

THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Greater DC Metropolitan Area

June 22, 2015 the Feast of St. Thomas More



Extreme justice is an extreme injury: for we ought not to approve of those terrible laws that make the smallest offences capital, nor of that opinion of the Stoics that makes all crimes equal; as if there were no difference to be made between the killing a man and the taking his purse, between which, if we examine things impartially, there is no likeness nor proportion.
— *Utopia*, Bk 1. (1516)

Dear Thomas More Society of America,

The year 2015 marks the 480th year of the martyrdom of Sir Thomas More. (The actual day and date of his death was Saturday, July 6, 1535.) As noted in our December 2014 newsletter, we are witnessing a continued thirst for learning about More's response to core issues in his day, especially as we wrestle with issues in our day – including religious freedom, marriage, and public responsibility. With this in mind, we asked some of our early members to share their personal reflections about our Society which was established in 1979. Mary Ellen Bork, Past-President and a Society member since 1983, shared an extremely insightful reflection, noting "The Thomas More Society continues to return to the many facets of More's story and learn from his many writings how to live in troubled times and make a difference." She noted further, "More's moral integrity, erudition, holiness and ability to defend the Church in a society undergoing revolutionary change inspires us to share his story," which represented the vision of our Founder, Judge Howard Markey. I invite you to read her full reflection on page 4. **[Continued on page 3, see "President"]**

Did You Know?

Most know that Thomas More was proclaimed a Saint in the Roman Catholic Church – Leo XIII beatified him on December 29, 1886 and Pius XI canonized him on May 19, 1935. However, what you may not know is that in 1980 More was added to the Church of England's calendar of "Saints and Heroes of the Christian Church" as a Reformation Martyr.



Senior Judge Thomas Hogan

Annual Gala Dinner. Senior Judge Thomas Hogan was the main speaker at the 2015 Gala Dinner of the Thomas More Society of America on May 14 at the Army Navy Club in Washington. Judge Hogan is the former chief Judge of the U.S. District Court of Washington, and was appointed to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC) by Chief Justice Roberts in 2009. He earned his Juris Doctorate from the Georgetown University Law Center in 1966. During Law school he was selected as a St. Thomas More Fellow. He chose the topic of "pilgrimage travel" as the theme for the evening, and it spurred robust conversation around the banquet hall. It was clear, from the stories he shared, that his pilgrimage travels have had a profound impact on his appreciation for the faith of Thomas More as well as his expansive view of the threats that are posed to people of faith in many societies that lack the liberties we enjoy as citizens of the United States. However, despite this awareness, he shared that these pilgrimages always filled him with energy and a profound appreciation for the rich history and culture that unite people of faith.

Judge Hogan spoke about the courage of Thomas More in defense of his faith. While he noted that he could not talk about specific cases before the FISA Court, he discussed the operations of the court and the important work in deciding requests of the government for access to electronic surveillance, search warrants and other investigative actions related

to matters of national security. Judge Hogan noted that these are troubling times that require the nation and the public to be alert to the dangers we encounter in the world. Judge Hogan's remarks were well received and highly appreciated by the dinner attendees. Several dinner attendees thanked him for his service on the court in maintaining the balance Constitutional Civil liberties with National Security.

Poetry Reading. On December 11, 2014, the Society co-hosted with the Catholic Information Center (CIC) Young Professionals Program a Christmas Poetry Reading with well over 125 in attendance. Readers recited a wide variety of poetry—ranging from the hysterically funny to classical treasures. Mary Powers (pictured right), a Society Director, noted, “The TMS/CIC poetry reading has become a favorite tradition in DC. It is such a wonderful event that brings the DC community



Mary Powers (Society Director)

together to celebrate Christmas through poetry. My favorite is always seeing how creative people are with their poetry choices and their readings. I always take away something new. It's definitely an event that St. Thomas More enjoys from heaven.”



