



Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 7, 2021

[The LORD] tells the number of the stars and calls them by name.

— Psalm 147

THE GOOD NEWS

Today's readings begin with a few verses from the book of Job. First, Job complains that his nights drag on endlessly. Then, worse yet, "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; / they come to an end without hope" (Job 7:6). Not exactly encouraging, these lamentations, not when taken alone.

Most of us have been there, though, and the antidote is the "good news" that Paul found so compelling that "an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it!" (1 Corinthians 9:16). Paul felt driven to announce the gospel to as many people as possible, "to save at least some" (9:22).

This good news is the mystery of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who lifted Simon Peter's mother-in-law from her sickbed with a mere touch of his hand. "The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons" (Mark 1:33-34)). Our woes and demons are as real as Job's, and Jesus is our savior.

—J. S. Paluch Co.

FEAST OF FAITH

The Gloria (1)

The Gloria, or Glory to God, follows the penitential rite. Both are acts of praise. In the penitential rite, we sing of the mercy of Christ. In the Gloria we praise God's saving action in the universe.

The Gloria is a relatively late addition to the Mass. It first appeared in the Roman liturgy in the sixth century, and then it was sung only by the pope—and only on Christmas! With time, the hymn came to be sung by bishops on major feasts, and then by priests; finally, it became the song of the entire assembly. With the advent of more elaborate musical settings, the people gradually stopped singing the Gloria, until this song of the people became the exclusive domain of the priest and the choir. But the liturgical reforms have restored it to its place as primarily the song of the assembly.

The language of the Gloria echoes the New Testament canticles. It may be begun by the priest, the cantor, and the entire assembly in varied combinations. The Gloria is sometimes called the "greater doxology," and in some ways it is like an extended, ecstatic version of the familiar doxology ("Glory be to the Father") prayed in the Divine Office and the rosary.

—Corinna Laughlin, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Gn 1:1-19; Ps 104:1-2a, 5-6, 10, 12, 24, 35c; Mk 6:53-56
 Tuesday: Gn 1:20 — 2:4a; Ps 8:4-9; Mk 7:1-13
 Wednesday: Gn 2:4b-9, 15-17; Ps 104:1-2a, 27-28, 29bc-30; Mk 7:14-23
 Thursday: Gn 2:18-25; Ps 128:1-5; Mk 7:24-30
 Friday: Gn 3:1-8; Ps 32:1-2, 5-7; Mk 7:31-37
 Saturday: Gn 3:9-24; Ps 90:2-6, 12-13; Mk 8:1-10
 Sunday: Lv 13:1-2, 44-46; Ps 32:1-2, 5, 11; 1 Cor 10:31 — 11:1; Mk 1:40-45

BEGINNING AGAIN

If I were to begin life again, I would want it as it was.
 I would only open my eyes a little more.

—Jules Renard

ON LOVE

If you would be loved, love and be lovable.

—Benjamin Franklin

WEEKLY



Finance Corner: Your generosity

is greatly needed and appreciated! For the month of **January/February** offerings:

PLEASE mail to St. Philip/St. Teresa Parish, P. O. Box 339, Occidental CA 95465. Or donate at our website www.stphilipstteresa.org via Paypal or card. Include your offering envelope # with your donation.

2/7: Operating Expenses. 2/14: No 2nd collection. 2/21: Capital Expenditures.

Mark your Calendar for Future Events & Meetings:

Parish Council [PC]: TBA Zoom

Finance Council [FC]: TBA Zoom

Liturgy Committee: TBA Zoom

St. Teresa Ladies Guild: Contact Diane, 823-6044

St. Philip Ladies Guild: Contact Penny, 559-367-7403

Centering Prayer ZOOM: Tues. noon/Fri. 930am - info www.stphilipstteresa.org

✠ ♥ ✠ Mass Intentions ✠ ♥ ✠ Schedule

2/07 Sun. 8am Mass for the People

2/07 Sun. 9:30am Mass ✠ Bob Tiller

2/14 Sun. 8am Mass ✠ Lucille Gonnella

2/14 Sun. 9:30am Mass ✠ Brendan Smith

Prayer Requests: Leave a message at 707-408-2650.

Teresa K., Pat K., Thomas T., Susan B., Lorri McC., Sarah, Clifford J., Terri A., Fred P., Theresa S., Sara, Mary Anne P., Barbara, Dave C., Jim P., William, Parson P., Dave, Mary O., Bill Z., Daniel, Sally T., Michael D., Richard M., Kathleen, Peter, Rosa S., Susan B., Joyce D., Anita C., George H., Mimi H, Steve, Barry, Lorri K., Hugh P., Robert S., Britney N., Jacque W., Rebecca A., April K., Jacinta G., Leo A., Ed C. family, Kathy R., Donna W., Jim K., Sherry S., Papke family., Gail F., Marie N., Christine, James, Dennis M., Art H., Lynn, Gary S., Peter R., Gerry N.

