

January 2019

ST MARY'S
ACADEMY

FAITH COMMUNITY JUSTICE RESPECT

Faith Walk

ST. MARY'S ACADEMY CAMPUS MINISTRY



Epiphany

By Giovanni di Paola, 1450

The Epiphany of Our Lord is the Christian feast observed on Jan. 6, 2019. The word "epiphany" comes from the Greek *epiphainen*, a verb that means "to shine upon," "to manifest," or "to make known." Thus, the feast of the Epiphany celebrates the many ways that Christ has made Himself known to the world, mainly the three events that manifested the mission and divinity of Christ: the visit of the Magi (Matthew 2:1-12), the baptism of Jesus (Mark 1:9-11), and the miracle at Cana (John 2:1-11).

MAIREAD MAGUIRE Northern Ireland, 1976

After three of her sister's children were killed during the violence between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, Mairead Maguire organized massive demonstrations and other action calling for a nonviolent end to the conflict. Along with Betty Williams, she is the co-founder of Peace People, and together the two women won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1976. She has spent her life since then to bearing witness to oppression and standing in solidarity with people living in conflict, including most in Syria.

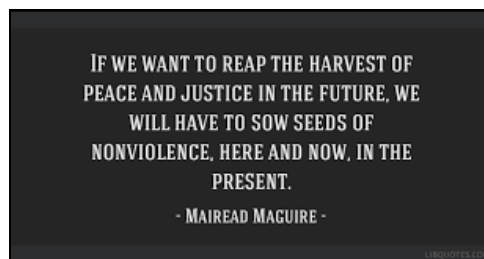


Together, they co-founded the Peace People, a movement committed to building a just and peaceful society in Northern Ireland. They organized each week, for six months, peace rallies throughout Ireland and the UK. These were attended by many thousands of people – mostly women, and during this time there was a 70% decrease in the rate of violence. Mairead currently serves as Honorary President.

Since receiving the award, Mairead has dedicated her life to promoting peace, both in Northern Ireland and around the world. Working with community groups throughout Northern Ireland, political and church leaders, she has sought to promote dialogue, nonviolence and equality between deeply divided communities.

A graduate from Irish School of Ecumenics, Maguire works with inter-church and interfaith organizations and is a councilor with the International Peace Council. She is a Patron of the Methodist Theological College, and Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education. She is also the author of *The Vision of Peace: Faith and Hope in Northern Ireland*.

<https://nobelwomensinitiative.org/laureate/mairead-maguire/>



Loretto and SMA Praying and Acting to End Gun Violence

The Loretto Community again this year invites us to pray in silence on the first Monday of the month (or second if we're off school) for an end to gun violence. This call to prayer began in 2015 when the Loretto Committee on Peace felt prayer was most fitting as public statements, lobbying, letter writing on gun control had not brought about change. The committee's hope is that our prayer may bring wisdom and guidance to this important issue.

You are most welcome to join us in the Oratory in the High School at 8:15 for whatever minutes work for you. Or take a few minutes of quiet wherever you are. Join us on January 7, February 4, March 4, April 1, May 6 and June 3. If you have questions, please contact Sister Regina at rdrey@smamet.org.

Tu B'Shvat



"Tu B'Shvat celebrates the bare beginnings of the reawakening of trees in mid-winter, and was seen by the 16th-century Kabbalists as the rebirth of that Tree of Life that has its roots in Heaven and its fruit in the existence and creativity of us -- the whole of life.

The festival itself and its amazing Seder come at the full moon on the 15th day of the Jewish lunar "moonth" of Shvat, this year from Sunday evening January 20 through sundown Monday January 21. That means it falls this year on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday.

As Rabbi Rami Shapiro writes, "Tu B'Shvat is not a call to go back to Nature.... [It] is a call to return to **our** nature. Let us remember that we are of nature, not apart from it -- for we are adam, earthling, and we are made of adamah, earth."

The Shalom Center invites us to explore the connections between Tu B'Shvat and a commitment to the physical health of our entire planet, a commitment to act to protect trees and the Interbreathing of all life."

Visit www.TheShalomCenter.org for more information.

