



Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 14, 2018

Readings

This week:

Samuel 3:3b-10, 19

Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20

John 1:35-42

Next week:

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Corinthians 7:29-31

Mark 1:14-20

Psalm

Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will. (*Psalm 40*)

Today

Today's presider is Fr. Larry Percell.

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

Monday, January 15, 7:00 pm

Spiritual Education, Thomas House

From
Thomas
Merton

Into this world, this demented inn
in which there is absolutely no room for him at all,
Christ comes uninvited.
But because he cannot be at home in it,
because he is out of place in it,
and yet he must be in it,
His place is with the others for whom
there is no room.
His place is with those who do not belong,
who are rejected by power, because
they are regarded as weak,
those who are discredited,
who are denied status of persons,
who are tortured, bombed and exterminated.
With those for whom there is no room,
Christ is present in this world."

—*Raids on the Unspeakable*

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

Monthly Fish Fry is January 19:

The STA Site Committee is hosting its monthly Fish Fest supper on January 19 at 6:00 pm in the Thomas House. Enjoy traditional fish and chips, coleslaw, beer and wine—and whatever dessert or side dish you'd like to contribute (definitely not required).



Newcomers, oldsters, children, guests—enjoy the camaraderie of a shared meal. The post-prandial sing-along will be led by guitarist Paul Procheska.

Do not overlook the RSVP instruction below, so we know how much fish to buy! A donation of \$5 per person would be appreciated. Water and lemonade are gratis; beer or wine is \$2 a glass. RSVP to Helen Baumann at hbaumann@aol.com or (650) 327-9236.

Volunteer opportunity:

Helping low-income taxpayers:

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance is an IRS-sponsored program to help low and middle income workers file an income tax return and receive the refunds and credits they are due. To sign up for this volunteer program, go to <http://earnitkeepitsaveit.org/volunteer>.

The time commitment includes training for Tax Law, training in TaxSlayer (the software used to prepare tax returns) and 3-4 hours a week from late January to mid-April at your choice of many locations in the Bay Area. There is no cost for the training. No prior experience is necessary. Training classes have started, and there is also an online program to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. For more information, contact Paul Chestnut at pcchestnut@comcast.net.

Seton school 2018-2019 applications:

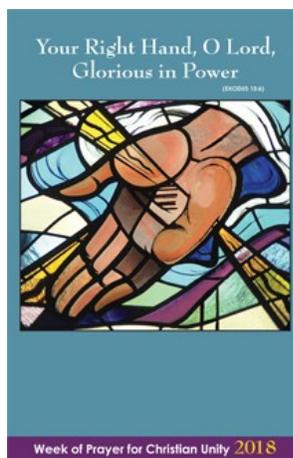
Applications for new students for 2018-2019 at St. Elizabeth Seton School are now available in the school office and at setonpaloalto.org for all grades including the Little Saints Preschool. Preschool applicants must be 4 years old by September 1, 2018. Kindergarten applicants must be 5 years old by September 1, 2018.

There will be an Informational Meeting/Open House for parents of Pre-K and Kindergarten applicants on Wednesday, January 24, at 7:00 pm in the school auditorium. Readiness testing for the Full-Day Kindergarten will begin in February.

There will be an Open House and Science Fair on Wednesday, January 31, 7:00–8:30 pm. Interested applicants are welcome to join us at this annual Open House.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity January 18-25:

The theme of this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is *Your Right Hand, O Lord, Glorious in Power* (Exodus 15:6). According to Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute, "Throughout the Biblical narrative of salvation, an unmistakable motif is the unrelenting



determination of the Lord to form a people whom He could call His own. The formation of such a people, united in a sacred covenant with God, is integral to the Lord's plan of salvation and to the glorification of His name. The prophets repeatedly remind Israel that their covenant demanded that relationships among its various social groups should be characterized by justice, compassion and mercy. Reconciliation

often demands repentance, reparation and healing of memories."

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has a history of more than 100 years, in which Christians around the world have taken part in an octave of prayer for visible Christian unity. By annually observing the WPCU, Christians move toward the fulfillment of Jesus' prayer at the Last Supper "that they all may be one" (cf. John 17:21).
—uscgb.org

Quaker spirituality: *Unfolding the mystery:*

This week's Spirituality Tuesday Assembly topic is *Quaker Spirituality; Unfolding the Mystery* with Forest Preston and Eric Sabelman, members of the Friends Church of Palo Alto. Come to the Saint Albert the Great Hospitality Center; 7:00-8:30 pm, to learn more about the history, worship and personal faith stories of our guest speakers.