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sun: Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time; World Day for Consecrated Life

Mon: St. Jerome Emiliani; St. Josephine Bakhita; International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking

Wed: St. Scholastica

Thurs: Our Lady of Lourdes; World Day of the Sick

Sat: Blessed Virgin Mary

St. Philip's Ladies Guild Memo.....

1- Saint Philip's Ladies Guild is seeking volunteers from the Parish to assist with our Church upkeep and cleaning. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Penny Applegarth (559) 367-7403.

2- Saint Philip's Ladies Guild is seeking ways to provide more community for our Parish members. We would like to know if there is interest in having a virtual weekly meeting to read the Mass readings of that day followed by a discussion on how the readings apply to our lives. If you are interested, please contact Penny Applegarth (559) 367-7403.

Pastor Speaks...

As per the direction given by Bishop Robert Vasa to all the Pastors, I decided to provide two more opportunities to those of our parishioners who like to receive **Holy Communion**. Other than Sundays and some Holy Days of Obligation, those who would like to receive Holy Communion from me or another delegated by me may do so until otherwise notified on **Wednesdays at St Philip's and Thursdays at St Teresa's at 9:15 AM**. All who are interested to join me at Mass those days are most welcome. Mass begins at 9 am sharp.

OUTDOOR SUNDAY MASSES:

Times & Zoom information can be found at our parish website ---- www.stphilipstteresa.org

RURAL FOOD PROGRAM UPDATE for JANUARY 2021

We prepared for stormy skies for the January 12 Rural Food distribution but were happy to get only a short sprinkle.



We were greeted with warm and sunny smiles as we distributed food to 61 families totaling 54 adults, 32 seniors, and 23 children.

As we plan for and adjust to distribution outside in inclement weather we have decided to adjust our set up and distribution times slightly. ***Please note the changes below.***

We are so thankful for the support provided to make this program flourish.

This program is funded through the Rural Food Collection each month, private donations and awesome volunteers. **Thank you for your generous donations as we strive to meet the nutritional needs of all attendees at our food distributions.**

RURAL FOOD VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES in Hall:

Saturday, February 6, 9:00 - 10:00am repackaging;

***Monday, February 8,** 9:00 - 11:00am set up; and

***Tuesday, February 9,** 8:00 - 11:00am distribution of food to clients.



Detail of stained glass window in Saint Patrick Church in Columbus, Ohio, depicting St. Thomas Aquinas in conversation with the crucified Christ.

St. Thomas Aquinas: rebel, academic, mystic

by [Isabelle Gagnon](#)

Among philosophers and theologians, St. Thomas Aquinas is generally an inspiring figure. A Doctor of the Church, he is best known for his Summa Theologica, a treatise considered monumental and arduous today but originally intended as a beginner's guide. Only considering this part of his work, the saint's patience, obedience, and wisdom are manifest. However, this medieval monk and scholar was a very colourful character whose life is worth describing in more detail. He is an excellent example of holiness because of his radical authenticity in his faith and his life in general.

Vocation of a rebel

The account of his entry into religious life shows his independence of spirit and his authentic openness to the Holy Spirit. The young Thomas was sent to study with the Benedictine monks at the Abbey of Monte Cassino, and his

parents, actively involved in Church politics, hoped that he would join the order and become the abbot of this monastery. But it was during this period that Thomas met the friars from the Order of Preachers, otherwise known as the Dominican Order, whose liveliness of faith attracted him. Founded by St. Dominic barely 10 years before the birth of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Order of Preachers participated in a wind of change in the Church. While many monasteries were losing contact with the outside world, the Dominicans went out to meet people and evangelize.

In the 13th century, the Church was experiencing worldly and greedy political power dynamics. In short, quite the opposite of what the mission of the Church should be. In this context, this young saint-in-the-making felt a deep calling to enter a mendicant order with an innovative mission. His mother, opposed to this plan, kidnapped him and kept him locked up for a year. Finally, since he did not change his mind, she allowed him to enter the Dominican Order. Today we know how important this young man was going to be, not only for his order but for the whole Church. The effort of evangelization achieved by the *Summa Theologica* and the whole of his work is outstanding.

A scholar against the tide

St. Thomas Aquinas was educated by St. Albert the Great and went on to teach in Italy and elsewhere in Europe. In doing so, he participated in a fascinating university tradition. First of all, Latin being the *lingua franca*, that is to say, the common language in the university and ecclesiastical circles of the time, he was able to teach in Paris as in Italy without any language barrier.

