



Third Sunday of Easter

April 15, 2018

Readings

This week:

Acts of the Apostles 3:13–15, 17–19

1 John 2:1–5a

Luke 24:35–48

Next week:

Acts of the Apostles 4:8–12

1 John 3:1–2

John 10:11–18

Psalm

Lord, let your face shine on us. (*Psalm 4*)

Today's presider is Fr. Xavier Lavagetto, O.P.

Today

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

Monday, April 16, 7:00 pm TMC Spiritual Education Committee, Thomas House Library

Saturday, April 21, 3:00 pm Video on Taizé founder, Br. Roger, TH Basement Hall

From Thomas Merton

We cannot be ourselves unless we know ourselves. But self-knowledge is impossible when thoughtless and automatic activity keeps our souls in confusion. To know ourselves, it is not necessary to cease all activity in order to think about ourselves. That would be useless, and would probably do most of us a great deal of harm. But we have to cut down our activity to the point where we can think calmly and reasonably about our actions.

We cannot begin to know ourselves until we can see the real reasons why we do the things we do, and we cannot be ourselves until our actions correspond to our intentions, and our intentions are appropriate to our own situation.

But that is enough. It is not necessary that we succeed in everything. A man can be perfect and still reap no fruit from his work, and it may happen that a man who is able to accomplish very little is much more of a person than another who seems to accomplish very much.

--No Man Is An Island

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

Film on Br. Roger of Taizé April 21:



Enjoy a showing of “Moments in the Life of Brother Roger,” a film on the life of the founder of the Taizé Community, on Saturday, April 21, 3 -5 pm, in the Thomas House Basement Hall.

Wine and cheese will be on the menu with the film.

Have you participated in a Taizé prayer service in our parish or elsewhere? Are you interested in the Taizé Community or curious about this form of meditative communal prayer? The film (in French with subtitles) presents sixteen “moments” in the life of Br. Roger Schutz, from his childhood in a Swiss mountain village, via his settling at Taizé near the beginning of the Second World War, to his tragic death during an evening prayer. Br. Roger was a compelling personality, who was always ready to take risks for the reconciliation of Christians, for the younger generations, and for the poor.

The post-film discussion will be facilitated by Anna Fernandez, a long-time member of the Taizé Community, originally from Rome and now a Marriage and Family therapist practicing on the Peninsula. She has attended many Taizé international meetings and pilgrimages, since first becoming acquainted with Taizé in 1981 in parish youth groups in Rome.

Bystander Intervention Training, May 2:



What do you do if you are in a public place and witness hateful harassment?

You don't have to be a bystander!

Wednesday, May 2, 7-9pm
St. Albert the Great Church
1095 Channing Ave., Palo Alto

Gain tools and practice to be able to respond to hate incidents due to religion, ethnicity, sexuality, gender or any other factors.

Learn how to overcome the bystander effect and de-escalate the situation in a non-confrontational way.

Led by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and sponsored by Multifaith Voices for Peace and Justice, this is the first time this training will be presented in Palo Alto.

Everyone is welcome. Registration is very helpful, but not required. The workshop is free. Donations will be accepted at the event. This is a two-hour training with a mix of information and hands-on practice.

For more information: 650/569-3416.

Amigos Center to honor Fr. John Sandersfeld April 27:

Amigos de Guadalupe Center in San Jose joyfully invites us to its spring fundraiser, “Sowing the Seeds of Justice,” honoring Msgr. John Sandersfeld and his over 50 years of service sowing the seeds of justice in their community.

This special event will take place on Friday, April 27, at 6 pm at The Drying Shed at 402 Toyon Ave, San Jose. A tax-deductible donation of \$100 will help support the immigration, DACA, affordable housing and education efforts in the Mayfair community and beyond.

To purchase a table or place an ad honoring Msgr. Sandersfeld in the program, or to ask any other questions, please call (408) 341-6080 or email info@amigoscenter.com.

Founded out of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in San Jose, where Cesar Chavez launched his organization efforts in the 50s and 60s, Amigos is committed to move individuals and families from isolation to engaged and active participants that co-create opportunities for thriving lives.



Amigos de Guadalupe

Center for Justice & Empowerment

“Connecting resources to people”

STA series: “An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power,” April 17:



An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power: This compelling 2017 follow-up to *An Inconvenient Truth*, shows that, while the stakes have never been higher, the solutions to the climate crisis are still within our reach.

