

Weekly re:Cap



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ADVENT

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Advent is a season of joyful anticipation. Traditionally, we light four candles, one for each week spent waiting for the coming celebration of Christmas. The Gospel of Matthew mentions four women, in addition to Mary of Nazareth, in the genealogy of Jesus. Paradoxically, the Gospel writer has chosen to include women whose stories might cast them in a suspicious light. Foreigners, prostitutes, and widows, these women are hardly the stately matriarchs, such as Sarah and Rebekah, mentioned elsewhere in Scripture .

Traditional readings have focused on the “irregularities” of their situations; however, such literal readings have been viewed through a patriarchal lens and run the risk of missing out on the core message of the Gospels. Instead, we can view the stories of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba from a more critical perspective. Having understood the oppression and injustice women have traditionally experienced, we can see and appreciate their stories in a new light.



Like many women in Scripture, countless women are the victims of oppression and injustice today. Human rights violations carry gendered ramifications that disproportionately affect women all over the world. Reflecting on the stories of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba in light of contemporary human rights issues reveal the continued relevance of the Gospel message. In a world of seemingly endless darkness, their stories offer us a glimpse of the Hope and Justice that is to come.

A Canaanite woman, Tamar was married, in succession, to Er and Onan, the sons of Judah, son of Isaac and Leah. After her two husbands died, Judah tried to evade his obligations to provide Tamar with an heir by sending her off to live in her father’s house as a widow. Out of desperation, Tamar conceived a plan to reclaim her rightful inheritance and the security she was due according to law and custom by pretending to be a prostitute and conceiving twins with her father-in-law. Tamar’s commitment to maintaining Judah’s lineage, albeit through unconventional means, won her Judah’s admiration, who said of his daughter-in-law, she “is more righteous than I” (Genesis 38:26). Tamar’s eldest twin, Perez, would become an ancestor of Jesus.

Like Tamar, many women today often find themselves at the mercy of patriarchal systems that disregard their needs and the dignity of their humanity. The gender inequalities in cultures and societies all over the world result in the fact that extreme poverty disproportionately affects women and girls. A myriad of factors contribute to extreme poverty, but societal and cultural norms, misogyny and sexism, as well as income disparities contribute to gendered-dimensions of poverty and cause women to suffer the most from its effects. For single mothers and women who are divorced, separated, or widowed, extreme poverty is often

exacerbated by alienation and estrangement. Anti-poverty measures must therefore consider and be sensitive to the variety of vulnerable situations women may encounter in different stages of their lives.

(Ed. note: The above was excerpted from "Franciscans International: Advent 2017 Reflections on Human Rights and Women.")

Capuchins at the School of the Americas Watch



Pope Francis shared his World Day of Peace for 2018 message on November 24th — “Migrants and Refugees: men and women in search of peace.” In this message, he identified several causes for this global phenomenon of migration. First, “armed conflict and other forms of organized violence continue to trigger the movement of peoples within national boundaries and beyond.” He said, “most people” seek to migrate through “regular channels,” but some take “other routes” mainly “out of desperation” when ever legal safe pathway appears impracticable. He declared, moreover, that

“those who, for what may be political reasons, foment fear of migrants instead of building peace are sowing violence, racial discrimination and xenophobia,” and said these “are matters of great concern for all those concerned for the safety of every human being.” (see *American Magazine*: In World Day of Peace message, Pope Francis decries discrimination toward migrants and refugees) In alignment with Pope Francis’ message, November 10-12, Fred Cabras, David Hirt, and Marcia Lee participated in the SOA Watch Border Ecuentro. SOA Watch is an organization established to bring to light the work of the School of the Americas (SOA). The School of the Americas is a combat training school for Latin American soldiers, located at Fort Benning, Georgia. Since 1946, the SOA has trained over 64,000 Latin American soldiers in counterinsurgency techniques, sniper training, commando and psychological warfare, military intelligence and interrogation tactics. Hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans have been tortured, raped, assassinated, “disappeared,” massacred, and forced into refugee by those trained at the School of Assassins. On January 17, 2001 the School of the Americas was replaced by the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. The new military training school is the continuation of the SOA under a new name.



