

# On Line and On Point

## MARY MOTHER OF JESUS INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY [marymotherofjesus.org](http://marymotherofjesus.org)

**WORTH A LOOK BACK**—What does the death of George Floyd and the conviction of Derek Chauvin mean for Catholics? The following reflection is from Fr. Bryan Massingale, professor of theology at Fordham University in New York.

Once, while walking on a busy and well-lit street at night, I was abruptly stopped by the police, rudely questioned and roughly searched, under the suspicion that I was the perpetrator of a robbery. I later learned that the only characteristic I shared with the actual criminal was the pigmentation of our skin, he being much younger, shorter and heavier than I. This happened despite my being a priest, a university professor and a respected member of the community (or so I would have thought). The police offered no apology. Nor, to be honest, did I really expect one. Living with such terror and indignity is to be expected. It's part of the deal of being a Black man in America.

The killing of George Floyd and the jury's verdict are a wake-up call, a summons to white America to examine its fears of people of color that demand accepting unjustified killing as the price of preserving its sense of privilege and entitlement.



The verdict is also a wake-up call and summons to the Catholic Church to address its complicity in the country's racism. A complicity evidenced in February's Pew Research study showing that less than one third of white congregations heard a sermon or homily about Black Lives Matter as a moral issue this past summer. A complicity manifested by priests who

denounced Black Lives Matter protestors as "thugs" and "maggots and parasites." A complicity demonstrated in the often-repeated assertion that the Black Lives Matter movement cannot be supported by Catholics because it "opposes the nuclear family" — overlooking the reality that Black Lives Matter calls for supporting ALL families, not only nuclear ones, for family life in America includes grandparents raising grandchildren and even gay uncles raising their sibling's children. In sum, a complicity demonstrated by the tendency of too many Catholic leaders to privilege the comfort of its white members over the pain and terror of its brothers and sisters of color.



This jury verdict is a summons to the Catholic community to embrace the teaching of Pope Francis, who in discussing George Floyd's killing declared, "We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of human life." The challenge for American Catholics is to profess a commitment to anti-racism as an essential dimension of being pro-life.—*from the blog of Father Doug Kaesel [CLE]*

**OFFERINGS**—We are grateful to everyone who has been so generous in supporting our community. Thanks so much. Please remember to make your regular donations to MMOJ by sending your check to MMOJ % St. Andrew UCC, 6908 Beneva Road, Sarasota. FL 34238. Again,

### Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community Mission Statement

We are a Christ-centered community of equals, consisting of women and men, ordained and non-ordained, empowered by the Spirit whose mission is to worship, to serve, to promote compassion, justice and care for creation. Come join us.

Send articles/info by Wed to be published on weekend: [rjbannerusa@gmail.com](mailto:rjbannerusa@gmail.com)

tabulation of offerings and donations will be announced when they are received at St Andrew UCC. Remember: **MMOJ continues to donate 5% of all offerings received each month to Outreach**, and will continue to focus on current food and hunger issues of our surrounding communities.

**REFLECTIONS ON Easter IV Liturgy**—James Bradford's oft repeated statement, "There but for the grace of God go I," was the launching point for our shared homily. Many saw, lived moments of grace-filled action. The final blessing prayer seemed to summarize all that was shared: "May our hearts be glad on our journey as we dream new dreams, see new visions, and create a new heaven and earth. May we live and work for compassion and peace, justice and non-violence in our hearts and in those of everyone we meet. May we learn to bless and honor and hold in reverence all creation, the earth, and one another. May we live in the grace given to us by our Holy One for all of our lives. We are the Face of God in the world; may we reflect God well. So, as we leave here in the peace of Christ, let us be the people that God created us to be." Surely, this is moving us onward daily.

**OUTREACH**—The current recipient of our financial support continues to be **All Faiths Food Bank of Sarasota**. All Faiths Food Bank is a member of Feeding America – a network of food banks across the country. One of its key objectives is to equitably serve agency partners who distribute food to those struggling with hunger.

**PREPARATION for the coming weekend's Liturgy**—Kathryn Shea and Lee Breyer return this weekend [Jim Marsh couldn't make it] with the theme: The Prayer of Jesus, "forgive us...as we forgive [others]." If we are really serious in seeking forgiveness from Jesus, we cannot be asking more than we are experiencing in our relationships with others around us. Cheryl and Jim Brandi will be our readers.

**A ROHRISM**—Strangely, many Christians today limit God's providential care to humans, and very few of them at that. How different we are from Jesus, who extended divine generosity to sparrows, lilies, ravens, donkeys, the grasses of the fields (Luke 12:24, 27–28), and even "the hairs of the head" (Matthew 10:30). No stingy God here! (Although God did neglect the hairs of my head.) But what stinginess on our side made us limit God's concern—even eternal concern—to just ourselves and our group? And how can we

imagine God as caring about us if God does not care about everything else too? If God chooses and doles out care, we are always insecure and unsure whether we are among the lucky recipients. Yet once we become aware of the generous, creative Presence that exists in all things by their very nature, we can honor the Indwelling Spirit as the Inner Source of all dignity and worthiness. Dignity is not doled out to the supposedly worthy. It grounds the inherent worthiness of things in their very nature and existence.—*Richard Rohr*



**ROOT CAUSES of Forced Migration**—Webinar [Part 1] on Tuesday, May 4 at 6 PM. Join attorneys and community organizers for conversation on the United States' role in driving forced migration and how the dynamic of white supremacy, xenophobia and militarization manifest at the border and within refugee immigrant experiences. Register: [bit.ly/RCOFM-Pt-1](https://bit.ly/RCOFM-Pt-1) Sponsored by SOA Watch and the National Lawyers Guild San Francisco Bay Area Chapter.

**STILL ASKING FOR HELP**—I would like to invite community members to share their thoughts/ideas on future Outreach targets, anticipating times when we may have extra money/resources for donation purposes. If you can help me plan ahead for extending Outreach, especially post-pandemic, please contact me, Cheryl Brandi, Outreach Coordinator, [cherylbrandi@comcast.net](mailto:cherylbrandi@comcast.net)

**GROWING COSMICALLY**—Jesus is the love of God incarnate, the wholemaker who shows the way of evolution toward unity in love. . . . In Jesus, God comes to us from the future to be our future. . . . Christian life is a commitment to love, to give birth to God in one's own life and to become midwives of divinity in this evolving cosmos. We are to be wholemakers of love in a world of change.—*Ilia Delio, Franciscan sister and scientist*