

The Catholic Church of the  
**Immaculate Conception**

2540 San Diego Avenue, San Diego, CA 92110 619 295-4141 FAX 619 295-4142  
e-mail: [parish@ic-sandiego.org](mailto:parish@ic-sandiego.org) Website: [www.ic-sandiego.org](http://www.ic-sandiego.org)

**September 21, 2014**

**Rev. Richard L. Perozich, Pastor**  
[pastor@ic-sandiego.org](mailto:parish@ic-sandiego.org)

**Rev. Msgr. Robert Ecker, Weekend Associate**

**Deacon Robert H. Fitzmorris**  
[rfitzmor@diocese-sdiego.org](mailto:rfitzmor@diocese-sdiego.org); 858 490-8332

**Liz Fielder, Manager, Serra Gifts**  
[fielder@ic-sandiego.org](mailto:fielder@ic-sandiego.org)

**Connie Rodriguez, Parish Secretary**  
[parish@ic-sandiego.org](mailto:parish@ic-sandiego.org)

**Parish Office Hours**

Monday: Noon to 4:00 pm  
Tuesday-Friday: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm  
Saturday & Sunday: Closed

Mass Schedule

**Daily Mass:** Monday - Saturday at 8:00 am  
**First Friday Mass & Devotion:** 8:00 am

Sunday Masses

Saturday Vigil: 5:15 P.M.  
Sunday Morning: 8:30, 10:00, 11:30 A.M.  
Sunday Evening: 5:15 P.M.

**Holy Day Masses:** 8 A.M., 5:30 P.M.

**Penance:** For daily Mass goes 7:30 AM, For Parish on Saturday: 4:30 to 5:00 P.M., and by appointment

**Baptisms & RCIA:** *By appointment only.* Please email Deacon Fitzmorris at [rfitzmor@diocese-sdiego.org](mailto:rfitzmor@diocese-sdiego.org).

**Weddings:** By appointment only. Arrangements must be made at least **one year** in advance. Please contact the office

**Funerals:** *For arrangements, please call the parish office.*



**History of Immaculate Conception Parish**

It was here in Old Town that Father Junipero Serra celebrated his First Holy Mass in California on July 2, 1769, near the site of the present Immaculate Conception Church, and it was on the hill overlooking Old Town that he planted the cross which marked the site of the Mission and the Presidio.

In 1849, the first parish church was established in Old Town with the name of Immaculate Conception and was dedicated in 1858. It still stands and is known as the Old Adobe Chapel on Conde Street. The cornerstone to the present Immaculate Conception Church was laid in 1868 under the direction of Father Antonio Ubach. With the population swing toward the south, it was not until July 6, 1919, that the church was dedicated by Archbishop John J. Cantwell of Los Angeles.

## WE PRAY

### MASS INTENTIONS

22	8 AM	<b>Weekday</b> †Patrick Ratelle	RP
23	8 AM	<b>St. Pio of Pietrelcina</b> †Dale Q. Pearson	RP
24	8 AM	<b>Weekday</b> †Geri South	RP
25	8 AM	<b>Weekday</b> Rita Leonard, SI	RP
26	8 AM	<b>Ss. Cosmas and Damian</b> Rev. Richard Perozich, SI	RP
27	8 AM	<b>St. Vincent de Paul</b> †Angela Renee Kresge	RP RP
28	5:15 PM	People of Immaculate Conception	
	8:30 AM	†Angie Giacalone	RP
	10:00 AM	Tomas Lopez Gomez, SI	RP
	11:30 AM	†Rev. William Early	RE
	5:15 PM	†Jose Finete	RP

### APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

**September** Intentions of the Holy Father  
**Universal:** That the mentally disabled may receive the love and help they need for a dignified life.

