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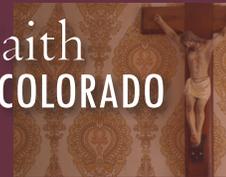
ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY

MAY 2016

VOLUME 21 ISSUE 4

In Good Faith

CARLOS X. COLORADO



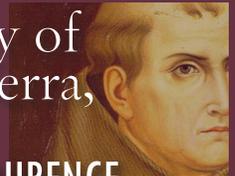
Isaiah House: Give Me Your Eyes

DAVE WERNER



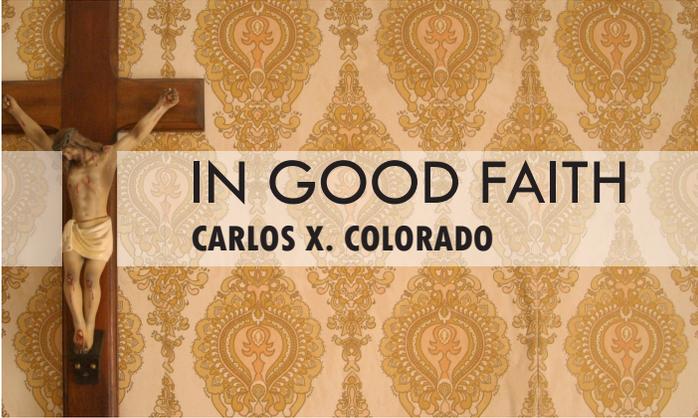
The Legacy of Junipero Serra, Part I

PATRICK LAURENCE



7 Questions
SHANNON THOMAS





“IN A SADLY noncontroversial passage of Pope Francis’ recent apostolic exhortation on the family, the Holy Father laments the ravages of work demands on family life. “In many cases,” writes the Pontiff, “parents come home exhausted, not wanting to talk, and many families no longer even share a common meal.” (Amoris Lætitia, 50.)

Don’t we know it! “Lawyers are worn out,” concludes one commentator after reviewing various surveys on lawyers’ lives (or lack thereof). “They go home at the end of the day too tired to enjoy life.” Judith Haute, *Balanced Lives in a Stressful Profession: An Impossible Dream?*, 21 CAP.U.L.REV. 797 (1992).

Ad Veritatem took the month of April off to celebrate Easter and also to make a statement about the need to preserve quiet spaces for prayer and reflection in our lives.

There is an *ethical* impetus for a work-lifestyle balance: “being admitted to the bar does not absolve you of your responsibilities outside of work—to your family, to your friends, to your community, and, if you’re a person of faith, to your God. To practice law ethically, you must meet these responsibilities, which means that you must live a balanced life.” Patrick J. Schiltz, *On Being a Happy, Healthy, and Ethical Member of an Unhappy, Unhealthy, and Unethical Profession*, 52 VAND. L. REV. 871 (1999).

Pope Benedict would have agreed. He warned us about the threat to the family from the “dictatorship of work commitments.” (June 6, 2012 General Audience.) Juxtaposed to this dictatorship is nothing less than human dignity and freedom: “to be free, free for the family and free for God.”

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IDEALS OF ST. THOMAS MORE

The legal profession is a high calling with corresponding responsibilities to society. The principal objective of every lawyer is to promote and seek justice. Catholic Lawyers pursue the truth in both their spiritual and professional lives. The duty of a Catholic lawyer is to remain faithful to Jesus Christ, His Church and its teachings at all times despite the personal consequences.

THE OBJECTIVES OF STMS

- encouraging its members to live a Christian life and apply the principles and ideals exemplified by St. Thomas More in their lives and encourage same in the legal profession.
- promoting and foster high ethical principals in the legal profession generally and, in particular, in the community of Catholic lawyers.
- assisting in the spiritual growth of its members.
- encouraging interfaith understanding and brotherhood.
- sponsoring the annual Red Mass for elected and appointed officials and members of the legal profession.

