ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY
DECEMBER 2013
VOLUME 18 ISSUE 10

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The Light of the Stable
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HYPOCRITES, SINNERS OR SAINTS?

PRESIDENT’S COLUMN
GREGORY N. WEILER

I was complaining to my spiritual advisor (for the uninitiated, that means my “spiritual director”) that I was burdened by the “feelings” of hypocrisy. After all I’m Catholic, and we Catholics set a pretty high bar for virtue and charity. Yet I screw up all the time: Who am I to urge others to a holiness that so often eludes me?

Father Leo smiled and said “Oh Greg, you’re not a hypocrite. A hypocrite thinks he’s OK. You know you’re messed up. You are just a sinner on the road to sainthood.”

Oh, thank you. I feel so much better.

Thus is the joy of Advent, the awareness of the soon-to-be celebrated Salvation event, the reality of the coming of the only means possible of taking us from sinner to saint.

As Father Leo also pointed out, it is grace that makes us want to share the reality of the Redeemer’s coming, Emanuel, or God with us—He is the means to our personal salvation. For the mystery of the Incarnation had to precede the Cross and empty tomb. And because of that, we can revel for a time in the joy of the Babe and unabashedly share the merriness of Christmas.

That’s the job, the raison d’etre, of our STMS community: to clearly and lovingly share/proclaim to the legal community our great joy and our Great News (that sure sells better than St. John the Baptist merry line, “repent you brood of vipers”).

Merry Christmas to you and your families. PAX ~ GNW

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Every mystery of the faith defies the containment of human thought, and the limitations of human experience. Yet they still illuminate, and increase understanding.

The divine mysteries are not mysteries to be solved, even if they could be. We are guided by the inborn intuition (which must be actively suppressed if we are to be free of it) that the perfect goodness and love of God lies at the heart of every mystery, that the truth, in a sense, is too much for us, better than our dearest and deepest hopes. We can walk only so far on the path of intellect (in the narrow sense), and then must leap, trusting as we fall that the life ahead exceeds this one by incomprehensible magnitudes, sin and death and sorrow all destroyed forever by the love of God, revealed by his Son, born of a woman.

Joy is the specific happiness of union, and at Christmas we rejoice in the union of the human and the divine, God with us, the infant king who reordered kingship.

We deceive ourselves to think that the joy of Christmas can ever be produced by anything merely human. It is produced only by the action of God, received by the human heart with an immeasurable joy that rightly brings to mind the very energies unleashed at the moment of creation: “Let there be light,” the light of the world, the light that destroys the darkness, and, at Christmas, the Light of the Stable.