**Evangelization:** That Christians, inspired by the Word of God, may serve the poor and suffering.

### PRAY: SEMINARIANS IN THEOLOGY

3rd	David Exner North American College Rome,
3rd	Brian Frice Mt. Angel Seminary OR
4th	Bernardo Lara Mt. Angel Seminary, OR
1st	Oscar Lopez, Mt. Angel Seminary OR
2nd	Nathan McWeeny Mt. Angel Seminary OR
1st	Eric Tamayo North American College Rome
3rd	Corey Tufford North American College Rome,
3rd	Derek Twilliger Mt. Angel Seminary OR
3rd	Billy Zondler, Mt. Angel Seminary, OR

### PRAY FOR OUR PRIESTS

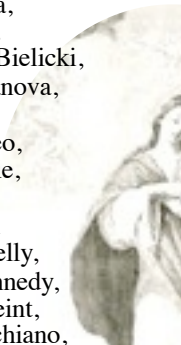
22	Rev. Sharbel Owen, OSB
23	Rev. Emmet Farrell
24	Rev. Paul Farelly, OSB
25	Rev. Msgr. Henry Fawcett
26	Rev. Gerardo Fernandez
27	Rev. Msgr. Joseph Finnerty
28	Rev. Eugene Fischer

### PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

Monday: Prv 3:27-34; Ps 15:2-5; Lk 8:16-18  
 Tuesday: Prv 21:1-13; Ps 119:1-44; Lk 8:19-21  
 Wednesday: Prv 30:5-9; Ps 119:29-163; Lk 9:1-6  
 Thursday: Eccl 1:2-11; Ps 90:3-17; Lk 9:7-9  
 Friday: Eccl 3:1-11; Ps 144:1-4; Lk 9:18-22  
 Saturday: Eccl 11:9-12:8; Ps 90:3-17; Lk 9:43-45

### PRAY FOR THE SICK

*Jesus, we ask you to bring your peace and healing touch to those who are ill, afraid or worried. Amen*

Lisa Becerra, Ann Bethel, Ann Marie Bielicki, Ismael Casanova, Bob Curry Joanne Daleo, Albina Farrie, Julie Fish Esther Fitch Margaret Kelly, Patricia Kennedy, Dorothy Kleint, Deena Marchiano,		Dena Mendoza, Jean Miller, Patricia O'Grady, Ellen Quigley, Lupe Riccio, Michelle Sullivan Mary Jane Tiernan, Marguerite Vorst, Floyd Watson, Marie Whitman Martha Zamudio, Carlos Amaya Fred Levine
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### PRAY FOR OUR DEPLOYED MILITARY

*Jesus, protect all who serve our country.*

Sgt. Ahmed John Alexander, Natalie Augustine, Major Jerry Bloomquist, Col. Mike Bodkin, Danny Carpenter, USMC, LTJG Joseph Colangelo, USN; Cpl. Samuel James Comer, Daniel Dinglebeck, USN, PFC David Eley, USMC, Micah Emery, Sgt. Christopher Escalona, Capt. Pedro Esquivel, 1Lt. Cortez Fabia, Juan Carlos Galazza; SSGT. Vincent Charles Lucario;	Robert Clinton Long, MC2; Sgt. Adriana Matizel; Wendell Miculob, LTJG Joe F. Morales, USN; LCPL Matthew A. Pena; Sgt. Richard Pierce; Sgt. William Paul Powers and Cinco, CPL Wilson Santiago; Alfred Tello; Ricky Thibeault; Tony Tulloss; PFC Travis Vliet; & 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.
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### MARRIAGE BANNS

October 4-Alex Blundell & Lilli Lovberg  
 October 11-Joe Jordan & Megan Dyer  
 October 18-John Gonzalez & Roselinda Serratos

### †PRAY FOR OUR DECEASED†

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace Amen.*

Brandon Blaine Bielicki, Georgene Bielicki, Elizabeth Cantoni, Salvador Carrillo, David Diaz Stephen Falley, Norm Henkels, Helen Kennedy, William Kennedy Jirair Khalatian, Mary Lynch, Bette June Marciel,	Robert McMahan, Kianna Meade, Julia M. Ocampos Ernie Proo, Joan Schmitten, Karina Sosa, Clyde Southern, Jr., Mariana S. Tadena Margie Gautier Patrick Piggot Rodney Serrano
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*Saint Leo the Great, pope*

**FROM THE PASTOR**

**THOSE WHO LOVE  
YOUR LAW SHALL  
HAVE ABUNDANT  
PEACE**

The blessedness of seeing God is justly promised to the pure of heart. For the eye that is unclean would not be able to see the brightness of the true light, and what would be happiness to clear minds would be a torment to those that are defiled. Therefore, let the mists of worldly vanities be dispelled, and the inner eye be cleansed of all the filth of wickedness, so that the soul's gaze may feast serenely upon the great vision of God.