Holocaust Remembrance Day January 27

International Holocaust Remembrance Day, is an international memorial day on 27 January commemorating the tragedy of the Holocaust that occurred during the Second World War. It commemorates the genocide that resulted in the death of an estimated 6 million Jewish people, 5 million Slavs, 3 million ethnic Poles, 200,000 Romani people, 250,000 mentally and physically disabled people, and 9,000 homosexual men by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. It was designated by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/7 on 1 November 2005 during the 42nd plenary session. The resolution came after a special session was held earlier that year on 24 January 2005 during which the United Nations General Assembly marked the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps and the end of the Holocaust.

On 27 January 1945, Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration and death camp, was liberated by the Red Army.



THEEB

"In his film debut as a director, Naji Abu Nowar, a British-born filmmaker, has created a scary and totally engaging coming-of-age story; it was shot in the deserts and rock canyons of Jordan. The cinematography by Wolfgang Thaler is awesome, especially the night scenes.

The story is set in the Ottoman province of Hijaz in 1916. Theeb (Jacir Eid Al-Hwietat) is the third and youngest son of a sheik who recently died. He is very close to Hussein (Hussein Salameh Al-Sweilhiyeen), his older brother who is carrying on the family tradition of serving others as a desert guide. Unbeknownst to the clan, the coming of the railway, called the Iron Donkey Trail, will put an end to the need for Bedouin guides for pilgrims to Mecca.



In a simple but chillingly effective scene early in the drama, Hussein leaves the family gathering and walks out of sight into the dark, convinced that he has heard someone approaching them. We are drawn into the fear that all strangers instill in us as they arrive unannounced.

The two men who emerge from the darkness with Hussein are a desert guide (Marji Audeh) and an English soldier (Jack Fox, the only professional actor in the film). According to Bedouin hospitality customs, these two visitors are welcomed to eat, drink, and stay the night. They reveal they have been told they can count on the sheik's family to guide them to a well in the wilderness. It is a dangerous route which has become the stomping grounds for Bedouin marauders and Arab insurgents.

Hussain agrees to take them to the well, which is near the Ottoman train tracks. Theeb follows them and eventually joins them on their arduous trek. The young boy who has never ventured far from home is fascinated with the mysterious Englishman and especially the large brown box which he orders Theeb not to touch. When they reach their destination, the Englishman and his guide are shot and killed by Arab bandits; Hussein and Theeb flee to higher ground and spend the night being taunted by their enemies. In a heated battle, Hussein is killed and Theeb jumps into the well in a smart survival effort.

After mourning his brother and burying him, the young boy watches as a wounded bandit (Hassan Mutlag Al-Maraiyeh) appears and asks for water. Although he helps this stranger and then, in turn, is assisted by the veteran traveler, Theeb remains silently uneasy in his presence, knowing that he was in the group of those who killed his beloved brother.

Theeb is an intense coming-of-age story which turns into a tale of survival in harsh circumstances. We see everything through the boy's eyes; he is in turn curious, excited, frightened, confused, and determined. Mostly, we sense he is trying to put all the events he is experiencing together with the Bedouin belief in both hospitality and family loyalty and honor.

His name means "wolf" and he has that kind of fierceness. At the right moment, he recalls a warning given by his father: "And if the wolves offer friendship, do not count on success. They will not stand by you when you are facing death." <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/films/reviews/view/28097/theeb>



Timkat: An Ethiopian Celebration of Epiphany

Susan Leem



Ethiopian Orthodox Christians are showered with water from a cross-shaped pool that was blessed by priests during Timkat. (Photo by Carl De Souza/AFP/Getty Images)

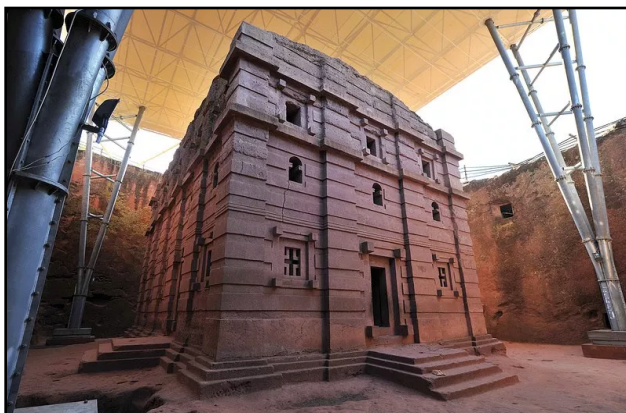
Each January, millions of Ethiopian Orthodox Christians celebrate the feast of Timkat, the most important holiday for the Ethiopian Orthodox faithful.

