



Pentecost Sunday

June 9, 2019

Readings

This week:

Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11

1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13

John 20:19-23

Next week:

Proverbs 8:22-31

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15

Psalm

Lord, send forth your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth. (*Psalm 104*)

Today

Today's presider is Rev 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, 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, June 10, 7:00 pm

Liturgy Planning, Thomas House

Thursday, June 13, 7:30 p.m.

Board Meeting, Thomas House

From
Thomas
Merton

Our God...is a consuming fire. And if we, by love, become transformed into Him and burn as He burns, His fire will be our everlasting joy. But if we refuse His love and remain in the coldness of sin and opposition to Him and to other men then will His fire (by our own choice rather than His) become our everlasting enemy, and Love, instead of being our joy, will become our torment and our destruction.

--*New Seeds of Contemplation*

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

International Thomas Merton Society 16th General Meeting at Santa Clara University June 27-30

UPDATED

This biennial meeting carries out the mission of the ITMS to promote an understanding and appreciation of the multifaceted character of Thomas Merton and encourages study and research to make better known the unique contribution he has made to the literature of spirituality and to American literature and religious life.

This year's conference theme is "O Peace, bless this mad place," a line from a poem by Merton. Keynote speakers include Rose Marie Berger, Fr. Cyprian Consiglio, O.S.B. Cam., Robert Ellsberg, Ron Hansen, and Richard Rodriguez, a panel on Dan Berrigan, and many concurrent sessions on topics such as Merton and Racism, Merton and the Ignatian Tradition, Merton and Peace, Merton and Ecology. Sr. Kathleen Deignan, who has led several retreats for TMC in the past, will participate in a workshop, as will Morgan Atkinson, the filmmaker who has shown two of his films on Merton at TMC events.

Registration for the 3-day conference is open now at: **merton.org/2019**. Registration fee is \$350 for ITMS members (TMC is a member) or \$400 for non-members and includes 3 days of meetings and meals. Several members of the TMC Spiritual Education Committee will be attending.

Full day and half-day registration options are now available.

*Full day options for Friday \$110; Saturday \$110
Half day options are available for Thursday afternoon \$60; Friday morning \$60; Friday afternoon \$60; Saturday morning \$60; Saturday afternoon \$60*

The passes cover parking, lunch, as well as morning and afternoon snacks along with any conferences or talks during the covered period.

*Here is the link for full and half day registration:
<http://merton.org/2019/dayregistration.htm>*

The entire program is at <http://merton.org/2019>

In addition, the ITMS has sent out a request for volunteers to work at registration either June 26 or June 27th for 2.5 hours. In exchange, there is a full conference tuition reduction to \$235.

Please join us after Mass in the St. Albert Hospitality Center for coffee and donuts. We especially encourage newcomers or those passing through town to stop by for food and fellowship.

Also, ITMS has notified us that Fr. Cyprian's concert, 7:30 pm in Mayer Theater on Thursday June 27th will be open to the community without charge

Contact Anna Jaklitsch with questions or about how to volunteer: annajak14@yahoo.com or 650-327-0978.

Paris to Pittsburgh

a National Geographic Film - screening and talk

All are invited to see this inspiring film about how people across the country are working together on solutions to reduce their carbon footprint and to deal with the impact climate change has on their communities. With the U.S. pull-out from the Paris Climate Accord, cities and states are taking action.

Tuesday June 11, 7:00 pm

St. Albert the Great Hospitality Center
1095 Channing Avenue
Palo Alto

Memorial for Tom Williams

A memorial for Tom Williams, tentatively planned for the first part of July, is pending the completion of the steps at St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

PRAY FOR US: Please remember in your prayers this week Denise Alongi, Rudy Bahr, Tom Carmody, Kerry Carmody, George Chippendale, Mary Connors, Mike Cummings, Jim Davis, Ken Dias, Pat Dietrich, Dick Freeman, Deonna Gill, Emily Gill, Joanne Hasegawa, Fr. John Hester, Dean Judd, Hunter Kubit, Dick Jackman, Alicia Kot, Fr. Bill Leiningner, Andre and Alyssa Lippard, Deacon Ysidro and Dolores Madrigal, Patricia Markee, Nancy Marty, Maureen Mooney, Hayden Pastorini, Alicia Placone-Combetta, Paul Prochaska, Anne Rush, Priya Smith, Bernice Sullivan, Jean Vistica, Dolores Walsh, Tom Williams and T. J. Wooten. **[Add or subtract names by e-mailing editor Kay Williams,**