It is to the attainment of this goal that the next words refer: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. This blessedness, dearly beloved, does not derive from any casual agreement or from any and every kind of harmony, but it pertains to what the Apostle says: Be at peace before the Lord, and to the words of the prophet: Those who love your law shall enjoy abundant peace; for them it is no stumbling block. Even the most intimate bonds of friendship and the closest affinity of minds cannot truly lay claim to this peace if they are not in agreement with the will of God. Alliances based on evil desires, covenants of crime and pacts of vice – all lie outside the scope of this peace. Love of the world cannot be reconciled with love of God, and the man who does not separate himself from the children of this generation cannot join the company of the sons of God. But those who keep God ever in their hearts, and are anxious to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, never dissent from the eternal law as they speak the prayer of faith. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

These then are the peacemakers; they are bound together in holy harmony and are rightly given the heavenly title of sons of God, co-heirs with Christ. And this is the reward they will receive for their love of God and neighbor: when their struggle with all temptation is finally over, there will be no further adversities to suffer or scandal to fear; but they will rest in the peace of God undisturbed, through our Lord who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

*From a sermon by Saint Bernard, abbot*

**THE STAGES OF CONTEMPLATION**

Let us take our stand on secure ground, leaning with all our strength on Christ, the most solid rock, according to the words: He set my feet on a rock and guided my steps. Thus firmly established, let us begin to contemplate, to see what he is saying to us and what reply we ought to make to his charges.


The first stage of contemplation, my dear brothers, is constantly to consider what God wants, what is pleasing to him, and what is acceptable in his eyes. We all offend in many things; our strength cannot match the rectitude of God's will, being neither one with it nor wholly in accord with it; let us then humble ourselves under the powerful hand of the most high God and be concerned to show ourselves unworthy before his merciful gaze, saying: Heal me, Lord, and I shall be healed; save me and I shall be saved. And again, Lord have mercy on me; heal my soul because I have sinned against you.

Once the eye of the soul has been purified by such considerations we no longer abide within our own spirit in a sense of sorrow, but abide rather in the Spirit of God with great delight. No longer do we consider what is the will of God for us, but rather what it is in itself. For our life is in his will. Thus we are convinced that what is according to his will is in every way more advantageous and fitting for us. And so, concerned as we are to preserve the life of our soul, we should be equally concerned, insofar as we can, not to deviate from his will.

Thus having made some progress in our spiritual exercise under the guidance of the Spirit who searches the deep things of God, let us reflect how sweet is the Lord and how good he is in himself; in the words of the prophet let us pray to see God's will; no longer shall we frequent our own hearts but his temple. At the same time we shall say: My soul is humbled within me, therefore I shall be mindful of you.

The whole of the spiritual life consists of these two elements. When we think of ourselves, we are perturbed and filled with a salutary sadness. And when we think of the Lord, we are revived to find consolation in the joy of the Holy Spirit. From the first we derive fear and humility, from the second hope and love.

## AROUND THE PARISH



### Gifts of Treasure

September 14, 2014

With gratitude for the gifts we have received, parishioners and visitors made a joyful return to the Lord.

**Total Collection...\$4,899.15**

Envelope: .....\$3,372.00  
 Plate: .....\$1,527.15

Total contributing households: 105  
 Total registered households: 446

5:15 Sat	\$ 671.18
8:30 Sun	\$1479.00
10:00 Sun	\$1441.97
11:30 Sun	\$ 465.00
5:15 Sun	\$ 392.00
Mailed in	\$ 450.00

**SPECIAL COLLECTION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST: \$1,243.00**

**EXPENSES** (week of September 8-12)

Breakfast & Hall Supplies	\$ 174.90
Debt Payment	\$1,982.36
Flower	\$ 234.59
Health Insurance	\$1,289.12
Heat/Plumb Maintenance	\$ 600.47
Internet	\$ 260.00
Janitorial Supplies	\$ 45.79
Music Ministry	\$1,268.12
Office Copier	\$ 268.58
Pest Control	\$ 100.00
Postage	\$ 110.00
Priest-Supply	\$1,800.00
Rectory Repair/Maint.	\$ 196.68
Subscription	\$ 33.00
Supplies-Ministry	\$ 126.31
Telephone	\$ 241.97
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 8,731.89</b>

**FAMILY CATECHESIS**

September 21 from 9:45 - 10:45 Immaculate Conception will offer Family Catechesis in the brides' room of the hall to prepare children and parents in the faith. Classes will meet every two weeks.