MEMBERSHIP IN STMS

Each member of the Society is committed to:

- strive to live an exemplary Christian life and apply the principles and ideals exemplified by St. Thomas More in their daily lives and encourage same in the legal profession.
- attend monthly meeting of the Society and provide personal support to the St. Thomas More Society.
- attend and support the Red Mass.

LAWYER'S PRAYER

Give me the grace, Good Lord,
to set the world at naught;
to set my mind fast upon thee
and not to hang upon the blast of men's
mouths;
to be content to be solitary;
not to long for worldly company
but utterly to cast off the world
and rid my mind of the business
thereof.
- ST. THOMAS MORE

EDITOR@STTHOMASMORE.NET

ISAIAH HOUSE:

GIVE ME YOUR EYES**DAVE WERNER****via*

WHEN Greg Weiler and Dave Belz first invited me to Isaiah House ten years ago, they asked me to flip hamburgers. That excited me because I enjoy cooking for others. I recalled the days as a child many years ago when my parents went to bed hungry so that my brothers and I could eat. Nothing monumental, just some poverty.

Caveat: I don't like writing articles, especially ones about spiritual matters such as serving people at Isaiah House. It requires you to share personal feelings. Also, sometimes the reader assumes that you think that you know something, and that you are somehow teaching them something they may not be familiar with. All I can say is that I really don't know very much and I certainly don't know enough to write any sort of article of that sort.

However, Greg Weiler told me that I cannot get a copy of John Schreiner's new CD unless I wrote this article. I will therefore take a stab at writing it on the condition that you understand it to be merely my own personal feelings and thoughts. I make no assertion beyond that.

On a few occasions I have gone to bed hungry. I will never forget that awful feeling. I hate it. I also hated seeing my parents go hungry so that I could eat. I particularly enjoy cooking for other people – whether or not they are hungry – for the simple reason that they won't have to endure that feeling of hunger for some period of time.

During my years serving at Isaiah House I developed relationships with many people. Some of my dear friends always attend Sunday mornings at 7:30, as we set out to do our part to solve the problems of the world at Isaiah House. Over the years, I've gotten to know many of the regulars who have become friends and people I look forward to seeing. I've developed a warm and loving relationship with Leah and Dwight, the selfless hosts at Isaiah House. I've also had the privilege of meeting many teenagers meeting their service hours or just out to help serve some food, as well as many

attorneys. I've also watched my wife and Mrs. Belz take over the Isaiah House kitchen and run it so naturally.

On a more spiritual level, I've prayed with the volunteers, the guests, and Fr. Leo. I have witnessed good people raise their hearts and minds up to the Lord and give him thanks.

All of this would be more than enough to inspire me to return every fourth Sunday, but actually there's more.

In my life, I read many books to expand my faith. Each of the wonderful books has contributed a "piece of the puzzle" that I otherwise didn't have. I have wondered, however, whether these authors were speaking the actual truth, or if they were spewing another person's version of how they thought the world should be. Are these authors really speaking to the reality of God, or to their personal perception of the human world?

As a passionate fan of Christian music, I also enjoy sitting in my backyard listening to many inspirational songs. One particular song spoke to me and did not let me go: "Give Me Your Eyes," written and sung by Brandon Heath.

Heath begins this beautiful song by lamenting the world and its problems. But then he explores a step beyond. He expresses his view of the world and his faith, and laments that he is just not "getting it." Christianity is not embracing him, and he struggles to understand his faith. Consequently, he turns to the Lord for guidance with a simple cry, asking "Give Me Your Eyes, Lord." Heath asks to see the world as God sees it, so he could begin to understand the truth.

The song haunted me for a long time until I succumbed to the calling and retreated to my backyard for prayer and freed my mind of all thoughts. Without any books or any understanding of the "truth," I surrendered myself and asked God to "Give me your eyes."

At first, nothing happened. I figured that I was out of line

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IN GOOD FAITH

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

requests for extensions of time.” See California Attorney Guidelines of Civility and Professionalism, Section 6. This rule implicitly recognizes that events and occurrences in lawyers’ lives—including matters in their family lives—will occasion and warrant accommodations.

