

On Line and On Point

MARY MOTHER OF JESUS INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
marymotherofjesus.org

HOPE LEADS IN 2022—This dynamic of being able to yield unconditionally to God's future is what John of the Cross calls hope, a hope that exists without the signature of our life and works, a hope independent of us and our accomplishments (spiritual gifts or ordinary human achievements), a hope that can even embrace and work for a future without us. This theological hope is completely free from the past, fully liberated from our need to recognize ourselves in the future, to survive, to be someone.

This gift of hope is what allows author Victoria Loorz and others to embrace a "post-doom" spirituality which is large enough to face climate crises and not be driven to despair. Grounded in the Gospel, such hope affirms that love is stronger than death. Loorz writes:

Post-doom spirituality . . . accepts the fullness of our reality: the tragedy as well as the beauty. This spirituality moves into—and then eventually beyond—grief and repentance toward a deeper, more courageous, compassionate, and spiritual aliveness. . . .

Facing the reality that we're standing on a precipice right now, as a species and as a whole planet, is sobering, to say the least. But facing what is real opens the heart to grief, which somehow opens the heart to love even more deeply. . . .

When you reconnect with the alive world in a more compassionate way, and when you realize that the whole world is a living system that can only thrive when death makes room for new life, you may feel a calm settle into you. You may find yourself with the energy that comes from love to embrace the whole story, including the necessary emptiness and loss. . . .

When we look toward what has been lost with the climate crisis or other ecological damage that our species has inflicted, we do still need to strive



toward repair, but the cure is within our own mentality. The mentality that love really is as strong as death (like the beloved says to the lover in [the] Song of Solomon) compels us to regard those of us who remain—forests, polar bears, wilderness, people—with fierce love, looking toward how we can all live our highest quality of life together as beloved community, no matter what. We do not need to minimize or overlook the pain and tragedy we encounter as we live in this time of interwoven crises. Eventually, when we recognize that the pain is directly connected with our love, we can embrace it. We can move into actions of restoration that are firmly planted in love.—Theologian and Carmelite sister *Constance FitzGerald*

SEARCHERS—"Once they saw a star that pointed to a promised land, to a land of peace. Peacemakers set out to follow that star. It is both a joyful and arduous journey. Sometimes the star shines brightly, the promise seems certain, and, the pilgrims can sing. 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring God's peace.' Often the star disappears, clouded over, hidden from view, and the pilgrims grope blindly, grow discouraged, get weary, give thought to settling down, to forgetting the promise of peace. . . . An occasional oasis for the spirit is essential, a time to feast on the refreshing waters, the rich food of the spirit in order to get strength to continue the pilgrimage through darkness, star-shine or not."—*Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB*

OFFERINGS—We are grateful for your continued contribution toward the growth and development of our community. Thank you so much. Please remember to make your regular donations to MMOJ by sending your check to MMOJ % St.

Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community Mission Statement

We are a Christ-centered community of equals, consisting of women and men, ordained and non-ordained, empowered by the Spirit whose mission is to worship, to serve, to promote compassion, justice and care for creation. Come join us.

Send articles/info by Wed to be published on weekend: rjbannerusa@gmail.com

Andrew UCC, 6908 Beneva Road, Sarasota. FL 34238.

Remember: MMOJ continues to donate 5% of all received offerings each month to Outreach, which will continue to focus on real issues of food and hunger in our surrounding communities.

OUTREACH—The current recipient of our offered financial support continues to be All Faiths Food Bank of Sarasota [AFFB] in its task of providing food for hungry and needy children. AFFB understands that hunger is a health issue and its mission is, “Together with our partners, we provide healthy solutions to end hunger in our community.” AFFB seeks to equitably serve agency partners who distribute food to those struggling with hunger. AFFB focuses on the population in our community known as the Asset Limited, Income Constrained Employed {ALICE}. The ALICE population represents those among us who are working, but due to childcare costs, transportation challenges, high cost of living and so much more are living paycheck to paycheck. 37% of households in Sarasota struggle to afford their basic needs

MOVIE CORNER

We recently watched an old favorite, the Whoopi Goldberg, 1993 classic, **Sister Act II**. We were able to stream it for free on the Roku Channel. It's one of the few sequels that I liked even better than the original production. It left me joyously humming Oh Happy Day and Ode to Joy for days. Although a great feel good movie, it was a sad reminder of the abandonment of many inner city Catholic schools.

