

St. Thomas More Society of San Francisco

www.stthomasmore-sf.org

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Address Correspondence To:

Timothy P. Crudo
Coblentz Patch Duffy & Bass
LLP
One Montgomery Street
Suite 3000
San Francisco, CA 94104
Telephone: (415) 677-5219
tcruo@coblentzlaw.com

Regis Servus Dei Prius

September 3, 2015

Dear Members and Friends of the Society:

As brilliant and successful as he was, St. Thomas More had his ups and downs. He was human, after all. He struggled with his vocation, finally deciding that he would rather become a good husband than a bad priest. His first wife died when he was 33, leaving him with four children. He certainly lost clients and cases, and of course in the end he lost his head. Even so, and even to the end, he dealt with the inevitable setbacks of life with good humor and good faith.

Here's what he wrote to his wife upon learning that his barns (and some of his neighbors'), along with all of their wheat, had been destroyed in a fire:

Mistress Alice, in my most heartywise I recommend me to you. And whereas I am informed by my son Heron of the loss of our barns and our neighbours' also, with all the corn that was therein; albeit (saving God's pleasure) it is great pity of so much good corn lost; yet since it has liked him to send us such a chance, we must and are bounden, not only to be content, but also to be glad of his visitation. He sent us all that we have lost; and since he hath by such a chance taken it away again, his pleasure be fulfilled! Let us never grudge thereat, but take it in good worth, and heartily thank him, as well for adversity as for prosperity. And peradventure we have more cause to thank him for our loss than for our winning, for his wisdom better seeth what is good for us than we do ourselves. Therefore, I pray you be of good cheer, and take all the household with you to church, and there thank God, both for that he has given

us, and for that he has taken from us, and for that he hath left us; which, if it please him, he can increase when he will, and if it please him to leave us yet less, at his pleasure be it!

A little wisdom from the perspective of 500 years.

September Lunch

We resume our monthly lunches on Thursday, September 17, when our speaker will be Deputy California Attorney General Louis Karlin, a noted scholar, speaker, and author of numerous works about Thomas More, including *Liberated by Conscience: An Extended Review of The One Thomas More by Travis Curtright*, *A Guide to Thomas More's Trial for Modern Lawyers*, *Translation as Conversion: Thomas More's Life of John Picus*, *Thomas More's Dialogue Concerning Heresies and The Idea of The Church*, and *Law & Tyranny in More's History Of King Richard III: An Examination of The Sanctuary Debate*. Mr. Karlin, who will be traveling from Los Angeles just to speak with us, will pose the question, "Was Thomas More a Man for All Seasons?" For years, St. Thomas More has lived in the popular mind as the witty, gentle man of integrity and conscience as portrayed by Paul Scofield in Robert Bolt's award-winning play and screenplay. Now, there is a competing model: Hilary Mantel's depiction in *Wolf Hall*, where we discover a mean-spirited religious bigot who found pleasure in torturing those who dissented from the Catholic faith. Mr. Karlin will compare both fictional versions with the historical record in an attempt to find the real More and inquire whether he deserves to be our Patron. You won't want to miss this one.

Law Student News

Welcome back to our returning law student members. Our patron started law school at Lincoln's Inn in London in 1496, becoming a barrister in 1501. This fall, law school classes of 2016 start their final year. Whether you are a student or a practicing lawyer, please introduce law students you know to the Society. They can learn more about us by checking out our website (www.stthomasmore-sf.org/) or, better yet, bring them along for a free lunch as a prospective member. Law student membership is free.

Mass at San Quentin

Members and friends of the Society are invited to join the congregation at San Quentin State Penitentiary for 10:00 a.m. Mass on Sundays. The prison allows up to 10 visitors each Sunday, and advance clearance is required. If you are interested in attending, please contact Rev. George Williams, S.J., the prison's Catholic Chaplain, at least two weeks in advance. You will need to provide him with the full name, date of birth, social security number, and driver's license number for each visitor. You can reach Fr. Williams at george.williams.cdcr@ca.gov.

