

St. Thomas More Society OF SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

ST

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Amelia M. Lancaster, Immediate Past President

Regis Servus Dei Prius

April 13, 2020

Dear Members:

On behalf of the 2020 Executive Committee of the St. Thomas More Society of San Francisco, Happy Easter! Although our celebrations this year are muted by the terrible pandemic we are living through, we can find strength in the fact that our current struggles are minor compared with those endured by Christ almost two millennia ago. We hope in these trying times everyone stays safe and enjoys the comforts of family.

Since at our last meeting the Board voted unanimously to suspend all STMS gatherings until safer times, this newsletter will be necessarily abbreviated. But please read on for an announcement regarding the Red Mass and a special quarantine reading list from esteemed member Matt Gordon. Also, see below for a special thanks to Father John Coleman, SJ, for a wonderful Theology on Tap event, and member Don Carroll for his extraordinary Lenten Series.

Finally, I hope we can all take solace from the knowledge that we are members of an extraordinary Catholic legal community that will be present for each other in times of need.

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February Theology on Tap

The Society's first Theology on Tap dinner was hosted by Father John Coleman, S.J., on Tuesday February 25, 2020, at the lovely Loyola House on USF's Lone Mountain campus. Our private dining room looked east over the approximately 900 new dormitory rooms being built for USF undergrads who otherwise couldn't afford to live in San Francisco. Father Coleman—an inspiring and prolific Catholic author and blogger—led a spirited and informative discussion of the movie *The Two Popes*. Thanks to all members who attended and made this one of the more special events in recent memory. I don't believe anyone was quite ready to leave when the evening came to an end.



2020 Lenten Series

As noted above, a very special thanks to Don Carroll for his moving four-part Lenten Series exploring the subject of mercy through Jesus' Parable of *The Prodigal Son*. This year the coronavirus forced Don to forego two of his normal physical gatherings for highly insightful written submissions. Based on personal feedback provided by a large number of members, I can say that Don's reflections were an overwhelming success. Don transformed a parable we've all heard since childhood into a perfect distillation of our Catholic faith. Don continues year-after-year to provide evidence of his role as one of the Society's most treasured assets.

Don also has suggested that Pope Francis' "*Urbi et Orbi*" ("To the City and The World") address on March 27, 2020, may prove useful to the faithful during this pandemic: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvE1ncKned8>

Quarantine Reading List

Thanks also to long-time STMS member Matt Graham for his suggestions for "Catholic" novels to read while under quarantine (or at any other time!). Matt's list and reflections are below:

- 1) *The Betrothed* (Alesandro Manzoni). "I like reading other people's favorite novel; I think it is an interesting insight into that person. *The Betrothed* is Pope Francis' favorite novel."
- 2) *Kristin Lavransdatter* (Sigrid Undset). "Written in [the] 20's as 3 separate novels by a Norwegian convert (before her conversion). 1100+ pages, but the best and most important novel I have ever read. Make sure you get the most recent translation (the Penguin edition)."
- 3) *The End of the Affair* or *The Heart of the Matter* (Graham Greene). "Maybe you read *The Power and the Glory* in school. These are two more of his four 'Catholic novels' and are better."

Upcoming Events

Red Mass – To end on a hopeful and optimistic note, please save Thursday October 15, 2020, for the Red Mass!

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Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Kearney', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Philip J. Kearney

President

Bryan Saalfeld

Vice President

St. Thomas More Society of San Francisco