On 16 November 1989, six Jesuit priests, their co-worker and her teenage daughter were massacred in El Salvador. A U.S. Congressional Task Force reported that those responsible were trained at the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA) at Ft. Benning, Georgia. In 1990 SOA Watch began in a tiny apartment outside the main gate of Ft. Benning. SOA Watch moved to the U.S. wall within the city of Nogales to bring attention to the connection between SOA and the resulting impact it has on people’s lives. We are committed to challenging violence and bringing messages for peace for migrants through: participating in SOA Watch; ministering with people in Nicaragua & Panama; being in solidarity with refugees in our communities in the U.S.; creating welcoming parishes for all people; and so much more. We are fortified through prayer,

relationships, and continued learning. Fred Cabras said that “inspired by my time in Mexico, learning about the struggle of those during the migration process, I realized that I need to make my own voice heard. (I must do this) if only, to stand in support and let all people know that they are loved and respected.” The province’s JPIC office will share a special edition on the Border Ecuentro so that the experiences of David, Fred, and Marcia may also be useful for your journey.

Capuchins host vigil remembering the departed



People from all ages and faiths gathered together at St. Francis Church in Milwaukee on November 7th for the monthly prayer vigil organized by the New Sanctuary Movement (NSM) of Voces de la Frontera. Over 30 people participated in the vigil, which was dedicated to the remembrance of the dead.

The “Día de los Muertos” vigil was prepared and led by David Hirt, with Michael Bertram welcoming all. The parish’s youth group, other parishioners and friars, joined members of Voces de la Frontera to celebrate the lives of those who have departed, especially this past year.

The purpose of the monthly prayer vigil is to bring immigrants and others in the community together to pray for and support immigrant families. It is held on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm in different churches around Milwaukee. This is the first time St. Francis has hosted the vigil. NSM also holds a prayer vigil in front of ICE offices in downtown Milwaukee on the Thursday following the first Tuesday vigil.



Prayerfully made

As clergy, helping a family through the death of a child is one of the hardest things you’re called to do. In their own small way, the Trappist Monks would like to help. When a child dies, God takes care of the child. But the monks of New Melleray Abbey in Dubuque IA want to lend support to the parents with prayer and, through their ministry of Trappist Caskets, by providing a beautiful child’s casket – *at no charge*. They donate all children’s caskets as a work of mercy.



At New Melleray Abbey, the monks view the crafting of child caskets as a corporal work of mercy, and a way to bring some small measure of comfort to families who bear the tragedy of burying a child.

Each casket is handcrafted and blessed by the Trappist monks of New Melleray. They use premium woods from their sustainable forest, and only the finest materials, inside and out. Available for immediate delivery or for later delivery as part of their pre-planning program. Let them know if they can help! (866) 274-6398; Info@TrappistCaskets.com





Terry Shank, spouse of our late affiliate Julia Shank, died recently.

Iris Gonzalez, former parish secretary at St. Francis Parish in Milwaukee, died recently.

Leo Petrimoulx has entered hospice care.

**Prayer
changes
everything.**

DECEMBER

- 6 Nicholas (F)
Public Relations Zoom/Video Conference
- 7 **Jerome Campbell (B)**
Ambrose Simon (N)
- 11 **Tom Nguyen (B)**
- 12 Liturgical Commission Zoom/Video Conference
Our Lady of Guadalupe (F)
Paul Koenig (B)
- 13 Pro Council Video Conference
Public Relations Zoom/Video Conference
- 16 **Worku Gebre (B)**
Diaconate Ordination, Chicago
- 20 Public Relations Zoom/Video Conference



*Our Lady of Guadalupe,
You are the patron of the Americas.
Pray for us to be present to all those who suffer,
especially to women who continue to be brutalized
in Mexico, In Guatemala, in El Salvador,
where those in power do nothing.*



ADVENT

— Hope. Love. Joy. Peace. —