"For I was in prison, and you visited me." Mt. 25:35-46

Mentor Program

With law students returning to school and newly minted lawyers embarking on their careers, this is a great time to get involved with our Mentor Program, which matches law students and younger lawyers with more experienced attorneys who share practice and other interests. If you would like to participate as a mentor or mentee, please indicate your interest on the Membership Application or contact Laura Vartain Horn at lvartain@gmail.com.

The Red Mass

The Red Mass will be held Thursday evening, October 22, 2015, at Ss. Peter & Paul Church. The St. Thomas More Award, which the Society presents each year to a community member who exemplifies the Society's goal of practicing the ideals of service and sacrifice in the pursuit of justice as reflected in the life and death of St. Thomas More, is bestowed at the Red Mass, which will be followed by our celebratory dinner at the Italian Athletic Club. Keep your eyes on this space for the announcement of the St. Thomas Award winner.

Oakland Diocese Pro Bono Legal Clinic

The Diocese of Oakland has started a pro bono legal clinic to serve the poor and needy in Oakland. If you are interested in getting involved in this worthy cause, please contact Nico Herrera at 917-774-3511 or at nico@herreralegal.com.

Dean John Trasviña Receives Prestigious Ohtli Award

Please join us in congratulating U.S.F. law school dean and Society Executive Committee member John Trasviña, who has been awarded the 2015 Ohtli Award. The award, given by diplomatic representatives from the Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior within the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, honors the contributions of Mexican, Mexican-American or Latino leaders whose altruistic work and efforts have contributed significantly to the prosperity and empowerment of Latino communities. "Ohtli" is a Náhuatl word meaning "pathway" or "camino" in Spanish, and the Ohtli medallion, which has an image of footprints, symbolizes the right pathway that women and men will take to their destiny. The award ceremony was held at Fenway Park as part of the Hispanic National Bar Association's Annual Convention in Boston.

The Knights of St. Francis and La Porziuncola Nuova

Tucked away in North Beach next to the National Shrine of St. Francis of Assisi, La Porziuncola Nuova is a scaled replica of St. Francis's Porziuncola in Assisi, Italy, that provides a quiet place for prayer and reflection in the tradition of our City's patron saint. In 2008, Pope Benedict XVI's Papal Decree gave to the Nuova Porziuncola its own "Pardon of San Francisco," an expanded version of the Pardon of Assisi that St. Francis received from Pope Honorius III in 1216. This Papal Decree makes the Porziuncola Nuova only the fifth Papally Decreed Holy Place in the world and the first in the United States.

The Knights of St. Francis of Assisi, formed in San Francisco and dedicated to advancing the tenets of St. Francis, are designated the guardians of the Porziuncola Nuova. To commemorate La Porziuncola Nuova's 7th birthday, on October 2 the Knights are hosting a gala celebration featuring a performance by Franc D'Ambrosio, best known for his role as the Phantom of the Opera. Proceeds will benefit the Piazza Saint Francis, The Poets Plaza, to be constructed just outside the Porziuncola and National Shrine. To learn more about the Knights and how to get tickets for the event, please visit www.knightsofsaintfrancis.org/the-knights-of-saint-francis-of-assisi.

Nyumbani

Founded in the early 1990s by a Jesuit physician and psychiatrist, Nyumbani is a Catholic charity that operates the Nyumbani Children's Home, Kenya's first and largest facility for orphans with HIV. When it first opened its doors, HIV-positive children were simply abandoned by their parents and often died. With advances in treatment, the children are now living to adulthood and the orphanage has become more like a village. Nyumbani's director, Sister Mary Owens, IBVM, is coming to San Francisco this month for the group's first San Francisco/West Coast event. DLA Piper is hosting an evening with Sr. Mary on September 23 at 555 Mission Street in San Francisco. Admission is free. To rsvp, please email Travis Jensen at travis.jensen@dlapiper.com.

Chaplain's Corner

"Becoming 'the-Best-Version-of-Yourself' Takes Commitment"

As a young lawyer, I spent most of my days writing legal briefs. Because judges can be very demanding, every word needed to be perfect. I created version after version of the same brief until my bosses finally were satisfied. I remember on one occasion creating 29 different versions of the same document. Each was better than the previous. Some were only marginally improved, while others were total re-writes.