However, this does not mean that there were no other obstacles in the intellectual context of the time. Between 1268 and 1272, St. Thomas Aquinas took part in a quarrel concerning Aristotle's place in Catholic university teachings as well as the opposition between secular and mendicant orders. Always on the side of innovation, the young scholar succeeded in reconciling Aristotelianism and the Catholic faith in his *Summa Theologica* and resisted attacks against the mendicant orders, of which the Order of Preachers is a part.

Visions of God: his prayer and mystical experience

A lesser known side of his work is his prayers in the form of poems inspired by his mystical experiences before the Blessed Sacrament. Among the best known writings of this nature are the hymns essential to the Liturgy of the Hours: "Pange Lingua", "Panis Angelicus", and "Lauda Sion". While we take them for granted today, these magnificent testimonies of faith show the highest sensitivity to the divine presence.

At the end of his life, St. Thomas Aquinas even confided in his secretary and friend, a man named Reginald, how his mystical visions made him think of his written work:

"The end of my work has come; all that I have written and taught seems to me like a piece of straw compared to what I have seen and what has been revealed to me. From now on I hope from the goodness of my God that the end of my life will closely follow that of my works."

This statement can dishearten us because reading such a great saint treating the work of a lifetime in this way can discourage us in our own quest for holiness. However, his words express something magnificent: his relationship with God was so intimate that God gave him many heavenly visions. This only confirms the limitations of life on earth and amplifies the promise of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Our paths to holiness

Saint Thomas Aquinas, who died at less than fifty years of age, had an exemplary journey, in large part because he remained faithful to himself in the most authentic way, that is, by being faithful to God's will. Holiness is, at its core, a radical expression of individuality and of openness to God's will. Throughout the history of the Church, we encounter saints who are all remarkable in their own ways, having very distinct personalities and journeys. This bodes well for humanity; as much as we can let ourselves be amazed by a saint like Thomas Aquinas, we must also remember that our path to holiness has to be fully discovered and freely consented to in order to be fully ours.



February 2021

A New Opportunity in Santa Rosa

The City of Santa Rosa will soon implement a new mobile crisis response program, CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets). CAHOOTS will act as a first responder to non-violent, emergency calls reporting a variety of mental health needs. The team will offer a range of services, including but not limited to:

- Crisis Counseling
- Suicide Prevention, Assessment, and Intervention
- Conflict Resolution and Mediation
- Substance Abuse
- Housing Crisis
- First Aid and Non-Emergency Medical Care
- Resource Connection and Referrals

Modeled after the tried and tested program in Eugene, Oregon, CAHOOTS will be a lifesaving resource providing an alternative to police intervention when the situation could be better served by a

trained social worker. This proactive program dramatically reduces city costs for non-violent emergency calls and provides a more immediate resolution for homeless individuals in crisis.

As Santa Rosa faces a homeless crisis intensified by the COVID-19 Pandemic, local officials are eager to roll this one-year pilot program out soon, as early as this summer. To do so, the City of Santa Rosa identified two experienced local nonprofit providers including Buckelew Programs, a major mental health provider, and *Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa*, a county-wide leader in homeless outreach following a housing-focused model.

Catholic Charities' Homeless Outreach Services Team (HOST) brings decades of experience to the CAHOOTS program. Trained in long-term trust-building with individuals experiencing homelessness, this team recruits make them uniquely qualified to partner in this program.

"Together these two nonprofits will pull their talents to provide something sorely needed in our community. The response to their selection has been incredibly positive. We look forward to a productive relationship," says SRPD Captain John Cregan.

Hopeful opportunities like CAHOOTS will allow HOST to be available immediately when individuals are in crisis and ready for the next step towards recovery. Not every crisis intervention is quick or easy for the HOST team. In many situations, a difficult change may be needed to begin that individual's journey. As a result, there are times when a HOST team member may be received with anxiety in that moment of crisis, but with persistent mutual respect and love, eventually, trust can be established. What comes next can be truly amazing.

We are thankful to have been asked to take this much-needed step that will make Santa Rosa a safer, more equitable community for all. Look out for more updates as Summer 2021 approaches.

