

**St. Thomas More Society**  
**of San Francisco**  
[www.stthomasmore-sf.org](http://www.stthomasmore-sf.org)

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*Regis Servus Dei Prius*

June 20, 2016

Dear Members and Friends of the Society:

If you have not yet paid your 2016 Society dues, please do that as soon as possible. The Society depends on dues to cover costs of the monthly luncheons, the annual Red Mass and banquet, and other activities including the Pope Francis Legal Clinic, De Marillac Academy projects, the law student scholarship, the Christmas luncheon and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade essay contest. Dues are \$75 for lawyers with five years or more of practice, and \$25 for retired lawyers and those with less than five years of practice. Please send dues to Society Treasurer, Andres Orphanopoulos, 2350 Kerner Blvd, Suite 360, San Rafael, CA 94901

**June Lunch**

**Date:** Thursday, June 23; 12:00 noon  
**Place:** The Family Club, 545 Powell Street, San Francisco  
**Cost:** \$52, \$42 (less than 10 years practice), \$25 (law students and clergy) There is no cost for first time guests.  
**Speaker:** Gina Hens-Piazza

Dr. Hens-Piazza is a professor of Biblical Studies at the Jesuit School of Theology at Santa Clara and the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley. Using slides of her travels to the

Holy Land, Dr. Hens-Piazza will address the role of women in the Bible, and specifically “Revisiting the Annunciation, Liberation Mariology.”

Reserve your place by responding via Evite, using the attached reservation form, or simply emailing Andres at [orphanopoulos@gmail.com](mailto:orphanopoulos@gmail.com).

### **De Marillac Academy**

Thanks to board members, Tony Phillips and Karen Kimmey for coordinating two field trips for students of De Marillac. On May 18<sup>th</sup>, the fifth graders visited the offices of Farella, Braun & Martel to experience the workings of a busy law office, while the 8<sup>th</sup> graders visited the California Attorney General’s Office.

We continue to look for ways to help and serve this school which serves low income families in the Tenderloin and surrounding communities, so if you have any ideas, please let me or any board members know.

### **Red Mass**

Date: October 25, 5:30 p.m.

Place: St. Peter and Paul Church, 666 Filbert Street, San Francisco.

The banquet will follow Mass at the San Francisco Italian Athletic Club (right across Washington Square from the church). Please put the Red Mass on your calendar now. The tradition of San Francisco’s Catholic lawyers attending Mass together, and then enjoying a banquet, is a long one going back some 70 years.

### **Fortnight For Freedom**

Tuesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> (the feast day of our patron, St. Thomas More) marks the beginning of the American Church’s “Fortnight For Freedom.” Lasting until July 4, the Church asks us to reflect on, pray and celebrate our right of religious freedom as Americans. To summarize, the conference of Catholic Bishops states:

We are Catholics. We are Americans. We are proud to be both, grateful for the gift of faith which is ours as Christian disciples, and grateful for the gift of liberty which is ours as American citizens. To be Catholic and American should mean not having to choose one over the other. Our allegiances are distinct, but they need not be contradictory, and should instead be complementary. That is the teaching of our Catholic faith, which obliges us to work together with fellow citizens for the common good of all who live in this land. That is the vision of our founding and our

Constitution, which guarantees citizens of all religious faiths the right to contribute to our common life together.

I believe it was by design that our founding fathers made religious freedom the very first of our enumerated rights. If we as citizens are not free in our conscience, and to fully practice our faith and religion, no other of our freedoms can be secure. This right of religious freedom is to freely “exercise” our religion, not merely the right to “worship.” Pope Francis in his trip to the U.S. stated:

"I would like to reflect with you on the right to religious freedom. It is a fundamental right, which shapes the way we interact socially and personally with our neighbors whose religious views differ from our own.

"Religious freedom certainly means the right to worship God, individually and in community, as our consciences dictate. But religious liberty, by its nature, transcends places of worship and the private sphere of individuals and families."

Any effort to limit that right to within the four walls of the church building is misguided, and a disservice to both our country and society.

### **Blessed Anacleto Gonzalez Flores**

This month's holy lawyer, relatively near in both location and time is Blessed Anacleto Gonzales Flores, whose life and sacrifice should be reflected upon during the Fortnight For Freedom.