This film follows former Vice President Al Gore around the world in his continuing mission to educate the next generation of climate champions and addresses the progress made so far.

Please come: Tuesday, April 17, 7:00 PM; St. Albert the Great Hospitality Center. Light refreshments available.

Bulletin submissions must be e-mailed by Thursday noon or phoned by Thursday, 9:00 pm, to:
Kay, kaywill@pacbell.net, (650)270-4188.
Michelle, myhogan@comcast.net, (650) 493-8452.

COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Send a kid to CYO Summer Camp:

For the 5th year, sisters Gwenn Connolly and Karen Vetter are raising funds to help send 30 kids from St. Elizabeth Seton School to CYO Summer Camp in Occidental, CA, this summer. These kids have big dreams and talents — but few resources.

Camp costs \$825 per kid for seven days. Each child's family pays a portion plus campership funds cover the remaining 65%. Gwen and Karen are raising \$300 per camper to cover the balance of expenses.

Last year, Gwenn and Karen raised \$7,400 from 24 donors (range was \$25-\$2,000). Donations enabled 30 kids from Seton to attend CYO Camp. Whatever you can contribute will make a huge difference and be tremendously appreciated. Your donation is tax deductible. CYO Summer Camp is a program of Catholic Charities, SF (501c3, tax ID #94-1498472).

Make checks payable to: CYO Camp Scholarships

Memo Line: St. Elizabeth Seton School students

Mail to: Gwenn Connolly

205 De Anza Blvd, #180

San Mateo, CA 94402

If you would like to help go to <http://catholiccharitiessf.org/donate/>

Step 1: Indicate the Donation Amount you would like to contribute. **Step 2:** On the line: How would you like us to use your gift? Please indicate Children and Youth Services. **Step 3:** On the line: Specify a Program, please indicate CYO Camp Scholarships, for St. Elizabeth Seton School students. **Please Note:** It's important to specify this information correctly to assure your donation is applied to this project. To learn more about the project please visit sendakidtoCYOCamp.com.

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PRAY FOR US: Please remember in your prayers this week Denise Alongi, George Bouchey, Tom Carmody, George Chippendale, Mary Connors, Mike Cummings, Ken Dias, Pat Dietrich, Dick Freeman, Fr. Thierry Geris, Deonna Gill, Emily Gill, Joanne Hasegawa, Fr. John Hester, Dean Judd, Hunter Kubit, Dick Jackman, 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. [Add or subtract names by e-mailing editors: Michelle Hogan, Kay Williams. See listing adjacent.]

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need the church's leaders and scholars to be their advocates.

And the church may in fact have much to contribute to the development of algorithms. "Collectively the Catholic Church and her institutions have a Big Data capacity that rivals, if not surpasses, any social network," tech commentator and consultant Father Robert Ballecer, S.J., points out. "Are we aware of the power in that data? Can we show the world a more responsible way to use it?"

The tools of our information age are "fantastic," says Dr. Twomey. "They do wonderful things. But we need to have confidence in the principles we think are important. It's taken us a long time to express them in our political process. We shouldn't allow some start-up to say they don't apply to them. This is just hubris." #

Resist shrinking Catholicism to pure members:

[Excerpts from article by Michael J. O'Loughlin, America, 4/13/18]

In a talk at a Villanova University (PA) conference on April 12, Cardinal Joseph Tobin urged Catholics to resist allowing "the individualism that permeates our culture" to infect the church... Even from ancient times, there have been individuals and movements who have tried to define and delimit what it means to be a Catholic Christian... [T]he universal church has always repudiated such attempts. It is only the Lord who ultimately judges who belongs or does not belong."

The notion of a smaller church based on faithfulness and obedience to church teaching has become more popular over the past couple of years... Cardinal Tobin seemingly condemned this approach to faith, characterizing it as an effort to form "small enclaves" of believers who will somehow "safeguard the treasure of the Christian tradition in its purest form from the corrosive intrusion of a corrupt society." He said instead that engagement with the world is a Christian principle that dates back to the earliest followers of Jesus.

Tobin said that the church is still learning how to live out the missionary call laid out by the Second Vatican Council, and he said that both St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI offered examples of how to invite believers and nonbelievers alike to engage with Catholic teaching.

"The church has no other option but to turn outward...to the human condition in its heights and depths." Some of that engagement may be difficult, he conceded. He also answered questions on the firing of L.G.B.T. people from Catholic institutions and partnering with groups on shared priorities, even if there are differences in other areas.