Ethics and civility rules already contain set-asides for work-lifestyle balance.

For example, “an attorney should agree to reasonable

Consider, too, the impact of *not* having a balanced life on an attorney’s ability to fulfill important ethical obligations, including the duty to be efficient and to provide well thought-through advice, to have stress and anger management, to avoid substance abuse, to be financially responsible, to comply with continuing education requirements, etc.

Finally, let us not forget that rest from work is sacred. “God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation.” (Gen 2:3.) ♦



The Holy Father’s Prayer Intentions for the Month of March 2016

UNIVERSAL: RESPECT FOR WOMEN

That in every country of the world, women may be honored and respected and that their essential contribution to society may be highly esteemed.

Evangelization: The Holy Rosary

That families, communities, and groups may pray the Holy Rosary for evangelization and peace.

CALENDAR

Sunday, May 22, 8-11 a.m.

Feed the hungry at Isaiah House.

ISAIAH HOUSE · 316 S. CYPRESS ST.
SANTA ANA, CA 91766



PATRICK LAURENCE*

“A HAPPY DEATH, OF ALL THE THINGS OF LIFE IS OUR PRINCIPAL CONCERN.

For if we attain that, it matters little if we lose all the rest. But if we do not attain that, nothing else will be of any value.”
– Junípero Serra, 1749

When Fray Junípero Serra was canonized by Pope Francis on September 23, 2015, the Church confirmed that the diminutive founder of California’s missions obtained the principal aim of all his labors: eternal union with God in heaven. A native of Mallorca, Serra left behind family, friends, and prestige as a professor of philosophy to become a missionary ad gentes in North America during the latter half of the 18th century. In this role, the Spanish intellectual distinguished himself by his single-minded zeal in spreading the faith and through his dizzying acts of asceticism.

PART I: THE CONTROVERSIAL SAINT

The pope’s decision to recognize Serra’s place among the elect has been, as expected, dogged by controversy. According to some critics, Serra was the architect of a program of colonization which resulted in the enslavement of unwilling neophytes, fostered the eradication of native culture and traditions, caused the decimation of the local native populations through the spread of European diseases, and facilitated a host of other evils which are still felt even to the present day.

Catholics should be cautious about taking a pugilistic attitude towards these charges. Although not speaking of the California missions in particular, Pope Francis recently acknowledged that “Many grave sins were committed against the Native people of America in the name of God.” Similarly, during his Meeting with Native Peoples of the Americas in 1987, Pope Saint John Paul II conceded that “[t]he early encounter between your traditional cultures and the European way of life ... was a harsh and painful reality for

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ISAIAH HOUSE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)



and had no right to ask for such a gift. But then I recalled the teachings of my wonderful friend Fr. Sy: it's okay to petition God for whatever you want, but first acknowledge that it's up to Him to give it to you. In making a petition, it's important to recognize that if your petition is not granted, that you will fully accept God's will no matter what it is.

My revelation occurred sometime after, while at a crowded restaurant near my office. The multitude of patrons was enjoying lunch, conversing with peers, watching TV and playing with electronic devices. The Dave Werner in me saw a bunch of people that I had no association with and would likely never see again. However, I was feeling rather lonely that day. Perhaps it was the right mood for what would come. I remembered Heath's song and simply begged God again to give me His eyes and let me see the world as He sees it.

A very brief wave of euphoria came over me as if a gentle and peaceful whisper of wind passed right to my heart and soul. For a very brief moment, I believe I was granted the gift to see the world God sees.

I don't mean to say this in a presumptuous fashion. I simply say it because it happened. And I know it came from Christ because it was totally unexpected: nothing happened that would have come from me. If it had come from me – if it was my thoughts – I think that I would have expected God to see a vast black ocean of sin, decay and death. I would have expected Him to see all the defects of my person and soul. I would have expected him to be like a lecturing teacher who found no good in me or my work.