**FILIPINO DINNER**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18th**

**Menu:** Chicken Adobo, pancit (noodles), loompaya (egg rolls), steamed rice. One free drink included in ticket price.

\$10 per person

Tickets available September 21 in parish hall.

**THANK YOU!**

Special thanks to Sue Sullivan and her committee of volunteers who contributed to the success of the Santa Maria BBQ. The evening was a bit warm, but it was graced with delicious food and great fellowship.

Joan Braunstein	Penny Sampo
Diana Brotherton-Ware	Cristal Spera
Bill & Betty Dennis	Rita Tarango
Adela Diaz	Marie Wagner
Pat Haase	Donna Weisshaupt
Carole Pietras	Marie Whitman
Glen & Marilyn Rasmussen	Ben & Beth Zanin
Marina Rasmussen	



**Street Level of Fr. Serra Hall**  
**619-297-3426**

Open 7 days a week  
 Monday - Friday 9:00 -4:00  
 Saturday 10:00 to 4:00  
 Sunday 9:30 to 3:00

Serra Gifts offers a beautiful assortment of religious items for your home, and for your family and friends

Gifts for special occasions  
 New items arrive weekly  
 Remember, your purchases help to support our parish

**THANK YOU**

**Parish Pancake Breakfast**

Join us in the parish hall for a delicious pancake breakfast. Served after the 8:30 and 10:00 Masses this Sunday.

**Centering Prayer**

The Immaculate Conception Centering Prayer Group welcomes newcomers to attend and learn the method of Christian contemplative prayer.

Thursday Evening-September 25  
 Immaculate Conception—Serra Hall  
 7:00-8:30 pm

**YOGA**

Free gentle stretch class:  
 Tuesdays at 5 pm in Serra Hall  
 Bring padding to provide comfort on floor.

*Yoga is a form of exercise for the body and mind, and does not lead a Christian away from Christ*  
 — Fr. Perozich

**AROUND THE DIOCESE**

**BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS**

On Saturday, October 4, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the blessing of the animals will take place in the courtyard of Immaculate Conception Church at 11:00 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE: When coming to IC, lock your car and stow all belongings in the trunk so as not to tempt theft and for your safety.

Holy Spirit Catholic Church is inviting you to join us and be a Catholic presence at the 5k Walk to End Alzheimers, October 18th at Balboa Park. Go to [www.act.alz.org](http://www.act.alz.org) to register as a member of Team "Holy Spirit." We will meet for fellowship and prayer before the walk begins. Questions: Debbie Schnitzius 619-772-1679.

**Parish Calendar**

September 21-30

- 21 Parish Pancake Breakfast 9:30 /11a.m.
- 23 YOGA class 5:00 p.m.
- 24 Choir Practice 5:30 p.m.  
R.C.I.A. 7:00 p.m.
- 25 Centering Prayer 7:00 p.m.
- 28 Quarters & Cans Sunday
- 30 YOGA class 5:00 p.m.

October 1-15

- 1 Choir Practice 5:30 p.m.  
RCIA 7:00 p.m.
- 4 Blessing of the Animals 11:00 a.m.
- 6 I.C. Seniors Luncheon 11:00 a.m.
- 7 YOGA class 5:00 p.m.
- 8 Choir Practice 5:30 p.m.  
RCIA 7:00 p.m.
- 12 Know Your Parish Sunday  
Parish Pancake Breakfast
- 14 YOGA class 5:00 p.m.
- 15 Choir Practice 5:30 p.m.  
RCIA 7:00 p.m.

**MARRIAGE & FAMILY**

**THE DOMESTIC CHURCH**

**1655** Christ chose to be born and grow up in the bosom of the holy family of Joseph and Mary. The Church is nothing other than "the family of God." From the beginning, the core of the Church was often constituted by those who had become believers "together with all [their] household."<sup>166</sup> When they were converted, they desired that "their whole household" should also be saved. These families who became believers were islands of Christian life in an unbelieving world.

**1656** In our own time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, believing families are of primary importance as centers of living, radiant faith. For this reason the Second Vatican Council, using an ancient expression, calls the family the *Ecclesia domestica*. It is in the bosom of the family that parents are "by word and example . . . the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children. They should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each child, fostering with special care any religious vocation."

