

St. Thomas More Society
of San Francisco
www.stthomasmore-sf.org

Executive Committee

Matthew F. Graham, President
Karen P. Kimmey, 1st Vice President
Thomas P. Mazzucco, 2nd Vice President
Catherine M. Dacre, 3rd Vice President
Andres T. Orphanopoulos, Treasurer
Anthony D. Phillips, Secretary
Amelia M. Lancaster
Ethan P. Niedermeyer
Honorable Sharon M. Reardon
Honorable Peter J. Siggins
Dean John D. Trasvina,
University of San Francisco School of Law

Timothy P. Crudo,
Immediate Past President

Address Correspondence To:

Matthew F. Graham
Wendel, Rosen, Black & Dean LLP
1111 Broadway, 24th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607
Telephone: (510) 622-7520
mgraham@wendel.com

Regis Servus Dei Prius

May 12, 2016

Dear Members and Friends of the Society:

The Society has a very important and topical lunch presentation planned this month. I hope you can join us for lunch—and think about bringing a friend or colleague. Also, we have finalized the date for this year's Red Mass Banquet (more below).

May Lunch

Date: Thursday, May 26; 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 prospective members of the Society.

Speaker: San Francisco Police Commissioners, Suzie Loftus, Julius Turman and Thomas Mazzucco These three members of the San Francisco Police Commission will present a panel discussion on "Race, Policing and the SFPD in the 21st Century)

To register, use the attached reservation form, Email Andres at orphanopoulos@gmail.com or respond to the Evite.

Red Mass

The date for the annual Red Mass and banquet is Tuesday, October 25, 5:30 p.m. at St. Peter and Paul Church. The banquet will follow Mass at the San Francisco Italian Athletic Club (right across Washington Square from the church).

Originating in the Middle Ages and now celebrated annually in San Francisco and around the world at the opening of each Court year, the Red Mass seeks blessing and guidance for judges, attorneys, law school professors, law students, government officials, and others involved in the legal and justice systems, and indeed for all who seek justice. In England, the custom dates back to the reign of Edward I (1272-1307), and in France jurists have gathered since 1248 in La Sainte Chapelle to attend Mass at the commencement of the new Court Calendar. Its name refers to the red vestments traditionally worn to symbolize the Holy Spirit's descent upon the Apostles at Pentecost. It also recalls the scarlet robes worn by royal judges who attended the Mass centuries ago.

Please mark your calendar and plan to join fellow Catholic lawyers, judges and others in celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass blessing our profession and work. Please make it a point to invite other Catholic lawyers you know.

Blessed James of Pieve

This month's holy lawyer is Blessed James of Pieve. Also known as James, the Almsgiver, he was born in the thirteenth century at Pieve di Cadore, or Castelpieve, a little town in Lombardy. He began his course of studies in order to devote himself to the religious state. So that he could do a lot of good as a priest, he studied, besides theology, also civil and ecclesiastical law, as was frequently done in those days.

After he had become a priest, the love of God so forcefully attracted him to poverty and humility that he decided to devote his entire life in a humble sphere to the service of the poor and the afflicted, joining the Third Order of St Francis. He used his knowledge of law to protect the poor and the oppressed, especially widows and orphans, and he preferred to exercise his spiritual ministry in poor churches.

At the gate of his native town there was a hospital in ruins and with it a deserted church. James acquired both structures and spent the entire fortune he had inherited from his parents in restoring them. Then he moved there and rendered to the poor the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. One day he found among old papers in the hospital one stating that several pieces of land belonged to it which a prominent man had acquired unjustly. James went to him and asked him kindly to yield the land to the hospital; but when he could accomplish nothing by being kind, he defended the claims of the poor sick in court, and a decision was rendered in their favor.

But his defense of the poor was to exact from him his life. The prominent man invited him, as if by way of reconciliation, to a supper, and had him treacherously murdered by his servants on his way home. He died on January 15, 1304.

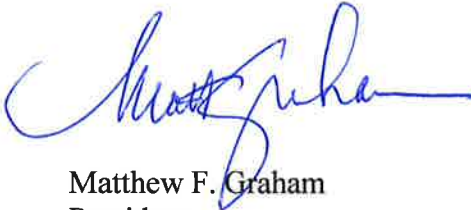
The body was dragged into a deep gully and thickly covered with brushwood and brambles. But after a few days the peasants saw the brambles sprouting in the middle of winter. On clearing them away, the body of the murdered saintly lawyer was found, and he was laid to rest in the hospital church.