Starting in 1917, a fiercely anti-Catholic Mexican government enacted laws hostile to the church and the exercise of their religion by Catholic Mexicans. These laws “outlawed teaching by the Church, gave control over Church matters to the state, put all Church property at the disposal of the state, outlawed religious orders, outlawed foreign-born priests, gave states the power to limit or eliminate priests in their territory, deprived priests of the right to vote or hold office, prohibited Catholic organizations which advocated public policy, prohibited religious publications from commenting on public policy, prohibited clergy from religious celebrations and from wearing clerical garb outside of a church and deprived citizens of the right to a trial for violations of these provisions. Priests were killed for trying to perform the sacraments, altars were desecrated by soldiers and freedom of religion outlawed by generals.” Among the many who refused to be silent was Gonzalez, the second of twelve children born to a poor family in Jalisco. After briefly studying in a seminary, Gonzalez did not feel the call to priesthood, and began the study of law at Escuela Libre de Derecho in Guadalajara, becoming an attorney in 1922. He attended Mass daily and engaged in numerous works of charity, including visiting prisoners and teaching catechism, while practicing civil law.

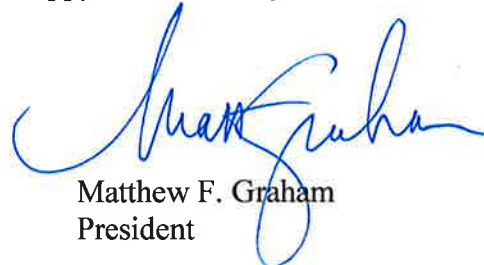
He became an activist and leader of the Catholic Association of Mexican Youth (ACJM) and founded the magazine La Palabra which attacked the anticlerical and anti-Catholic laws. He was the founder and president of the Popular Union (UP), an organization to organize Catholics to resist the persecution of the Church.

Originally, he supported passive resistance against the government, having studied the methods of Gandhi. However, in 1926 upon learning of the murder of four members of the Catholic Association of Mexican Youth he joined the National League for the Defense of Religious Freedom, supporting the coming rebellion. He wrote, "the country is a jail for the Catholic Church... We are not worried about defending our material interests because these come and go; but our spiritual interests, these we will defend because they are necessary to obtain our salvation."

In January 1927, having endured ten years of persecution, rebels began the Cristero War. González did not take up arms but gave speeches, encouraging Catholics to support the Cristeros financially and with food, accommodation and clothing. He wrote pamphlets and gave speeches supporting the cause against the anticlerical government.

Seeking to quash the rebellion, the government sought capture of the leaders of the Popular Union and the National League for the Defense of Religious Freedom. González was captured and framed with charges that he murdered an American, Edgar Wilkens, when in fact the government knew that Wilkens had been killed by his robber, Guadalupe Zuno. González was tortured, and on April 1, 1927, was executed by firing squad. Echoing the words of assassinated Ecuadorian President, Gabriel Garcia Moreno, in defiance of the forces seeking to suppress his faith, González' last words were, "Hear Americas for the second time: I die but God does not! Viva Cristo Rey!" Gonzalez was beautified in 2005 by Pope Benedict XXI, one of some forty saints and martyrs from the Cristero War so honored.

Hope to see you at lunch on Thursday. Happy Fourth of July, and God Bless America!



Matthew F. Graham  
President

And now, a few words from our Chaplain:

## “Reclaiming Innocence”

A couple of months ago, I was invited to dinner at the home of parishioners who had two young daughters. I asked the seven-year old what she wanted to be when she grows up. Without batting an eye, she said: “I want to be saint.” I was stunned. The only other time I have heard that was a few years ago at dinner with a friend in Atlanta, who of all things is an attorney.

She told me that, when she had been a little girl, her dream was to become a saint one day. She prayed daily, went to Mass every Sunday, loved catechism classes, and knew the rosary by heart at the age of four. She had wanted to be holy. Then she swirled the ice in her glass, looked away, and said in a small voice: “It’s too late. The things I’ve done. The compromises I’ve made. It’s impossible now.” She somehow believed that she could never reclaim the innocence she once had.