**1657** It is here that the father of the family, the mother, children, and all members of the family exercise the *priesthood of the baptized* in a privileged way "by the reception of the sacraments, prayer and thanksgiving, the witness of a holy life, and self-denial and active charity." Thus the home is the first school of Christian life and "a school for human enrichment." Here one learns endurance and the joy of work, fraternal love, generous - even repeated - forgiveness, and above all divine worship in prayer and the offering of one's life.

**1658** We must also remember the great number of *single persons* who, because of the particular circumstances in which they have to live - often not of their choosing - are especially close to Jesus' heart and therefore deserve the special affection and active solicitude of the Church, especially of pastors. Many remain *without a human family* often due to conditions of poverty. Some live their situation in the spirit of the Beatitudes, serving God and neighbor in exemplary fashion. The doors of homes, the "domestic churches," and of the great family which is the Church must be open to all of them. "No one is without a family in this world: the Church is a home and family for everyone, especially those who 'labor and are heavy laden.'"

**Courtyard Update**

The courtyard survey has been completed and will be combined with the conceptual design to produce a precise plan. If you wish to be involved in the design or other aspects of the project, please contact Glen Rasmussen at [glen@glenras.com](mailto:glen@glenras.com).

## AROUND THE COMMUNITY

### Tutors needed for CCHS

Cathedral Catholic High School is searching for college students who would be interested in a tutoring position at CCHS. The tutors are needed from 1:15 – 3:15pm Tuesday – Friday to begin now and continue through the end of May 2015. This is a paid position. If interested, please contact Mrs. Gina Armstrong at [garmstrong@cathedralcatholic.org](mailto:garmstrong@cathedralcatholic.org).

### DO YOU KNOW...

Perfume and cologne can affect persons with allergies, but most deodorants do not. Please consider these sensitivities when you prepare to come to Mass. Thank you.

### *EVANGELII GAUDIUM- Pope Francis*

13. Nor should we see the newness of this mission as entailing a kind of displacement or forgetfulness of the living history which surrounds us and carries us forward. Memory is a dimension of our faith which we might call “deuteronomic”, not unlike the memory of Israel itself. Jesus leaves us the Eucharist as the Church’s daily remembrance of, and deeper sharing in, the event of his Passover. The joy of evangelizing always arises from grateful remembrance: it is a grace which we constantly need to implore. The apostles never forgot the moment when Jesus touched their hearts: “It was about four o’clock in the afternoon” (Jn 1:39). Together with Jesus, this remembrance makes present to us “a great cloud of witnesses”, some of whom, as believers, we recall with great joy: “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God”. Some of them were ordinary people who were close to us and introduced us to the life of faith: ... The believer is essentially “one who remembers”.

### WELCOME TO IMMACULATE CONCEPTION!

To register at the parish, please fill out the form below, and drop it in the basket or call the office at 295-4141.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

### Quarters and Cans Sunday

**September 28, 2014**

During our second collection next Sunday, all money collected will be used here at Immaculate Conception to assist our brothers and sisters who come to us in need. Your generous donations will continue to be used to help feed, and in some cases assist those who are in need of our help with rent and utilities. The parish also provides gas and grocery cards. Resource information is also available so people can access public and private agencies that can help with their needs.

Food items collected will be taken by our volunteers to the Catholic Charities Food Resource Center. Please make sure these items are in non-breakable containers, unopened, and the dates have not expired. There is always a need for the following items:

- Canned goods including vegetables, fruit, chili, tuna fish, spam, chicken, beef, beans, soups, and spaghetti sauce
- Peanut butter, jelly, and honey
- Cereals, pasta, rice, and beans
- Any paper goods such as toilet paper, paper towels, paper plates, cups, napkins, Kleenex tissues, baby wipes,
- Hygiene items such as shampoo, soaps, toothpaste, tooth brushes, dental floss, mouthwash, disposable razors, shaving cream, lotions and feminine products.
- Plastic, paper or reusable grocery bags for carrying the above

### Thank You

On behalf of the entire Quarter and Cans Committee, and Father Richard, we thank you for your continued support of these important programs as we try to follow Our Lord’s command to put the Holy Gospel into action.