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COMMUNITY FORUM

Ideas Opinions Reflections Concerns

Tom Williams

[Respectfully submitted by Nora Williams, Tom's eldest daughter
June 6, 2019]

Beloved member of the Thomas Merton Community, **Tom Williams**, died this past Saturday, June 1, 2019 about two months after he was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver. He was 84.

At the core of Tom's life was his relationship with God, nurtured through daily Mass, constant prayer, contemplation and the study of scripture. Tom had a deep resonance with the Trappist monks, making many retreats to the monastery in Vina, CA and counting Thomas Merton's *The Seven Storey Mountain* as one of the seminal spiritual influences in his life.

Tom walked his path in the world with much gusto. He was born and raised on Chicago's South Side, sang first soprano in the choir at St. Thomas the Apostle in Hyde Park, attended St. Ignatius high school and then enrolled at Stanford University, class of 1958. He was Stanford's first black football player and stayed close to the university and the football program mentoring many of the black football players during the 70's and 80's. NFL star Brian Holloway shares: "...Your father is a powerful, intelligent, thoughtful man of God that moved and inspired a generation. He fills so many with joy and will continue to do so for eternity X infinity... God brought one of his favorites home..."

Tom went on to found his own business, first in executive search placing women and minorities in corporate executive positions, then evolving it into his soul's project, "The Level Playing Field", which worked to create opportunities for black football coaches to flourish in the NCAA and the NFL. The challenges in Tom's life, especially the poverty he grew up with and the ever-present racism both in Chicago and California were a constant call to transform both himself and the larger culture.

His family was a huge source of Tom's pride and he loved us all to the moon and back. He and Kay would have been married 54 years, this June 19. He cherished all of us kids, Nora, Gerry, Meg and TC as well as our spouses Shawn, Cathy, Chris, ex-spouse Catharine and delighted in his grandkids Ella, Serafina, Tyler and Nico.

Classical and jazz music were a great love and were constantly playing in the house, creating a backdrop to our daily lives. We hosted copious gatherings filled with laughter, lively (and sometimes combative) debates, his signature barbecued chicken, wine (probably too much), Tom's mischievous sense of humor, and an

overarching supply of love. Tom instilled in us to stand up for what we believe, have compassion for those who unconsciously hurt others, and as the Thomas Merton's Abbot at Gethsemane said: "to play in joy before the face of God."

The Gospel according to 'Game of Thrones'

[By: [Terrance Klein](#) May 22, 2019]

Cersei Lannister is the usurper queen of the Seven Kingdoms. She has two brothers, Jamie Lannister, called the Kingslayer, and the dwarf Tyrion Lannister. But, of course, you know all of this unless you are more removed from civilization than, say, the Starks of Winterfell or the White Walkers who roam beyond the wall.

If you are clueless about all of this, devotees of "Game of Thrones"—and they are legion—might consider you as uncouth as a drunken Dothraki warrior. But take heart because, if you are a faithful Christian, you are already engaged in a historical struggle ever so much the grander than any clash of dynasties.

"Game of Thrones," the HBO adaptation of George R. R. Martin's medieval fantasy series, is an epic dramatic struggle between the forces of good and evil. To the credit of the show's eight seasons, it has often been difficult to know who was winning and who was not. Sometimes it was a struggle to settle upon who was good and who was bad. At times you could only see who was bad and who was even worse. Circumstances shifted, and people changed. The only constant was that the powerful oppressed the weak. That remained true even when the weak became the powerful.

If you are a faithful Christian, you are already engaged in a historical struggle ever so much the grander than any clash of dynasties.

If this explains the television series to the culturally clueless, it also explains the Christian faith to the spiritually impoverished. "Game of Thrones" is a terrific drama, played out in fictional history. Christianity's core claim is that history itself is a great drama, an epic struggle between light and darkness.

