

St. Thomas More Society OF SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

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Address Correspondence To:

Amelia M. Lancaster
26 O'Farrell Street, Ste. 600
San Francisco, CA 94108
amelia.m.lancaster@gmail.com

Anthony D. Phillips, Immediate Past President

Regis Servus Dei Prius

December 2, 2019

Dear Members:

The Advent season provides much opportunity to reflect on Christ's life on earth and His presence in our lives. With this in mind, I hope this Advent and coming Christmas season bring you peace and closer communion with God. As I mentioned in my first newsletter of the year, one goal of the St. Thomas More Society of San Francisco is to foster this communion through social events, spiritual discussions, and community contributions. I hope we met this goal during my tenure, and that you'll consider joining us for our last gathering of the year - our annual Christmas luncheon - to celebrate our shared faith, our community, and the coming Christmas holiday.

Christmas Luncheon

The Christmas luncheon is our largest luncheon of the year and will take place this Thursday, December 5th. Those who arrive early can enjoy an open bar and Christmas carol sing-along with students from the De Marillac Academy choir. We will distribute our Secret Santa gifts to De Marillac Academy and collect contributions for our Toys for Tots drive as described below. Lunch will follow with presentation of the St. Thomas More essay contest winner. This year's essay contest asks "*What enabled St. Thomas More to stand alone with such conviction [against King Henry VIII and angry mobs]? What did he accomplish by resisting the power of the state and the persuasion of loved ones as well as the peer pressure of a mob? Could More have achieved the same goals through compromise? Finally, what lessons can we take today from the examples of More's stands?*"

We will also introduce our 2020 Executive Board.

- Date:** Thursday, December 5, 2019, Christmas carols and open bar at 11:30am, lunch to follow at 12noon
- Location:** The Family Club, 545 Powell Street, San Francisco
- Cost:** \$55 (lawyers with 10+ years of practice, \$45 (lawyers with <10 years of practice), \$25 (law students and clergy)

You may pay for the luncheon in person or at our website [here](#).

Secret Santa Program

For the sixth year in a row, we have partnered with De Marillac Academy to provide Christmas gifts to the school's students and 30 families. We still need participants, so please consider donating or bringing a small gift or gift card to the luncheon. Gift cards or gifts valued around \$50 are a common option. You can pay for a gift card at our website [here](#), or you can email me directly at amelia.m.lancaster@gmail.com to confirm your participation. I will send an email with details about the child you are supporting prior to Thursday's luncheon.

Toys for Tots

For the first time, we are also hosting a Toys for Tots drive in partnership with the San Francisco Fire Department. The San Francisco Firefighters Toy Program is the largest holiday toy program in San Francisco and the nation's oldest program of its kind. Today, more than 300 firefighters and friends volunteer their time to distribute toys to more than 40,000 disadvantaged children. The Toy Program also serves many other community organizations, including shelters for abused women and children, inner-city schools, children's cancer wards, and pediatric AIDS units.

Monetary and toy donations through the program are tax deductible. Toy donations must be unwrapped and new and intended for children up through age 12. You can bring and place all toy donations in the donation bin at our Christmas luncheon.

Annual Dues

If you haven't done so already, please consider paying your annual dues prior to or at our Christmas luncheon, as dues help us award our St. Thomas More essay contest winners and cover all remaining expenses for the year. You may pay your dues on our website [here](#) or in person. For those feeling extra generous, dues payments also make an excellent Christmas gift for fellow members, colleagues, and friends.

In addition, we are now collecting dues for 2020. Members who pay their dues before January 1, 2020 can enjoy a \$5 discount.

Thank You and Farewell

As this is my last newsletter, I want to thank all members for their participation and reception of new initiatives this year such as our St. Thomas More dinner. I very much enjoyed my tenure as president and getting to know many of you more personally. Likewise, I thank our Executive Board for contributing much time and effort to ensure our initiatives were successful. A special thank you to our chaplain, Father Roger Gustafson, for continuing to support our Society and for his spiritual direction.

Looking ahead, we welcome our 2020 president, Philip J. Kearney, who will lead an expanded Executive Board of 15 members (there are currently 12). I have no doubt that Phil's leadership and the expanded Board will further our Society's mission of engaging members of the legal profession with the Church and local community. An email with information about the 2020 Executive Board members will follow soon.

It has been an honor and privilege serving you as President of the Society this past year. Merry Christmas to you and your families, and I look forward to seeing many of you at this week's Christmas luncheon.

God bless,

Amelia Lancaster

President