Remarkably, I saw none of that. What I did see was not theological. It was not intellectual. I saw a father holding his son. The son was quite young, perhaps even in diapers. His father held him tight, protecting him, and loving him. Instantly, I saw everyone in the restaurant around me held by their father, their heavenly father. It became so clear that what God sees through His own eyes are His children.

In my mind, I also heard these words spoken as if to confirm what I was seeing: "These are my children. They are your brothers and sisters. I love them and I want them to be with me to all eternity. Feed my sheep."

That event happened some 4 years ago. After that event, I feared going back into that form of prayer for quite some time. However when I again heard the song, I could not help myself and asked again that I be given His eyes.

I realize that most theologians would probably tell me that I'm absolutely dead wrong in what I sensed in this second encounter. What I sensed and what I felt was quite simple: I sensed that God was sad. There have been several times in my life when I have been in a room and people completely

ignored me. It's an extremely lonely and sad feeling.

If you imagine that you are in a room and people are talking about you and the people that are talking about you are your sons and daughters, brothers and sisters and other family members, you might get a sense of the sadness that I felt that God was suffering that day. It wasn't too hard to figure out: His sadness was that His sons and daughters filled the room with laughter, discussion, thoughts and even some discussion about Him – without even pretending that He was in the room.

I remember how my mother used to get disappointed to the point of tears when I did things that she thought were wrong. I remember how horrible I felt disappointing her. It's that same feeling that I sense when I disappoint God. I hate that feeling. I hate the thought that He is sad because His son – me – ignores Him, ignores His presence, and ignores His wishes.

"These are my children. They are your brothers and sisters. I love them and I want them to be with me to all eternity. Feed my sheep."

Leah and Dwight planned a special hamburger breakfast on Easter Sunday. They asked my crew and me to help out. It has been such an honor to feed His sheep on the day His son brings life and hope to the world. ♦

** Dave Warner has recently resigned from the Board of Directors of the St. Thomas More Society after years of faithful service due to relocation. We thank Dave and wish him well and offer him our continued friendship and prayers.*

1. How did you come to the Legal profession?

A variety of influences lead me to the law. When I was a child I saw the law as a way to protect myself and others from various systemic abuses of civil rights, etc. When I was in college, and working at UCI medical center in the department of Obstetrics, I saw the law as a way to defend doctors from malpractice lawsuits - that were not really malpractice. It appeared to me that all groups of people needed some sort of protection. After I graduated with a Bachelor's degree in psychology, I wavered between a professional degree in Psychology and a career in law. I ultimately decided that I could help a broader group of people if I were to choose law.

2. Who had the most profound impact on the development of your Christian faith?

The Holy Spirit. No one in my family is a practicing Catholic but me, and I did not have any Catholics around me when I started on this journey. A few years ago I was feeling lost. At that moment "I" decided that I needed to immediately take steps to become Catholic – but I didn't really know why I felt or thought that way. I had no sponsor and no person guiding me. Once I made the decision to become Catholic, I did some internet research and found out that my local Parish had an RCIA class (Right of Christian Initiation for Adults) starting the following week. I started attending the RCIA classes weekly and hadn't even been to mass yet. It was at the classes where my faith developed and I started to meet people who has similar backgrounds as me and also had a very strong Catholic Faith. I learned and

7 QUESTIONS

with

**Shannon
Thomas**



became a member of the community. However, without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I never would have made it to the class.

3. What is your favorite book?

I like books that take me to foreign nations, teach me about foreign cultures, and times long past. There is one book called "Sister of my Heart" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni that I particularly enjoyed.

4. Who is your favorite saint?

Since I am a fairly new Catholic, I have a limited knowledge of all of the Saints. My religious education and faith formation experiences have been limited to the RCIA classes I attended and mass. When I was growing up I attended the Baptist church, and learned about the 12 apostles. When I became Catholic, I learned about the apostles from a very different perspective as saints. At this point, my favorite Saint is St. Peter, for he is the rock upon whom Jesus built his church and the first Pope.