Forest Preston is a 10th generation Quaker, and is a graduate of Cornell University (BS in Electrical Engineering) and Stanford University (MS in Electrical Engineering). Eric E. Sabelman, PhD, is a biomedical engineer in the Neurosurgery Department of Kaiser Permanente Hospital in Redwood City, California, working on Deep Brain Stimulation for treatment of Parkinson's disease. He is an adjunct lecturer in Santa Clara University's Department of Mechanical Engineering, where he teaches a graduate course on medical device design.

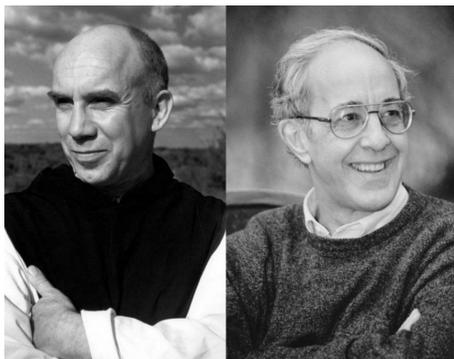
COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Nouwen and Merton left trails for spiritual seekers to follow:

Abridged from an article by Patricia Lefevere, a longtime NCR contributor, at ncronline.org.

Both Catholic priests, Nouwen and Merton centered their lives on the Eucharist. Both were deeply responsive to the suffering of others, said Jim Forest of the Netherlands, who knew Nouwen and Merton, calling them “spiritual parents” during certain periods of his life. Both priests were excellent confessors and counselors, he said, adding that “both made it possible for me to reveal parts of myself that were painful, awkward and embarrassing.” Nouwen, born in the Netherlands, and Merton, born in France and educated in Britain, were at home on two



U.S. secular campuses—Yale for Nouwen and Columbia University for Merton, where he completed both his undergraduate and master’s degrees in the

1930s and became a Catholic at nearby Corpus Christi church in 1938. Nouwen later taught at the Harvard Divinity School in the 1980s.

Merton and Nouwen authored more than 100 books between them, which have sold some 22 million copies and been translated into more than 30 languages.

The priests wrote the books at a time when the word “spirituality” wasn’t really present in the English language, said Oblate Fr. Ron Rolheiser, himself a leading spiritual writer and teacher in the Merton-Nouwen tradition. Rolheiser, president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, recalled how restricted was the concept of spirituality in Catholic circles when these men were first writing their books—from the late 1940s to the mid-1990s—and how suspect was the notion of spirituality in Protestant and Evangelical circles.

But their pioneering work has spawned a large swell of spiritual writers and led to a growing acceptance of the genre in Catholic, Protestant and Evangelical milieus. The gradual—if often reluctant—acceptance of spirituality as a respected academic discipline has led to the birth of schools of theology and institutes whose mission it is

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American individualism is destroying the soul:

By Rev. Carlos Malavé, executive director for Christian Churches Together, a forum of more than 35 churches and Christian organizations that encompasses the broad diversity of Christianity in the U.S.—Evangelical, Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Pentecostals, historic Protestant, Racial and Ethnic churches. Published in Sojourners and at sojo.net.

I am very mindful of Dante’s words: “The darkest places in hell are reserved for those who maintain their neutrality in times of moral crisis.”

Coming together from all streams of American Christianity to speak in opposition to cuts on the safety-net programs is no minor achievement. We have a widespread consensus on the priority of providing essential life saving support to poor people in our country. We also agree that the ultimate goal is to create a just society in which everyone live an abundant life that includes meaningful work with fair salaries, affordable health care and education, and time for leisure and recreation.

In order to achieve this, our political leaders must renounce rigid political ideologies. These ideologies are destroying the fabric of our nation and the hopes of our people. As disciples of Jesus, we will continually call our elected leaders to reject all allegiances to groups or corporations that do not advocate and serve the majority of Americans.

We have gone astray for too long from life in community. The prevailing immoral American individualism is destroying the soul, common decency, and the kindness of our people.

In this frantic pursuit of riches and power, we are trampling our neighbors. The few are denying the masses of a future, of their dignity.

Proverbs: 22:22-23 says “Do not rob the poor because they are poor, neither oppress the afflicted; for the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those who spoiled them.”

We are here because we believe in a different world. We believe in a world where all have life in abundance. We are here because we cannot accept a federal budget that steals from the poor in order to increase the coffers of the powerful, a budget that enshrines war and tramples the poor.

