

On Line and On Point

MARY MOTHER OF JESUS INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

marymotherofjesus.org



GUN VIOLENCE CONTINUES—

The assault at Robb Elementary School in the small town of Uvalde was the deadliest shooting at a school in the United States since a gunman killed 20 children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut, in December 2012.

An 18-year-old gunman has opened fire at the above elementary school in the US state of Texas, killing at least 19 children and two teachers as he went from classroom to classroom, before being shot dead by police.

Hours after the attack, families were still awaiting word from their children.

Bridget Mary posted all the above information to us in an earlier message. We can bring this violence to an end by our action. We know that 81% of Americans Support Gun Safety, so our voices need to be heard. You can call your senator[s], and make sure they are

going to support legislation that protects our children and grandchildren now.

Call THEM now. (202) 224-3121.

[A thank you to Bridget Mary for the borrowed words from her recent posting]

OFFERINGS— If you have made a recent donation to our community, we thank you for your generosity. We are most grateful for your demonstrated care and concern. Thank you. Please remember to make your regular donations to MMOJ by sending your check to MMOJ % St. 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 is All Faiths Food Bank of Sarasota [AFFB] in its task of providing food for hungry and needy families and children. Please be generous.

MOVIE CORNER

Earlier this month in Daily Meditation on evil and the nature of violence Fr. Richard Rohr wrote: "In a series of sermons, radio addresses, newspaper articles, and public speeches, Archbishop Óscar

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

Romero (1917–1980) of El Salvador called the people of his church and his nation to return to gospel values, particularly those of justice and love as a way to end violence.” adults at Sandy Hook

This reminded me of how much I liked the 1989 movie **Romero**, starring Raul Julia. It was such a powerful portrayal of one man’s growth in social consciousness and how he came to oppose the tyrannical oppression in El Salvador. Although many of you have probably seen it, it’s worth watching again. According to just watch.com it is available for streaming on Tubi, Pure Flix and Vix. It can also be rented or purchased on AppleTV and Amazon.—*Beth Ponce*
Send your suggestions for movies to watch, to ponce.beth@gmail.com

ROHR ON TRANSFIGURATION—

The last homily I delivered was a little over two years ago, in March of 2020, right before the pandemic shut down the world. The gospel reading that morning was Matthew’s account [17:1-9] of the Transfiguration of Jesus. In this story, Jesus is preparing his disciples for the cross—“It’s going to come, so be ready,” he seems to say. Jesus knows it’s the only thing that’s going to transfigure them, and the same thing goes for us, too. You see, suffering has this strange and marvelous ability to pull us into *oneness*. Maybe you’ve seen it happen in your family, at the funeral of a loved one, or during some other communal tragedy. I think many of us felt it in the early days of the pandemic—before our dualistic politics got in the way. We realized there was a sense that we were in it together.

Until we find the *communal meaning and significance* of the suffering of all life, we will continue to retreat into our individual, small worlds in our misguided quest for personal safety and sanity. A Crucified God is the dramatic symbol of the *one suffering* that God fully enters into with us—not just for us, as we were mostly taught to think, but in *solidarity* with us. The Good News is that we do not have to hold that suffering alone. In fact, we *cannot* hold it alone.

During the Easter season, let us remember that we too can follow this path, actively joining God’s loving solidarity with all. What starts in God ends in God. All of reality is moving toward resurrection. This is the great hope of our tradition that is becoming more and more necessary for the world to hear.—*Richard Rohr*

GOD IS NO THING—*Author Lisa Colón DeLay offers insight into the origins of contemplative prayer, which include the experience of God beyond what we know:*

The desert elders would sink deeply and continually into what they called the “prayer of quiet.” This type of prayer is called apophatic prayer. It does not employ words. Apophatic prayer involves a mindful and relinquishing disposition in the process of communing with God. This contemplative method of praying does not use images, requests, intercessions, and rituals. It involves the quieting of one’s spirit and the settling into the essence of being, which allows one to be found in the presence of God. Many of us in Western context and cultures are accustomed to only word-based praying. We understand God mainly through an acquisition of

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

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knowledge that affirms what and who God is. This is the kataphatic way of knowing God. This is the first way we begin to know God (or anything, for that matter): with definitions, descriptions, concepts, categories, images, and words. After some development, we understand more fully that God is transcendent, uncontainable. We may notice that God shatters any box of mental understanding we have been misusing. Then we may come to a place that points beyond conceptions so that we may start to discover what God is not and allow room for what we can hardly conceive—God is no thing. Sometimes other names can help disrupt our hardened and limited concepts of God: Divine Love, Mystery, Source. Apophatic theology, seen most fully within Eastern Orthodox Christianity, invites the spiritually devoted beyond limitations and known categories to ways that make room for what we don't know and cannot comprehend about the Divine. The prayer of quiet draws us ever deeper into the Mystery that is worth growing familiar with but is ultimately unknowable in its totality. There is a boundlessness of the One who we, in English, sometimes call God, and apophatic prayer may lead us into that unknowing to experience the divine beyond what we know.



Father Richard stresses the importance of not-knowing to the authentic life of faith: To presume we know is always dangerous. There is an arrogance that comes from knowing and thinking that we normally have the right answer. That's why great spiritual traditions balance the kataphatic way (knowing God through

*words and ideas) with the apophatic way (knowing God through silence and unknowing). We see it very clearly in the desert fathers and mothers, and it lasts pretty much through the first thousand years of Christianity. The Franciscan theologian Bonaventure (c. 1217–1274) ended his classic text *The Soul's Journey into God* with this instruction, which represents the apophatic tradition of unknowing: *If you wish to know how**

these things come about, ask [for] grace, not instruction, desire not understanding, the groaning of prayer not diligent reading, the Spouse not the teacher, God not man, darkness not clarity, not light but the fire that totally inflames and carries us into God.

The above selection from Richard Rohr's *Meditations* was offered us by Joan Pesce