5. Do you have a favorite verse or story from scripture?

I like Jesus' parable of the prodigal son, because even though the prodigal son didn't "deserve" to be taken back into the father's house, the father's love was unconditional and the father took him back with open arms.

6. What do you appreciate most about the faith?

I appreciate the universality of it the most because it really does make me feel like a part of the body of Christ. I appreciate that I can go into any Catholic Church in the world and they will all be reading the same scriptures.

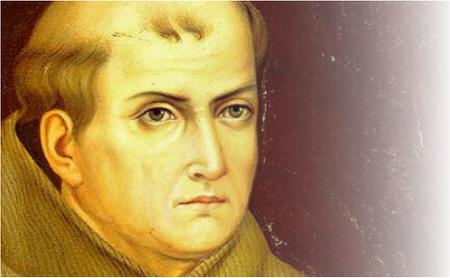
7. What advice can you give to a young lawyer on living the Catholic faith in the legal profession?

Being a new Catholic, but not a new lawyer, I struggle with this

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

JUNIPERO SERRA, PART I

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)



your peoples. The cultural oppression, the injustices, the disruption of your life and of your traditional societies must be acknowledged.”

Some of the criticism leveled against Serra and the California missions, however, can hardly be described as objective or historical. At times the rhetoric—with references to the missions as “death camps” and the unintended epidemics as “genocide”—has crested beyond mere hyperbole and approached the defamatory. Archbishop José Gomez of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has recently called for “a new

conversation about Father Serra and the missionary era.” In Gomez’ view, the negative reaction surrounding Father Serra’s canonization demonstrates just how distorted his legacy has become over the years. “Unfortunately,” he says, “a lot of the arguments out there resort to old stereotypes that can be traced back to the anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic propaganda of the ‘black legend.’ Even in the best scholarly writing, we can detect strong prejudice against Catholic beliefs and deep skepticism about the Church’s missionary project.”

Notably, the critique of Serra is often focused primarily on the colonial system of which he was a part rather than on the moral character of the missionary himself. In his personal life, Serra was clearly driven by an intense desire to share his love of Christ with those who did not yet know Him. Although he, like the other missionaries of his time, spoke in paternalistic tones about the natives, his letters demonstrate that he loved and cared for them. Also, Serra’s penitential practices

are acts to admire if not necessarily imitate. For example, he slept only a few hours per night on a board while clutching a one-foot crucifix. After rising with his confreres at midnight to say the office, he routinely eschewed returning to bed and would instead pray and read until dawn. In short, Serra reportedly exhibited heroic virtue and the other trappings of sanctity, even though the Spanish colonial system in which he operated was far from perfect. The Church is canonizing a man, not a system. ♦

[Next month, Part II of this series will examine Saint Junipero Serra’s legacy in the California Missions and in July, Part III will take stock of the balance of the Saint’s overall contributions.]

* *Patrick Laurence, an attorney, writes frequently on legal, cultural, and philosophical issues from Orange County, California. He and his wife, Kristen, are the proud parents of three children. This material is reprinted with permission.*

7 QUESTIONS WITH SHANNON THOMAS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

I became Catholic. Before I became Catholic, I decided that in Family Law I would be able to help families through the adversarial divorce process with the least amount of acrimony possible. Thus, helping to protect children through an adversarial system that places parents against each other and is not designed for families. However, after I became Catholic, I learned that that Pope

question myself. I personally have not quite reconciled the practice area (family law) that I chose before

John Paul II indicated that Christian lawyers shouldn’t really practice family law. Now, as a lawyer who has practiced my whole career in family law, I have to decide whether I can reconcile my Catholic faith with the law that I practice, or whether I ultimately should transition into another area. So, to a new Catholic lawyer I would say – pick your practice area wisely and do not necessarily accept the first position that comes along. Make sure that you can work in your practice area without moral conflict. Surround yourself with other lawyers of the faith and become part of that legal community. It will be in that community that you will find the peers that you need and observe how to practice with integrity and honor. ♦