The internationally acclaimed Catholic author and speaker, Matthew Kelly, wrote a children's book about a boy named Max, who discovered from his grandfather on a fishing trip that he exists in order to become the-best-version-of-himself. From then on, Max tried each day to become a better person. He would eat right, share with others, do his chores, and study his homework.

When we become the-best-versions-of-ourselves, we develop habits of excellence that make us virtuous. We become the person God intends us to be. Our lives take on meaning and purpose because we begin to advance God's kingdom on earth. And just like writing and re-writing a paper so that each successive version is better than the last, we advance gradually over time, little-by-little, step-by-step. Each day we produce a new version of ourselves. With God's grace and a little effort, each version can be an improvement, sometimes only slightly but other times completely, from top to bottom through a total conversion.

To become the-best-version-of-himself, Max discovered that he would have to set the right priorities, work diligently, take a hard look at himself each day, and be willing to accept

criticism from others. To be the best version of ourselves, we, too, must do the next most important thing at every moment. We should work to overcome obstacles and take steps to make important changes in our lives. We should take a hard and honest look at ourselves and our past, acknowledging our fears, recognizing where we've gone wrong before, and setting aside our pride by regularly examining our conscience before God. We also must listen patiently and openly to criticism because taking direction from others encourages humility and fosters personal growth.

Each of these steps takes dedication. We will never become the-best-version-of-ourselves if we do not commit ourselves to the process. Most of us long to improve ourselves but often lack the commitment. We enjoy our freedom and do not want to be obligated or held accountable if we can avoid it. We frequently are irresolute about that which makes demands on us and shrink from responsibility. Unlike generations before us, we are not joiners and often hold back from community life.

Doing our own thing, however, makes us weak, diminishes our faith, and reduces the vitality of the Christian people as a whole. God asks us to commit our time, talent, and treasure to his Church and to those most in need. We become the-best-version-of-ourselves through commitment and the selflessness of fulfilling our duty as Christian disciples.

After Jesus healed the deaf man in the gospel reading this weekend, the people said that Jesus "has done all things well." (Mk. 7:37.) In the first reading, the Prophet Isaiah promises those of us with weak hearts and who are afraid to "fear not," for our God will come and open the eyes of the blind, clear the ears of the deaf, make the "lame leap like a stag" and the "tongue of the mute [to] sing." (Is. 35:5-6.) If our eyes are fixed on the Lord, our ears open to his Word, our feet committed to his path, and our mouths ready to praise God, then we, too, can "do all things well" and become the-best-version-of-ourselves.

■ Father Roger Gustafson, Chaplain

2015 Dues

The 2015 Membership Form is attached to this letter and may be used to pay your dues and to update membership records. Annual dues for 2015 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. Your dues are essential to the Society and enable us to fund events, attract quality speakers, and award scholarships, so please get them in. You can make your dues payment through PayPal or Venmo by following the links provided above.

We are continuing our efforts to attract new members, particularly among younger lawyers, and we encourage you to help us recruit new members to join the Society. Feel free to start by forwarding this newsletter to someone you think may be interested in joining. Remember that lunch is free for prospective members, so bring along a colleague, a friend, a parishioner, or even opposing counsel to our September lunch.

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We welcome your input, so if you have any questions, comments, or ideas for the Society, please feel free to contact any member of the Executive Committee.

Your good servant,



Timothy P. Crudo
President

ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY SEPTEMBER 2015 LUNCHEON RESERVATION
The Family Club
545 Powell Street at Bush Street

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 September 17, 2015, at The Family Club.

Please reserve ___ place(s) at \$52 per person (10 years or more in practice).

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

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

There is no charge for pastors or 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 member as a guest of the Society (no charge):

I would like to sponsor one or more law students or members of the clergy at \$25 per person and include \$ ___ in my check for this purpose.

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. The Society is charged for no-shows, so cancellations on less than 48 hours cannot be reimbursed.

Please return this form and your check to our Treasurer:

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 OF SAN FRANCISCO
2015 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 your dues payment. Annual dues for 2015 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