

# ad. veritatem

ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY

**MAY 2014**

VOLUME 19 ISSUE 4

Beggars Leading  
Beggars to  
the Feast  
**GREGORY WEILER**



Mother of  
Grace  
**JOHN J. FLYNN III**



# BEGGARS LEADING BEGGARS TO THE FEAST

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN GREGORY N. WEILER



I don't know about you, but when I read about people like Saint Francis, Mother Theresa or Pope St. John Paul II and their great accomplishments, I sometimes think: "Well, it's easier for them to be holy, after all, they're saints—they must be God's favorites or somehow are better able to tap into Grace. I'm stuck in this life, families, a legal practice, problems, pressure or just not as good at prayer and God stuff as these other holy people."

Or, maybe I'm just not as "good" as these God-focused folks.

Perhaps you may even think of the lawyers/judges active in the St Thomas More Society the same way – somehow better Catholics than you.

Such an attitude is both false and a bit of a cop out.

We are all made for greatness, lives of significance—that's our destiny. We are all in the exact same boat. We can only be the best versions of ourselves—or in another word, saints—with and by God's grace.

Pope Francis would be the first to tell you that he's "just a beggar leading other beggars to the Feast," and that feast is eternity with God. We all need redemption, all need a savior. And the last I heard, every heartbeat and every breath is a gift.

So for the people we consider great, is holiness easier for them? I don't think so. They are perhaps just more realistic and maybe a bit better in sorting through the lies, disorder and priorities of our culture and seizing the happiness freely offered by Our Lord. Therein lies the opportunity for happiness and holiness, becoming the beggar that leads others to the Feast. PAX ~ GNW

*Gregory N. Weiler is a partner at Palmieri, Tyler, Wiener, Wilhelm & Waldron LLP in Irvine.*

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The St. Thomas More Society of Orange County is an independent organization sponsored by lawyers and judges who are practicing members of the Roman Catholic Church.

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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

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# MOTHER OF GRACE

JOHN J. FLYNN III

May is the month of Mary. How unlikely yet fitting it is that this perfect model of humility should have produced in Christian history such intense debate and division. The truth is a sword, indeed, but once it cuts, it leaves the divided free, and the call of truth remains. The division itself ironically creates a kind of corridor for dialogue. The light of truth continues to burn despite the division, still drawing the divided parties ahead:

Dialogue does not originate from tactical concerns or self-interest, but is an activity with its own guiding principles, requirements and dignity. It is demanded by deep respect for everything that has been brought about in human beings by the Spirit who blows where he wills. Through dialogue, the Church seeks to uncover the “seeds of the Word,” a “ray of that truth which enlightens all men”; these are found in individuals and in the religious traditions of mankind. Dialogue is based on hope and love, and will bear fruit in the Spirit. Other religions constitute a positive challenge for the Church: they stimulate her both to discover and acknowledge the signs of Christ’s presence and of the working of the Spirit, as well as to examine more deeply her own identity and to bear witness to the fullness of Revelation which she has received for the good of all.

This gives rise to the spirit which must enliven dialogue in the context of mission. Those engaged in this dialogue must be consistent with their own religious traditions and convictions, and be open to understanding those of the other party without pretense or close-mindedness, but with truth, humility and frankness, knowing that dialogue can enrich each side. There must be no abandonment of principles nor false irenicism, but instead a witness given and

received for mutual advancement on the road of religious inquiry and experience, and at the same time for the elimination of prejudice, intolerance and misunderstandings. Dialogue leads to inner purification and conversion which, if pursued with docility to the Holy Spirit, will be spiritually fruitful.

(*John Paul II, Encyclical, Redemptoris Missio (1990), § 56.*)

But effective dialogue begins with adequate self-understanding. The great Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar perfectly summarized this additional irony:

Here, the longstanding ecumenical rule is vindicated once again: Each denomination should first explore the depths of its own beliefs rather than try to reach out, for these depths may indeed provide the common ground to meet the other.

(*Hans Urs von Balthasar, Commentary, Mary: God’s Yes to Man [John Paul II’s Encyclical, Redemptoris Mater] (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), 162.*)

The Marian aspect of Christianity lies at these depths, opening one of the corridors of dialogue, at the same time shedding a profound light on the essentially maternal nature of the Church. The maternity of Mary belongs to the family of Christian mysteries. St. Maximilian Kolbe even went so far as to link Our Lady’s maternity to the maternity embedded in the very life of the Trinity, the central mystery of the Church. The Church, too, is called “Mother,” and perhaps the motherhood we know in this life was intended in the plan of God to echo these deeper types of maternity, in the Trinity, and in the Church. It is Mary whose assent gave birth to Christ, and the Church who gives birth daily to Christ, outside of whom there is no grace. Mary is the embodiment of the Church’s mysterious maternity, the Mother of Grace. ♦



# PUT OUT INTO THE DEEP

Are you content with your spiritual life?

Do you often find yourself frazzled, exhausted, and seemingly under assault from all sides?

Do you have that gnawing feeling that you could be a better spouse or parent? Are you not at peace even though you are a “successful” lawyer or judge?

Do you simply “long” for more? Do you want to make Jesus more than an abstraction in your life?

Troubling questions, huh?!

If you have the gumption to really put out into the deep, to change the status quo for the good, consider one of these life changing spiritual adventures.

## **Missionaries of the Poor**

Please join a small group of STMS members in visiting and serving with the Missionaries of the Poor in their clinics in Jamaica or Haiti. Father Ho Lung (often seen on EWTN) and his brothers serve the least of our brethren (clinics which serve orphans, the severely handicapped, HIV infected and all the disenfranchised) with unbelievable selflessness. Join the brothers for a week in their Monastery, with them in their monastic prayer and venture out each day to serve. While not for those desiring a little spiritual vacation, your visit will be life changing and will, in a way that cannot be described in words, blast you out of what might be a Christian comfort zone.

An incidental benefit will be to be with Father Ho Lung, a priest who we can only liken to a living Mother Theresa.

If you're interested, call Gregory Weiler: (949) 300-4581.

## **The Spiritual Exercises**

Join one of the small groups for the famous Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola, the same exercises that every Jesuit experiences during a 30-day retreat but which we laity can experience over nine months. These are the same exercises which formed Pope Francis!

Meet once a week with a small group and leader and pray through Scripture in a “special” way for nine months. The Spiritual Exercises have been a pillar of Catholic formation for almost five Centuries and are available to us in Orange County. If you ask around many of the most passionate Catholics you know will have gone through the exercises.

**For more information contact David Werner: (949) 244-1566.**

## **Attend a Cursillo Retreat**

Cursillo, called a “short course in Christianity” has probably influenced more passionate Catholics in Orange County than any other movement or Ministry. How? Again it is hard to describe how a three-day retreat can be life changing.

However there is no denying that the men and women who start the Retreat Thursday night are enabled, Grace charged, and are sort of divinized by Sunday afternoon. The founders of the STMS started the Society after their Cursillo. It's not some secret society or clique, but rather a three-day retreat with 15 talks that build on each other, all given in the “oven” of an incredibly loving Christian community.

Cursillo is a Catholic must, especially if you think you don't need it!

**Email Don Hunsberger (dah@hunsbergerlaw.com) for more information.**

If you long for more, pray on participating in one of these gifts. “Lord should I do this? Lord, give me the courage and Grace to break my spiritual complacency.”