You might not immediately learn this by asking the average believer to explain the Christian faith. Instead, you are likely to listen to a list of teachings, called doctrines, which are to be believed without evidence, and moral precepts, which are to be observed solely on the authority

of those who promulgate them.

Yet the core of the Christian faith is that good and evil are at war and have been for as far back as memory goes. Scholars call this “salvation history,” but ordinary people know it as the ongoing, daily struggle between right and wrong, one that surges around and within every human being. Moreover, just as in “Game of Thrones,” in the real world it is hard to know who is what and which side is winning. Good and evil are entwined in a violent vortex. The sole constant is that the powerful continue to oppress the weak.

“Game of Thrones” is a terrific drama, played out in fictional history. Christianity’s core claim is that history itself is a great drama, an epic struggle between light and darkness.

When challenged, most Christians will also be rather weak in their explication of the great historical events at the heart of their own movement. They might say something like this:

Christ died and then rose from the grave, defeating the powers of darkness and death. Then he went away to his Father, apparently leaving us in the midst of those powers, who are still quite evil and truly oppressive. But we have been given a Holy Spirit, who leads our struggle, and Christ will come again at the end of time.

Those outside the faith have every right and reason to ask: What do you mean that Christ has defeated evil but left you and the rest of us to suffer it, with no more than an invisible protector and a promise of return?

The finale of “Game of Thrones” is rather profound—and rooted in the Gospel.

This is where the finale of “Game of Thrones” is rather profound—and rooted in the Gospel. Through 73 episodes and the course of countless battles, Daenerys Targaryen has risen from being an oppressed girl (and isn’t that the lowest rung of those wronged?) to become:

Daenerys of the House Targaryen, the First of Her Name, The Unburnt, Queen of the Andals, the Rhoynar and the First Men, Queen of Meereen, Khaleesi of the Great Grass Sea, Protector of the Realm, Lady Regent of the Seven Kingdoms, Breaker of Chains and Mother of Dragons.

Yet at the apex of her power, Daenerys succumbs to its lure. She begins to believe that her vision of good and evil is, by virtue of her power, the only possible version. Her general, Jon Snow, truly loves her. Of all the characters in this saga, he is the slowest to take sides. Yet when he sees a growing evil that he cannot ignore, he strikes. He takes Queen Daenerys into his arms, kisses her passionately and then thrusts a dagger into her heart.

As a celibate, ascetic warrior of the Night’s Watch, the Knights Templar of this tale, Jon had always been taught that “love is the death of duty.” But in the end, he sacrifices his future and his love in the pursuit—not the possession—of the good, accepting Tyrion’s claim that “duty is the death of love.”

Why did Christ conquer death and evil and then leave us to their merciless might? What does that even mean? It means that Christ came into our epic struggle not to end it by a single act of power but rather by a solitary act of love to set in motion the only power that can truly be the end of evil.

If Christ conquered evil, why didn’t he remain and rule? Because Christ wants more than to subdue evil. He wants to eliminate it by the outpouring of its counterpart, love. Christ appears to withdraw from us, but he remains as the innocent victim, who succumbed to the hoary heart of evil only to live on in the righteousness of resurrection. He calls us to himself, to life itself, by the sheer beauty and innocence of his true love.

Christ can conquer us, or we can love him. But Christ is creator, not conqueror. He created us in love. He created us for love. In the great drama that we call history, we chose something less than love, and thus we invited death and evil into the world. Duty demands that we should suffer our self-wrought consequences. But the Gospel tells us that in Jesus, love is the very death of duty.

The Rev. Terrance W. Klein is a priest of the Diocese of Dodge City and author of *Vanity Faith*.

Bulletin Articles

Have you been touched, moved or inspired recently by an article you have read? Do you think this article might encourage others in our community? Please share your ideas with Margaret Capriles (capriles.m@gmail.com) or Bob Capriles (bob_capriles2002@yahoo.com). We continue to look for articles to share as we ‘pinch-hit’ for our bulletin editor-in-chief, Kay Williams.