Forty percent of Ethiopians identify as Christians and are among one of the oldest Christian traditions in the world. This celebration of the Epiphany remembers Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River with a ritual reenactment and parades with replicas of a holy relic — a relic many of us may know from the Steven Spielberg film *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

A model of the Ark of the Covenant, called the Tabot, is wrapped in cloth and carried through the crowd in every city. A representation or model of the Ark resides in every Ethiopian Orthodox church. This holy relic is said to hold the Ten Commandments, which adherents believe God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai.

The Tabots are carried only by the most senior priests of the community and completely covered because they are too sacred for anyone to gaze at them. Even the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox church is forbidden to see it; only its guardians can look at it. The actual Ark of the Covenant is said to be in the city of Aksum, guarded by monks who have vowed not to leave the chapel grounds until death.

One of Ethiopia's most spiritual places for Christian Orthodox followers is Lalibela. The town hosts a church that was not just built, but hewn out of the region's rock.



A view of the rock-hewn Church of Saint Emmanuel where Ethiopian Orthodox Christians gather during for the annual festival of Timkat. The site is now protected by UNESCO. (Photo by Carl De Souza/AFP/Getty Images)



Priests carry models of the container said to hold the Ten Commandments in brightly colored cloth. (Photo by Gordontour / Flickr, cc by-nc-nd 2.0)



Ethiopian priests and monks walk in a procession and carry embroidered fringed umbrellas. (Photo by Carl De Souza/AFP/Getty Images)



An Ethiopian Orthodox Christian prays before taking part in celebrations for the annual festival of Timkat in Lalibela. (Photo by Carl De Souza/AFP/Getty Images)

The Sisters of Selma: Courageous Role Models for Today

Regina Drey SL



Then Loretto sisters David Maureen Smith (Maureen Smith) and Judith Mary Dillon (Judith Baenen) link arms with other civil rights protesters at a 1965 march in Selma, Ala.

In planning a session of Loretto-related curriculum with 11th graders, I realized the session date was January 15, the actual birth anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. 89 years ago. I thought of watching his funeral on a gloomy April day. The dignity of Coretta Scott King. And Selma – haunting images of billy clubs and non-violent demonstrations demanding an end to discriminatory practices that kept black citizens from voting.

I also think of sisters from many religious communities who joined thousands in the struggle in Selma. Having seen the disturbing footage of Bloody Sunday, the sisters were ready to respond when Dr. King call on clergy to join in the marches. They went there to stand with the people – (The image of Mary standing in love and solidarity with Jesus as he is dying is one we cherish at SMA.) – aware of the escalating tension and arrests of the previous months, aware that they could be hurt, but also aware that they needed to stand with people and act against injustice.

The sisters involved in these marches became known as the Sisters of Selma. I love that phrase. To me it refers to religious women but also conveys the sisterhood we all share and connection with all who struggle.

The Sisters of Selma were a small group among thousands of marchers. Their presence, however, was not only a strong statement of support but the first time, according to many sources, sisters had been involved in a national public protest. The marches in Selma and the end of the Second Vatican Council both occurred in 1965. Both were calls to action. Both served as catalysts for renewal and engagement with the injustices of the modern world.

To achieve this, religious communities, which had traditionally staffed schools and hospitals, embraced a renewed sense of mission – working social justice issues – that continues today. In Loretto, this sense can summed up, I believe, in the words of our Loretto Constitutions, “We work for justice and act for peace because the gospel urges us.”

There were four Loretto sisters among the sisters of Selma, including Judith Baenen, SMA alumna and former president of SMA and today a Loretto co-member, and Therese Stawowy who is interviewed in *Sisters of Selma: Bearing Witness to Change*. Produced in 2003 by PBS, participants from several communities recall how marching in Selma was a pivotal moment for the Civil Rights movement and for themselves personally.

So what will my time with the eleventh graders focus on? The Sisters of Selma. To borrow words from a beautiful art piece on HS Principal Iswari Natarajan’s wall, we strive to empower the young women, and all students, to “lead with confidence, create possibilities, change the world.” In other words, we follow the example of the Sisters of Selma.