Chris Payne (Left), Father Justin Huber (Center), John Vittone (Right)

Pre-Lenten Reflection. Fr. Justin Huber led 50 members of the Society and public in a pre-Lenten reflection held at the Catholic Information Center (CIC) on February 12, 2015. At left is a picture of Fr. Huber with Chris Payne and John Vittone in front of the Saint Thomas More stained glass window at the CIC. Joe Milligan, Society Director, commented, “Fr. Justin set an inspiring, yet challenging tone for each Society Member to make the most of the Lenten journey towards Easter.”



Sister Anne O'Donnell with Society Members

“Tristitia.” On March 23, 2015, at the Thomas More Chapel at the Georgetown University School of Law, Sister Anne M. O’Donnell, SND, led the Society in a reflection of Thomas More’s “Tristitia” better known as “The Sadness of Christ.” Sister Anne is a Past President of the Society and Professor Emerita at the Catholic University of America specializing in: Erasmus, More and Tyndale. For many years, she has been instrumental in helping the Society remain connected with fellow scholars from around the world. As a follow on to this event, Sr. Anne noted, “God willing, may we meet next year for discussion of More’s *Dialogue of Comfort*.” At right is a picture of Sr. Anne with Society Members.

Society Member News and Happenings.

On April 30, Society Director **Joe Milligan** led a discussion for the Angelus Academy Saint Thomas More Men’s Sodality on the 1981 Scepter Booklet, “Sir Thomas More the Making of a Saint,” by Thomas McGovern.

On June 2nd, **Dr. Gerald Wegemer**, Professor of Literature at the University of Dallas and Founding Director of the Center for Thomas More Studies, gave an outstanding presentation for Hillsdale College at the Kirby Center in Washington DC, entitled “Thomas More on Liberty, Law and Statesmanship.” The video is posted by the Kirby Center at <http://kirbycenter.hillsdale.edu/events/2015/06/wegemer>.

Congratulations to **Austin Lipari, Esq**, for assuming the position of Deputy Director, Student Division at the Federalist Society. Austin is a Thomas More Society Director.

Congratulations to **Will Haun, Esq**, for selection to a Clerkship with Judge Janice Rogers Brown of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit during the 2016-2017 court term. Will is a Society Director and Associate in the Washington, D.C. office of Hunton & Williams LLP.

President (continued from page 1)

Our mission is to “acquaint and educate its members and the public as to the principles, ideals and standards of personal conduct exemplified in the private and public life of Sir Thomas More.” As a Society, we have sought to fulfill this mission through a variety of activities that would have surely delighted and attracted Sir Thomas: In December 2014, we co-hosted a Christmas Poetry Reading for approximately 200 people at the Catholic Information Center (CIC); in February 2015, Fr. Justin Huber, our Chaplain, led 50 participants in a pre-Lenten reflection at the CIC; in March 2015, Sr. Anne O'Donnell, SND, facilitated a discussion at the Thomas More Chapel at the Georgetown University School of Law; and in May 2015, Senior Judge Thomas Hogan addressed the Society at its Annual Gala Dinner at the Army-Navy Club in Washington, DC. Related articles are addressed elsewhere in this newsletter as well as on our website:

<http://thomasmoresocietyofamerica.org>.

It has been my distinct privilege to lead our Society during the past year and I look forward to “passing the gavel” to John Vittone this summer. Along with our Board of Directors, John and I have worked hard to assemble a program of activities that we trust will help us to further our mission. John has had a distinguished career in law, retiring as the Chief Administrative Law Judge with the U. S. Department of Labor. He currently chairs the Senior Lawyers Division of the American Bar Association and is a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Judicial College that is responsible for providing continuing legal education for state, federal, and local judges throughout the Nation. He is well qualified and looks forward to leading the Society over the next year.

After a summer recess, we will resume Society activities on September 22, 2015 with a “Hobbit Party,” and will reconvene in October / November with our Fall Luncheon. We certainly hope you can join us for all events. Saint Thomas More, pray for us.