Chapter Talk – Fourth Sunday of the Year – January 31, 2021, cycle-B



"God acts in the simplicity of open hearts, in the patience of those who pause until they see clearly" (Let Us Dream, p.61). These words of Pope Francis are among many thoughts he has on discerning: discerning what is the voice of God or the movement of the Spirit and what is the voice of the "bad spirit" as he calls it. In the readings for this Sunday, we have God in the first reading from Deuteronomy (18:15-20) anointing Moses as the needed prophet who will be the voice of God, who will utter the word of God to the people, giving them an orientation and vision for how they are to live and act as a people consecrated by God. There is a warning from God, however, that if "a prophet presumes to speak in my name an oracle that I have not commanded him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, he shall die" (Dt. 18:20). Is this not a warning for us in this sense: while we may not consider ourselves prophets, how often do we speak words that come off as absolute, asserting the

truth so strongly as IF we were speaking as the mouthpiece of God? In the gospel Jesus speaks “with authority”, there is newness to his teaching, one is immediately touched by the healing power that flows from his words. The voice of the bad spirit speaks: “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?” (Mk 1:24). The ‘new authority’ of Jesus’ word stands in stark contrast to the bad spirit. Jesus, the anointed one, God’s beloved Son, heals with a ‘word’. He says to the ‘bad spirit’: “Quiet. Come out of him” (Mk 1:25). And so, we are given the ‘new teaching’ that comes with ‘authority’, the ‘authority’ of God’s healing life and salvation. There are many gospel passages where Jesus’ authority is being challenged and it is striking to notice how his words flow from his communion with his Father. He pauses, he steps back, he listens, he discerns. Jesus ‘reads’ hearts, hearts that were testing him, that were trying to trap him, hearts that were closed and hardened to his new teaching, his new wine of the gospel.

To discern the voice of God speaking to us individually and as a community is no easy matter. How do we discern? I am not specifically referring to discernment of one’s vocation, but rather to discernment of the voices that speak within our inner life, and that influence our words and choices. Jesus, who is the Divine pattern we are following and striving to live from, reveals his ‘new teaching’, which comes with ‘authority’, meaning it carries the truth, God’s truth, in any given moment...In the gospels Jesus discerns, he knows and sees the bad spirit that is diminishing the person. Pope Francis distinguishes between the voice of God and the ‘bad spirit’ voice that is not focused on God’s truth but allures one into fears, anxieties, selfish protections and so on. He writes: “How do we distinguish the spirits? They speak different languages; they use different ways to reach our hearts. The voice of God never imposes but proposes, whereas the enemy is strident, insistent, and even monotonous” (p.61).

Pope Francis distinguishes further these two voices: “The voice of the enemy distracts us from the present by getting us to focus on fears of the future or the sadness of the past. The voice of God, on the other hand, speaks to the present, helping us to move ahead in the here and now...The voice of God opens your horizons, whereas the enemy pins you against a wall. Where the good spirit gives you hope, the bad spirit sows suspicion, anxiety, and finger-pointing. The good spirit appeals to my desire to do good, to help and serve, and gives me strength to go forward on the right path. The bad spirit, conversely, closes me in on myself, and makes me rigid and intolerant. It is the spirit of fear and grievance. It

makes me sad, fearful, and irritable. Rather than freeing me, it enslaves me. Rather than opening me up to the present and the future, it encloses me in fear and resignation” (p.61-62). Dear sisters, are not these comments by our Pope what we need to hear right now? God’s truth, God’s way forward is not in those experiences where we feel pinned against a wall and feel there is no way out. To give energy to those voices is to put God aside. When they overpower us, we need to pick up our anchor of faith and give space to the voice of Christ who says: ‘depart’, ‘be quiet’! The Divine truth builds up the human person, it is so much deeper and broader than the diminishing voice of fear, a voice that is rigid and intolerant of change or growth. The Divine voice of Christ comes with hope, with perspective, with opening to larger horizons for God’s saving work to be done within and amongst us.

Returning to the words of Pope Francis that I began with: “God acts in the simplicity of open hearts, in the patience of those who pause until they see clearly” (p.61). Here is the medicine we need dear sisters: open hearts, patience in the pausing, which can last some time (!), until we see clearly, listening beyond our certainties; indeed, then God will speak, God will act, God will show us the way.

How important is this? “Learning to distinguish these two kinds of ‘voice’ allows us to choose the right path forward, which is not always the most obvious, and to avoid making decisions while trapped in past hurts or in fears of the future that risk immobilizing us” (p.62). As good custodians of the inner life let us heed this final evocation of Pope Francis.

Sr. Kathy DeVico, Abbess

[Our Lady of the Redwoods](#)



Redwoods Monastery is a community of Roman Catholic Cistercian (Trappist) nuns founded in 1962 from the Monastery of Nazareth in Belgium.

Living in a wilderness area of old growth redwood forests contributes profoundly to the spirit of this monastery as well as to the practical life of our community. Our participation in the monastic practices of lectio divina, liturgical prayer, and mindfulness of God and creation build a community of love that extends far beyond the confines of the monastery. We strive to be open to inner and outer transformation that forms the fabric of our life at Redwoods.