Resources that may be of interest:

PBS Sisters of Selma: Bearing Witness to Change

Loretto participants: <https://www.lorettocommunity.org/loretto-looks-back-at-selma/>

Loretto participants: <https://www.lorettocommunity.org/selma-a-debt/>

Loretto participants: <http://blogs.webster.edu/webstertoday/2015/03/05/selma-march-loretto-sister-webster/>

Poetry Corner

Seeing Things

By Seamus Heaney

I.

Inishbofin on a Sunday morning.
Sunlight, turfsmoke, seagulls, boatslip, diesel.
One by one we were being handed down
Into a boat that slipped and shilly-shallied
Scaresomely every time. We sat tight
On short cross-benches, in nervous twos and threes,
Obedient, newly close, nobody speaking
Except the boatmen, as the gunwales sank
And seemed they might ship water any minute.
The sea was very calm but even so,
When the engine kicked and our ferryman
Swayed for balance, reaching for the tiller,
I panicked at the shiftiness and heft
Of the craft itself. What guaranteed us—
That quick response and buoyancy and swim—
Kept me in agony. All the time
As we went sailing evenly across
The deep, still, seeable-down-into water,
It was as if I looked from another boat
Sailing through air, far up, and could see
How riskily we fared into the morning,
And loved in vain our bare, bowed, numbered heads.

II.

Claritas. The dry-eyed Latin word
Is perfect for the carved stone of the water
Where Jesus stands up to his unwet knees
And John the Baptist pours out more water
Over his head: all this in bright sunlight
On the façade of a cathedral. Lines
Hard and thin and sinuous represent
The flowing river. Down between the lines
Little antic fish are all go. Nothing else.
And yet in that utter visibility
The stone's alive with what's invisible:
Waterweed, stirred sand-grains hurrying off,
The shadowy, unshadowed stream itself.
All afternoon, heat wavered on the steps
And the air we stood up to our eyes in wavered
Like the zig-zag hieroglyph for life itself.



Prayer Opportunities

- Parents and Faculty/Staff: First Wednesday of the month at 9:15 in the HS Oratory
- Prayer Intention Boxes - Near the Prayer Wall in the HS, MS Lobby and LS Lobby
- Prayer Wall in the High School: Open to All!
- Send your prayer requests via the SMA website under "Resources," "All Academy Resources," "Prayer Requests." Or email smaprayergroup@gmail.com. All prayers are handled in confidentiality, and may be submitted anonymously.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

St. Mary's Academy is a school that believes the fundamental message of God as taught and lived by Jesus, to love without bounds.

Together we continue to build and live the Loretto School values of faith, community, justice and respect!

*Paula Lee, Ph.D.
Campus Minister
plee@smanet.org*

JANUARY 2019

Interfaith and Justice Calendar

January is Nt'l. Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month

*The event begins the evening of the previous day

**Exact date may vary between traditions and communities

Adapted from: www.interfaith-calendar.org and www.adl.org



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 New Year's Day Mary, Mother of God Catholic World Day of Peace	2	3	4	5 Guru Gobindh Singh Birthday Sikh
6 Feast of Epiphany Christian Dia de los Reyes Three Kings Day	7 Feast of the Nativity Orthodox Christian	8 Feast of the Holy Family Catholic	9	10	11 Nt'l. Human Trafficking Awareness Day	12 Anniversary of Haitian earthquake 2010
13 Baptism of the Lord Christian Maghi Sikh	14	15 Birthday of ETTY HILLESUM (1914-1943) Makar Sankranti Hindu	16 Nt'l. Religious Freedom Day	17	18 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (1/18-1/25)	19 Timkat Ethiopian Orthodox Christian
20 World Religion Day Baha'i Tu B'Shvat* Jewish	21 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Mahayana New Year** Buddhist	22	23	24 Feast of St. Francis de Sales Christian Birthday of Henri JM Nouwen (1932-1996)	25	26
27 Int'l. Holocaust Remembrance Day Birthday of Mairead Maguire (1944)	28 Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas	29	30 Birthday of Saul Alinsky (1909-1972)	31 Birthday of Sr. Megan Rice, SHCJ (1930)		