Pope Francis Legal Clinic

Like James the Almsgiver, you can use your legal skills to serve the disadvantaged. Contact Ethan Neidermeyer at ethanniedermeier@gmail.com to find out how to volunteer. Although, like James, this work of mercy could lead to sainthood, Ethan assures me, that unlike James, a treacherous murder does probably not await you!

2016 STMS Dues

Finally, if you have not paid your 2016 Society dues, please send payment to Treasurer, Andres Orphanopoulos, 2350 Kerner Blvd, Suite 360, San Rafael, CA 94901. The Society dues are \$75 for attorneys with five years or more of practice, and \$25.00 for retired lawyers or less than five years of practice. Thanks—Your dues pay for Society activities.



Matthew F. Graham
President

And now, a few words from our Chaplain:

“A LIVING HELL”

One year, the student council of my law school decided to sell T-shirts as a way of raising money. The one I purchased was a beautiful maroon color with the “University of Chicago Law School” seal embossed on the front, and the words “Hell *Does Freeze Over*” printed on the reverse.

For many students, law school can be a living hell. Demanding professors, merciless Socratic questioning, indecipherable reading assignments, time-consuming public interest internships, law review requirements, and the constant worry over class ranking all can take their toll. I spent sixteen-hour days studying in law school, most of which I spent alone, buried in case law books and grinding through the rigorous requirements of a world-class legal education. Although there were study groups in the weeks before final exams, the curriculum generally did not lend itself to team work. You were on your own for the most part, and competitive behavior among students only made matters worse.

Subsequent law practice carried many of the same burdens. Most of my work day was spent alone, reading through cases and drafting briefs that were edited by busy partners or senior associates and returned with little discussion. Most emails from other associates and staff would begin with the words, “Pardon the interruption, but . . .” Meetings and hallway conversations were kept to a minimum, so that billable hours could be maximized. It was often an isolating experience.

In his recent book, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI describes hell, not with images of pitchfork-brandishing devils, burning sulfur, and eternal fire, but as an existence of self-imposed isolation. “The depths we call hell,” he writes, “man can only give himself. . . . [It] consists in man’s being unwilling to receive anything, in his desire to be self-sufficient.” See Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Credo for Today: What Christians Believe* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009), 92.

In this state, a person refuses to receive anything from God but “wants to stand entirely on his own feet, to be sufficient unto himself” (*Id.* at 92-93). In other words, hell is something *we* choose. “It is the expression of enclosure in one’s own being alone” (*Id.* at 92). We choose a state of hell, both in this life and the next, when we make ourselves “untouchable, the solitary, the reject” (*Id.* at 93). Hell is “what happens when man barricades himself up in himself” (*Id.*). Thus, for Pope Benedict, hell is a decision in favor of personal isolation and a state of loneliness voluntarily chosen by someone who declines the gifts of God and “withdraws into himself” (*Id.*).

By contrast, heaven is the willingness to be open to and receive God’s grace. Heaven is connection to God and to other people, something that can only be received and not engineered. This is precisely the new commandment Christ gave his disciples: “As I have loved you, so you also should love one another” (Jn. 13:34). That is heaven.

In his Apostolic Letter, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, Pope John Paul II writes that “[t]o be human means to be called to interpersonal communion” (n. 7). We are made for relationship and for each other. “To say that man is created in the image and likeness of God means that man is called to exist ‘for’ others, to become a gift” (*Id.*). To live in self-imposed isolation, therefore, diminishes our humanity, and that is a living hell. In the many small decisions you and I make every day—to become involved or not, to do what is needed or to gratify ourselves, to pray or to indulge our desires, to reach out to others or to isolate ourselves—we choose, little by little, heaven or hell. We may not be able to change the nature of legal education or law practice, but we can choose to be more communal and more relational, even in our professional lives.

The next time a scared first-year associate knocks timidly on your door, turn off the billable hours timer, invite him or her in, and take time to provide guidance. The next time a colleague needs a listening ear, offer your full attention, without silently worrying about the lost minutes on your time sheet. Concern yourself more with the personal welfare of those around you than with your year-end billable hours ranking and bonus. Do something to create a greater sense of community in your firm.

Legal practice need not be a living hell. I urge you, brothers and sisters, in every moment, choose love, choose connection, choose life, both now and in eternity.

■ Father Roger Gustafson, Chaplain

ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY MARCH 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
May 26, 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:

Andres Orphanopoulos
North Coast Land Holdings, LLC
2350 Kerner Blvd, Suite 360
San Rafael, CA 94901
Telephone: (415) 461-2922
Facsimile: (415) 461-5946
E-Mail: orphanopoulos@gmail.com