God is calling men and women from all walks of life, including President Donald Trump and the U.S. Congress to “see that justice is done, and let mercy be our first concern.”

Newsletter submissions must be e-mailed or phoned by Thursday, 9:00 pm. For Kay, e-mail kaywill@pacbell.net or phone (650) 328-2781; for Michelle, e-mail myhogan@comcast.net or phone (650) 468-3386.

Nouwen and Merton, continued:

to teach spirituality, even award doctorates in it, Rolheiser added. He called Nouwen “a struggling saint, one-in-progress,” adding the priest never fit the pious profile of a saint though he was always recognized as a deeply spiritual man.

His readers identified with him because Nouwen shared his struggles so honestly. “He related his weaknesses to his struggles in prayer and, in that, many readers found themselves looking into a mirror.” When Rolheiser first read Nouwen, “I had a sense of being introduced to myself.”

...The weekend at Yale Divinity School offered a glimpse of just how important the spirituality of these two men still is to the many assembled: men and women, young and old, lay and ordained from different confessions and a variety of occupations. Robert Ellsberg, publisher of Orbis Books, reminded the audience that both Merton and Nouwen were constantly restless spiritual explorers. Both men grew up in Europe, but lived more than 30 years in the United States and made many sojourns within America as well as traveling all over the world. Merton journeyed to Cuba, Bermuda, Rome and Asia while Nouwen lived in Bolivia, Peru, France and Canada. Both were moving toward an interior geography of the soul, said Ellsberg, a long-time friend of Nouwen who served for some years after Nouwen’s death in 1996 as a member of his literary trust.

Ellsberg said that Merton realized his vocation was far more than being in a certain place—like the Abbey of Gethsemani, where he lived 27 years—or wearing the habit of a Trappist monk. “There are too many people in the world who rely on the fact that I am serious about deepening an inner dimension of experience that they desire that is closed to them,” Merton wrote on June 22 1966. “And it is not closed to me,” Merton wrote. “This is a gift that has been given me not for myself but for everyone....I cannot let it be squandered and dissipated foolishly. It would be criminal to do so.”

On September 10, 1966, Merton signed a short formula in which he committed himself “to live in solitude for the rest of my life.” His resolve came following an affair he’d had with a student nurse when he was a surgical patient in a Louisville, Kentucky, hospital. While the temptation to abandon his vocation had vexed him for weeks, he returned, Ellsberg said, to the idea that had first attracted him to the abbey, to the idea that the monks through their prayers and their faithfulness, were in some way keeping the world turning

...Ellsberg recalled that Nouwen stood in a crowded lecture hall in the 1970s, jotted the date of his birth, 1932, then another date, 2010, on the board followed by a question mark. ...Nouwen returned to the blackboard, drew

A simple creed:

I just returned from a New Year’s retreat during which the presider, Fr. Anthony Gittins, invited us to write our own creed for 2018, something we all might want to try. He shared with us his A Simple Creed:

I BELIEVE in God, Creator of an unfinished world, a world in process, Who does not decree an eternal plan in which we cannot participate.

I BELIEVE in God who has not discriminated and divided people into “developed” and “developing” countries, the poor and the rich.

I BELIEVE in Jesus, born poor, born in difficult times, who came to understand the conditions of his own local world, and who took such a courageous stand for justice and peace that it cost his life.

I BELIEVE in Jesus who lives for all people so that all people may truly live, and so that we may all become free and help to transform the world.

I BELIEVE in the Spirit of God who breathes life into all creation.

And **I BELIEVE** in the community of all persons:

Women and men and children,
Strangers and aliens, immigrants and refugees.
Those who are poor, homeless and oppressed,
Those who are old and ailing, sick and dying
And those who experience any kind of disability.

I BELIEVE in our common human responsibility for making the world a more fit place for every human person to live.

I BELIEVE that it is possible to build a just peace and care for a livable earth.

I BELIEVE that a life full of meaning and value is the right of every person everywhere and I commit myself to making some serious changes in my own lifestyle in order to bring about clearer signs of the Realm of God on earth.

Amen.

a line from one end of it to the other and announced: “I have come from somewhere and I am going someplace else.” Nouwen was inviting his students and readers to accompany him on a journey ever deeper into the heart of the divine mystery, Ellsberg said.

“Whether Henri found the home he was seeking is something he alone knows,” he said. “But in his prolific writings, as much as Merton, he left a trail for fellow seekers.”

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