Keep sending your comments, criticisms, suggestions, to ponce.beth@gmail.com —*Beth Ponce*

101 Ways to Foster Nonviolence in your life —

11. Listen.
12. Get training in nonviolence.
13. Take responsibility for ending injustice.
14. Buy locally-made, produced or grown products.
15. Avoid stereotypes.
16. Ask for forgiveness.

17. Challenge someone who says something offensive, be it a comment or a joke.
18. Say thank you—and mean it.
19. Learn another language or study another culture.
20. Plant flowers or trees.—*to be continued*

THE QUEENS CAME LATE —Three Wise Women—*[remembering the first MMOJ newsletter editor, Carol Ann Breyer and her insistence it was this way]*

The Queens came late, but the Queens were there/ With gifts in their hands and crowns in their hair.

They'd come, these three, like the Kings, from far,/ Following, yes, that guiding star./

They'd left their ladles, linens, and looms,/ Their children playing in nursery rooms,/ And told their sitters: “Take charge! For this is a marvelous sight we must not miss!”

The Queens came late, but not too late/ To see the animals small and great,/ Feathered and furred, domestic and wild,/ Gathered to gaze at a mother and child.

And rather than frankincense and myrrh/ And gold for the babe, they brought for her/ Who held him, a homespun gown of blue, And chicken soup—with noodles, too

And a lingering, lasting, cradle-song/.

The Queens came late and stayed not long, For their thoughts already were straining far — Past manger and mother and guiding star And a child aglow as a morning sun — Toward home and children and chores undone.— *[Norma Farber (1909-1984) – from “When It Snowed That Night”].*

Celebrating Brigit of Kildare

In a free, one-hour sacred journey, meet Brigit of Kildare as a wisdom figure and mentor for our time.

Retreat Facilitator: Dr. Bridget Mary Meehan
February 1, 2022 – noon EST in Zoom and Facebook Live. Register for free at: <https://pcseminary.teachable.com/p/pcs-705-celebrating-st-brigid-of-kildare>



STAFF—*Russ Banner, editor; Joan Pesce, Lee Breyer, Anna Davis, text review; Beth Ponce and Dotty Shugrue, features*

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VOW OF NONVIOLENCE

[In order to make the vow of nonviolence a source of daily reflection and commitment, the following guide was constructed from the PAX CHRISTI USA vow]

SUNDAY--Recognizing the violence in my own heart, yet trusting in the goodness and mercy of God, I *vow for one year to practice the nonviolence of Jesus* who taught us in the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons and daughters of God... You have learned how it was said, 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy,' but I say to you, 'Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. In this way, you will be daughters and sons of your Creator in heaven.'"

MONDAY--Before God the Creator and the Sanctifying Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus, by *striving for peace within myself and seeking to be a peacemaker in my daily life*. God, I trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it.

TUESDAY--Before God the Creator and the Sanctifying Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus, by *accepting suffering rather than inflicting it*. God, I trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it.

WEDNESDAY--Before God the Creator and the Sanctifying Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus, by *refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence*. God, I trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it.

THURSDAY--Before God the Creator and the Sanctifying Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus, by *persevering in nonviolence of tongue and heart*. God, I trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it.

FRIDAY--Before God the Creator and the Sanctifying Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus, by *living conscientiously and simply so that I do not deprive others of the means to live*. God, I trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it.

SATURDAY--Before God the Creator and the Sanctifying Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus, by *actively resisting evil and working nonviolently to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth*. God, I trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it.

submitted by Pax Christi USA--Manasota Chapter [Florida]