Sincerely,
Chris Payne
President

While there is nothing so neat and witty that will not be made insipid by silly and inconsiderate loquacity, so also there is nothing in itself so insipid, that you

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To Join or For Information See:
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**cannot season with grace and wit if you give a little thought to it.
— A Letter to his Children, 1522.**

**A faint faith is better than a strong heresy.
— A Dialogue Concerning Heresies (1529)**

May 2, 2015

Reflections on the Thomas More Society

By Mary Ellen Bork

Thinking about the Thomas More Society necessarily invites one to reflect on a small community of people in Washington inspired by the intellectual and moral virtue of the sixteenth century English lawyer who defended the Church at the beginning of the English Reformation. I joined in about 1983 not long after Judge Bork and I were married. Not being a lawyer, I was soon introduced to many lawyers, judges, justices, and law professors and quickly learned to distinguish a district court from an appeals court. One outstanding judge was Howard Markey, founder of the Society.

Judge Howard Markey, a decorated Air Force pilot and Chief Judge of the Federal Circuit, founded the Thomas More Society in 1979. He was known as a great administrator and his interest in forming a society dedicated to the ideals of Thomas More was contagious. He was a leader in everything he did. A tribute after his death in 2006 by a Federal Circuit judge captures some of his dynamism:

Leadership for Howard Markey began with setting a vigorous example. He simply heard more appeals, wrote more opinions, gave more speeches, drafted more articles, taught more law school classes, and judges more moot courts than any other member of the court. And he did so despite all his administrative duties. Meanwhile, he chaired both the board of directors of the American Inns of Court and the Committee on Codes of Conduct of the Judicial Conference of the United States. He traveled constantly and sat with every regional circuit court, the first and only judge to do so.

Despite life in overdrive, he was the happiest and funniest man I ever met, routinely reeling off five or six successive jokes without pausing to recollect, or even to breathe. Family members report that he had a perfect memory, an asset especially helpful to a tireless storyteller, which he was. (www.chicagoplitigation.com/2008-9/legacy-of-federal-circuit-)

Markey's interest in a society devoted to More came at an auspiciously fruitful time of research and writing on this important historic figure. Yale University Press was in the midst of a thirty year project of publishing *The Complete Works of Thomas More*, whose executive editor was Dr. Clarence Miller. Louis Martz, one of the editors, was a speaker for the group at the Cosmos Club. There were also reappraisals of More's writing and his role in politics by scholars such as John Guy in *The Public Career of Sir Thomas More* (1980) and Lord G. R. Elton. Father Germain Marc'hadour, a French priest who founded the academic journal "Moreana" in 1963, was a frequent guest of the Society as he travelled to conferences on Thomas More throughout the world. He was editor of the journal for the first twenty-five years and led the group Association Amici Thomae Mori, founded in Brussels and based at the Universite Catholique de l'Ouest (Angers, France). The journal helped communication between scholars interested in More.

In 1981 the Society published its own 120 page collection of essays on More entitled "Time Trieth Truth," a Morean motto. The speeches and articles were by people like then Archbishop James Hickey, Judge Markey, and Associate Justice Donald W. Steinmetz, and other members. Father Marc'hadour noted them with approval in the journal.

The Society held several meetings a year with a special dinner. Some of the more memorable dinner speakers were Admiral James Stockdale, Chief Justice Warren Burger, Ambassador Romuald Spasowski, the former Polish ambassador to the United States who defected in 1981 and eventually became a Catholic. In 1999 Judge Robert H. Bork, judge on the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, spoke on “Thomas More for Our Season”. He reflected on the freshness of More’s memory lying in the fact that his life casts a light on our time. More’s courage and consistency in opposing the forces of disintegration and the relation of law and morality were the focus of his talk. Judge Bork’s talk has been published in his book *A Time To Speak* (2008).

The Thomas More Society continues to return to the many facets of More’s story and learn from his many writings how to live in troubled times and make a difference. A recent president, Sister Anne M. O’Donnell, SND, professor emerita at Catholic University, with expertise in Tyndale and issues related to More, added greatly to our knowledge of his times. More’s moral integrity erudition, holiness and ability to defend the Church in a society undergoing revolutionary change inspires us to share his story and continue Judge Markey’s vision.

Mary Ellen Bork, Past President and Writer living in McLean, Virginia.

**I do not care very much what men say of me, provided that God approves of me.
— A Letter to Erasmus, 1532.**