in the vestibules of our three churches. What you are not using will be given to others who need a warm wrap at night during the coming winter months.

Thanks from the parish Human Concerns Committee (also endorsed by the Green Committee as a reuse event).

A Thomas Merton Center envelope is included in the bulletin the last Sunday of each month. Your donation makes possible our monthly contribution to St. Elizabeth Seton School; our spiritual education programs, weekly bulletin, and other publications; and hospitality after Mass and at other meetings. We need your support—please be generous!

Altar of Remembrance will be back in November:

On November 7 when you come to Mass, you'll see that our annual Altar of Remembrance is up, in front of the Mary altar. It is themed on the Mexican tradition of the Day of the Dead, when our deceased loved ones are remembered and honored. At St. Thomas Aquinas, we are invited to bring photos of our loved ones whom we want to remember during November and place them on the altar. If you bring pictures, be sure to label them on the back with your name and phone number, so they can be returned to you if you forget to pick them up. The altar will be up through November, and will be taken down after the 25th, before Advent begins on December 2.



Kenyan crafts fairs:

Each year Margo McAuliffe brings home crafts from Kenya that are sold at craft fairs like the one here earlier this month.

The mission of Kenya Help is to educate and train women, children and youth in Kenya by providing resources and support. It has no paid positions, and operating costs were approximately 3.3% of the 2013 budget, so 96.7% of your donation goes straight to Kenya. There are three more crafts fairs coming up between now and Christmas: Sunday, November 11, 11:00-2:00, First Presbyterian Church

Saturday, November 17, 10:00-5:00, Flegel's Furniture in Menlo Park

Tuesday, December 4, 6:00-8:00, St. Gregory's Women's Club, San Mateo

Kenya Help is a non-profit foundation with 501(c)(3) status. If you shop on Amazon, consider designating us as your AmazonSmile beneficiary. Just click the image above or use the link at the Kenya Help website.

Please remember in your prayers this week: Denise Alonghi, George Bouchey, Tom Carmody, George Chipendale, Mary Connors, Mike Cummings, Ken Dias, Pat Dietrich, Dick Freeman, Fr. Thierry Geris, Deonna Gill, Emily Gill, Jean Gill, Joanne Hasegawa, Fr. John Hester, Dean Judd, Dick Jackman, Hunter Kubit, Alicia Kot, Fr. Bill Leininger, Andre and Alyssa Lippard, Deacon Ysidro and Dolores Madrigal, Mary Rose McGuire, Maureen Mooney, Hayden Pastorini, Paul Prochaska, Anne Rush, Priya Smith, Bernice Sullivan, Jean Vistica, Dolores Walsh, Kay Williams, and T.J. Wooten.

COMMUNITY FORUM

I d e a s O p i n i o n s R e f l e c t i o n s C o n c e r n s

It is never truly enough:

By Amy Morris-Young, who teaches writing at Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles, at ncronline.org, October 20, 2018.

I hear myself saying the word fine a lot lately. “How are you?” “Oh, fine. Fine. Thanks for asking. How are you?” It’s what we say, isn’t it? The expected response. But I am far from fine. I am in the moral crisis of my life. I feel like a [1940s] German watching camps being built. Knowing full well what they are for. And doing nothing about it. Next month will be two years since our current president was elected. His campaign promises included banning all Muslims from our country and building a wall along the US-Mexico border. According to the FBI, hate crimes against people of color spiked the day after that 2016 election to more than double the usual daily number, and have remained elevated since. By the following August, we watched the white-nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, turn violent and then deadly. One anti-racism protester was murdered, two police officers died, and 34 people were injured. Two months later, in October 2017, we learned that along our border with Mexico, approximately 2,700 children were separated from their parents who were attempting to migrate to the U.S. without legal papers. Since the January 2017 inauguration—per the president’s campaign promise to target undocumented Mexican immigrants with criminal records—raids by our Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) of businesses and public places like schools have quintupled. Fewer than 25% of those arrested had criminal records, but were imprisoned or deported. Families were split apart as well. When asked what was happening to the children, our then Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly said they were being sent into foster care, “or whatever.” The estimated number of immigrant children in detention centers or our foster care system nationwide is nearly 13,000. . . . The *Boston Globe* reported that “children were taken by Border Patrol agents who said they were going to give them a bath.” After hours passed, only then did the parents realize that “the kids were not coming back.” This resonates chillingly of Nazi guards in concentration camps telling Jewish mothers that they were taking their children into the showers. Of course, those showers were not created to cleanse, but to exterminate. In the mid-1980s, when I was teaching at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, our department secretary was a middle-aged lady named Rose, who had a thick German accent. One sunny afternoon, we sat together with our sack lunches on the faculty terrace. I

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Letting go when you’re holding on:

By Julie Peters, October 11, 2018, at spiritualityhealth.com.

As the seasons shift from light, bright summer to the darker, more serious and more reflective fall season, I’m thinking about harvest time. It’s a good time to prioritize and protect what’s working in our lives and make an effort to cut away the dead branches, to weed the garden. It’s a good time for letting go.