The last time I felt totally innocent, entirely pure, and completely whole as a person was in my early childhood. I remember watching Mr. Rogers on television while sitting in my mother’s lap. I felt safe, cared for, unconditionally loved, and completely innocent. I don’t think it is fortuitous that the times in our lives when we have felt the most innocent and pure—like a saint—are the same times in our lives when we have felt intensely loved.

A saint is not someone who has never sinned. A saint is someone who has allowed God to love them each day into greater and greater being. Saint Augustine wrote that,

when we were first created, we were made innocent and good. It was possible for us to sin, but also possible for us not to sin. After the Fall, when mankind sinned, it was no longer possible for us not to sin. But through Christ’s redemption for us on the cross, St. Augustine says, it became possible again for us not to sin.

It is possible not to sin. When we allow the living God to love us into greater and greater being, we no longer desire to sin. We no longer desire to turn away from his love, and we become innocent again because we really understand, perhaps for the first time in our lives, that we are intensely and unconditionally loved.

As a lawyer, I was subjected repeatedly to lawyer jokes. *What do you call a thousand dead lawyers?* *A good start.* I pretended to laugh, rather than make people feel uncomfortable. The common thread in these distasteful jokes is the assumption that lawyers are liars, cheaters, and generally despicable people. Sadly, I have even perpetuated this false stereotype. Sometimes when people have asked me what I did before becoming a priest, I told them that I was a lawyer and added, “well, I had to atone for my sins somehow.”

However, we must never allow ourselves to buy into these erroneous characterizations born of ignorance. We must never forget the good we do for society through the practice of law. Ours is noble profession, and we can be holy. We can reclaim our innocence. It is

possible not to sin, because we are worthy of love.

Holiness is allowing ourselves to be loved into greater and greater being by God, who sees the best in us and the person God has always intended us to be. Furthermore, once we have reclaimed our own innocence by recognizing the profound love of God, then we can be saints and love others into greater and greater being. Wouldn't that be a beautiful day in the neighborhood?

■ Father Roger Gustafson, Chaplain

**ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
2016 MEMBERSHIP FORM**

*Use this form to pay your annual dues and update your membership record.  
New members may use this form to join the Society.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Firm, Company, Court, or School: \_\_\_\_\_

Area(s) of Practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Year Admitted to Bar: \_\_\_\_\_ Retired from Practice? \_\_\_\_\_

Law Student? \_\_\_\_\_ Note: Law students membership is free.

Would you like to participate in our Mentor Program as a mentor or mentee?

Please accompany this application with current dues payment. Annual dues for 2016 are \$75.00 for attorneys with five years or more of practice and \$25.00 for retired attorneys and those with fewer than five years of practice. Law student membership is free. Please make checks payable to St. Thomas More Society.

*Return form and check to:*  
**Andres Orphanopoulos**  
**North Coast Land Holdings LLC**  
**2350 Kerner Boulevard, Suite 360**  
**San Rafael, California 94901**  
**Phone 650-224-1129 Fax 415-461-5946**  
**orphanopoulos@gmail.com**

ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY JUNE 2016 LUNCHEON RESERVATION

THE FAMILY CLUB

545 Powell Street, San Francisco

*Please use this Form to reserve your spot at the luncheon and to make payment.*

\_\_\_\_\_ I plan to attend the St. Thomas More Society Luncheon at 12:00 noon on June 23, 2016, at The Family Club, 545 Powell Street, San Francisco

Please reserve \_\_\_\_ place(s) \$52 per person.

Please reserve \_\_\_\_ place(s) \$42 per person (fewer than 10 years in practice).

Please reserve \_\_\_\_ place(s) \$25 per person (law students and clergy).

There is no charge for first-time prospective members of the Society.

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Member e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of other attendees for whom payment is submitted:

\_\_\_\_\_

I am bringing the following potential members as a Guest of the Society (no charge):

\_\_\_\_\_

The total amount of my enclosed check is \$\_\_\_\_\_.

*Please make checks payable to the "St. Thomas More Society of San Francisco." If you RSVP and cannot attend, please let us know in advance. Cancellations on less than 48 hours cannot be reimbursed.*

Please return this form and your check to our Treasurer:

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Telephone: (415) 461-2922  
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