How the church can help fight the tyranny of Facebook algorithms:

[By Jim McDermott, SJ, *America*, April 5, 2018]

On Jan. 2, 2007, dressed in his trademark turtleneck, jeans and sneakers, Apple chief executive Steve Jobs debuted the iPhone. It was like a door opening directly into the future. Almost overnight Silicon Valley seemed to become the capital of human progress, a Wonka-esque home to possibility and wonder.

Eleven years later, the reputation of our latter-day Athens curdles. Rather than a mall or town square where you can find anything you can imagine, the internet appears to have become a surveillance system to surprise even Foucault, with cameras hidden on each page you visit—tracking your choices, the movements of your cursor, even the searches you delete.

As a founding figure of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, an international non-profit that oversees the smooth running of the internet, Dr. Paul Twomey watched the online universe explode into life at the turn of the century. Now an international consultant on cybersecurity, privacy and governance, he has followed the growth of social media and search engine platforms, and watched the rise of mining personal data as the internet's default business strategy. He has been in the room with the people involved.

What he sees there leaves him cold. "There's no one saying you can't do some things," he says of many tech organizations today. "There are no adults in the room. You talk to them about ethics, the concept of political freedom, and they're like deer in the headlights. They have no idea what you're talking about."

It is a point that has come up many times in recent months: How does a company like Google or Facebook evaluate its ethical responsibilities? Does it? In November, the actor Kumail Nanjiani (of the TV series "Silicon Valley") tweeted about visiting start-up companies for the show and inquiring about products that seemed potentially harmful. "They don't even have a pat rehearsed answer," he wrote. "They are shocked at being asked.... 'We're not making it for that reason but the way people choose to use it isn't our fault. Safeguards will develop.'"

"Only 'Can we do this?'," Mr. Nanjiani continued. "Never 'Should we do this?'"

Dr. Twomey agrees. "People complain about the [National Security Agency]. I trust the spooks more than I trust these people," he says, unfavorably comparing tech companies to surveillance agencies.

He notes with equal concern the growing transfer of important societal functions to computer algorithms. "For the last 200 years," says Dr. Twomey, "we've been developing political systems to ensure an essential set of values around things like fairness. Now [those determinations] are being done increasingly by private companies via algorithms."

In some cases very poorly: In 2016 a ProPublica study found that the COMPAS software now used in many state court systems to advise on sentencing was only "somewhat more accurate than a coin flip" in predicting the likelihood of an individual's future criminal activity within the following two years. Further, the software was "likely to falsely flag black defendants as future criminals, wrongly labeling them this way at almost twice the rate as white defendants." Another study in 2018 found it no more accurate than asking a random person with no expertise what they thought.

Similar problems have been seen in algorithms for everything from teacher performance and hiring practices to loan evaluations.

A key problem, says Dr. Twomey, lies in the background of the creators. "Ninety percent of all algorithms written in this world are written by the same people, twentysomething male gamers. The tech companies say they're wonderfully diverse, and it's nonsense. They're every color of the rainbow, but they're all the same person, 20-to-30-year-old men coming from mathematics, computer science, maybe physics. And most of them wouldn't know who Aristotle was if they fell over him."

"The values of technology creators are deeply ingrained in every button, every link, and every glowing icon that we see," tech activist Anil Dash wrote in March, and with them their assumptions and blind spots. A predictive algorithm used by child protective services ends up disproportionately flagging black children as needing intervention and underreporting similar situations with white children. Another tool for setting car insurance rates ends up charging lower-income people more.

Lacking external evaluations of algorithms, which both tech companies and state agencies resist (and which become more difficult the more complicated the algorithms become), coders' prejudices and assumptions are buried in the system. Dr. Twomey fears they will promote a "global caste system" in which "your kids are going to get discriminated against" without even knowing it.

How can the church help fight this? To say that the Vatican does not tend to adapt quickly, particularly when it comes to science and technology, is an understatement. (See: its many apologies to long-dead scientific pioneers.) Its general lack of pliancy would seem to be a huge disadvantage when change and innovation is happening so fast.

But Dr. Twomey says that the church getting tech savvy is less important in this moment than its continuing to clearly stand with and for those on the margins: "The church needs to understand that the preferential option for the poor in a digital age includes the digital naïve, ignorant and excluded. Someone has to be a voice for their interests, a voice for their safety, a voice [to ensure] they're being treated fairly." They

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