Lately I’ve been thinking about letting go not only as a passive release, but as an active choice. I want to take responsibility for how I participate in keeping certain toxic routines or environments or people around. So many of the things in our lives that exhaust us or make us cranky are things we do to ourselves. Letting go is sometimes a question of honestly considering how we’re holding on.

There’s always a reason why we do the things we do. We take on too much because we’re afraid of what we might feel in the stillness.

We stay in bad relationships because we’re terrified of being alone. We smoke cigarettes or drink too much or overeat because there’s nothing in this world that calms us down faster. We know we have a few bad habits, but we do them because



we enjoy them, or because they protect us from feeling the things we’re afraid to feel, or simply because we’ve always done them, despite the consequences. We know we should stop but we don’t really want to, in our heart of hearts. We try to let go while we hold on for dear life. . . . It’s not easy to let go of old habits, of course, so I added another phrase to my fall contemplations: “How can I support myself to let go?” Change doesn’t only happen on the intellectual level. We have to actually take action, to face our fears and anxieties and make space for what we do want. And the truth is, it is uncomfortable.

Growth is usually pretty uncomfortable.

In order to let go, we need to figure out why we’re holding on. It’s usually not so much the thing itself that we’ve got in a white-knuckle grip, but the underlying fear of what will happen if we let go. When we can address the fear and find other ways to protect ourselves or calm our anxiety, we’ll need the toxic habit less.

Lots of yoga and mindfulness practice is about listening

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It is never truly enough, continued:

don't remember exactly how the conversation started, but I imagine I asked Rose how and when her family came from Germany to the United States. I do remember that as she told me how her family emigrated here in 1946 after World War II ended, her voice became steadily quieter, until she was almost whispering, like a dying leaf detaching from its branch and falling to the ground. She said her family had lived across the street from a concentration camp. That they had watched the Nazi soldiers and the ragged Jewish laborers build it. How when she walked back and forth between their home and school and the market, she saw the children on the other side of the fence. How at night, she and her sister would sneak out into the dark and lob apples over the barbed wire into the camp. How if they had been caught, they and their family could at the least have lost their home and business, or at worst, been imprisoned or executed. Her eyes filled as she told me, "But, it was not enough." Almost 40 years later, it was clear that her feelings of guilt and helplessness were as sharp as they had been when she was 15 years old.

I am a busy lady. I spend the bulk of my time and energy caring for our adult disabled son Nick and our youngest grandchild Mary. I am also a Catholic. The lyrics from the hymn "Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers, that you do unto me"—based on Matthew 25:40—seem to be embedded in my DNA and course through me many times each day.

So, I try to do what I can when I can for those I perceive as vulnerable and dehumanized. I go to Mass. I pray. I donate some money. I donate some stuff. I sign some petitions. I share information on social media. I vote. But I truly fear it will be, as Rose said all those years ago, not enough. Not even close.

Letting go when you're holding on, continued:

to our intuition, following our heart, and doing what feels good. But a huge chunk of the work of mindfulness is figuring out how to be uncomfortable in the service of growth. Changing a habit, standing our ground, and letting go can be so stressful they make us want to barf. Mindfulness allows us to sit with those sensations and relax, to let them be present without racing around doing whatever we can think of to make it stop. So this week, I'm letting myself be uncomfortable. I'm doing my best to sit with my urge to jump to old habits to ease my discomfort and let it flutter around in my stomach. I'm doing my best to stay true to the choices that I know are best for me, at least for now. I'm taking a few deep breaths and reminding myself: "I release you."

Every child at the border belongs to all of us:

Abridged from an article by Leo J. Donovan, SJ, October 5, 2018, at americamagazine.org.

Who are the children whose terrified faces we have seen in images from our southern border as they were literally torn from their mother's arms? They were, yes, Mexican and Salvadoran, Guatemalan and Honduran. But whose were they also and truly?

... Jesuit Refugee Service/USA is clear about its care.

We urged the U.S. government to ensure that people are not criminally punished for trying to seek asylum and that the rights and dignity of children and families entering the United States are respected. U.S. policies calling for the indefinite detention of families seeking asylum are contrary to Catholic teaching and violate the rights of asylum seekers and the dignity of children and their families. They also put at risk the long-term mental health and well-being of children and their parents. . . . We stand on the principle that commitment to the common good is the presupposition for our very right to freedom and democracy. In accord with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations. . . and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we see this vision as indeed the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. International law, we believe, is likewise foundational for the cooperation and common good of nations today. . . . These are not partisan or "liberal" positions. They are expressions of humanity seeking to be true to itself and its future.

... We have also been inspired by the converging convictions of the major faith traditions. . . . The biblical witness speaks repeatedly of welcoming the stranger. And in the parable of the good Samaritan, we see that the stranger in need is our neighbor indeed. The refugee is not really "a stranger" but one of us, part of us, someone without whom we are literally less. Exclusionary rhetoric raising the specters of the dangerous, the infected and the criminal "other" is not simply a morally unacceptable characterization of migrants. It is an indictment of ourselves. The children at the border—at any border—are not "someone else's," even granting, of course, the primary rights of their parents. They are our children.



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