## A TALE OF TWO CHURCHES

*Cardinal Francis George, OMI*

Once upon a time there was a church founded on God's entering into human history in order to give humanity a path to eternal life and happiness with him. The Savior that God sent, his only-begotten Son, did not write a book but founded a community, a church, upon the witness and ministry of twelve apostles. He sent this church the gift of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of love between Father and Son, the Spirit of the truth that God had revealed about himself and humanity by breaking into the history of human sinfulness.

This church, a hierarchical communion, continued through history, living among different peoples and cultures, filled with sinners, but always guided in the essentials of her life and teaching by the Holy Spirit. She called herself "Catholic" because her purpose was to preach a universal faith and a universal morality, encompassing all peoples and cultures. This claim often invited conflict with the ruling classes of many countries. About 1,800 years into her often stormy history, this church found herself as a very small group in a new country in Eastern North America that promised to respect all religions because the State would not be confessional; it would not try to play the role of a religion.

This church knew that it was far from socially acceptable in this new country. One of the reasons the country was established was to protest the king of England's permitting the public celebration of the Catholic Mass on the soil of the British Empire in the newly conquered Catholic territories of Canada. He had betrayed his coronation oath to combat Catholicism, defined as "America's greatest enemy," and protect Protestantism, bringing the pure religion of the colonists into danger and giving them the moral right to revolt and reject his rule.

Nonetheless, many Catholics in the American colonies thought their life might be better in the new country than under a regime whose ruling class had penalized and persecuted them since the mid-16th century. They made this new country their own and served her loyally. The social history was often contentious, but the State basically kept its promise to protect all religions and not become a rival to them, a fake church. Until recent years.

There was always a quasi-religious element in the public creed of the country. It lived off the myth of human progress, which had little place for dependence on divine providence. It tended to exploit the religiosity of the ordinary people by using religious language to co-opt them into the purposes of the ruling class. Forms of anti-Catholicism were part of its social DNA. It had encouraged its citizens to think of themselves as the creators of world history and the managers of nature, so that no source of truth outside of themselves needed to be consulted to check their collective purposes and desires. But it had never explicitly taken upon itself the mantle of a religion and officially told its citizens what they must personally think or what "values" they must personalize in order to deserve to be part of the country. Until recent years.

In recent years, society has brought social and legislative approval to all types of sexual relationships that used to be considered "sinful." Since the biblical vision of what it means to be human tells us that not every friendship or love can be expressed in sexual relations, the church's teaching on these issues is now evidence of intolerance for what the civil law upholds and even imposes. What was once a request to live and let live has now become a demand for approval. The "ruling class," those who shape public opinion in politics, in education, in communications, in entertainment, is using the civil law to impose its own form of morality on everyone. We are told that, even in marriage itself, there is no difference between men and women, although nature and our very bodies clearly evidence that men and women are not interchangeable at will in forming a

family. Nevertheless, those who do not conform to the official religion, we are warned, place their citizenship in danger.

When the recent case about religious objection to one provision of the Health Care Act was decided against the State religion, the Huffington Post (June 30, 2014) raised "concerns about the compatibility between being a Catholic and being a good citizen." This is not the voice of the nativists who first fought against Catholic immigration in the 1830s. Nor is it the voice of those who burned convents and churches in Boston and Philadelphia a decade later. Neither is it the voice of the Know-Nothing Party of the 1840s and 1850s, nor of the Ku Klux Klan, which burned crosses before Catholic churches in the Midwest after the civil war. It is a voice more sophisticated than that of the American Protective Association, whose members promised never to vote for a Catholic for public office. This is, rather, the self-righteous voice of some members of the American establishment today who regard themselves as "progressive" and "enlightened."

The inevitable result is a crisis of belief for many Catholics. Throughout history, when Catholics and other believers in revealed religion have been forced to choose between being taught by God or instructed by politicians, professors, editors of major newspapers and entertainers, many have opted to go along with the powers that be. This reduces a great tension in their lives, although it also brings with it the worship of a false god. It takes no moral courage to conform to government and social pressure. It takes a deep faith to "swim against the tide," as Pope Francis recently encouraged young people to do at last summer's World Youth Day.

Swimming against the tide means limiting one's access to positions of prestige and power in society. It means that those who choose to live by the Catholic faith will not be welcomed as political candidates to national office, will not sit on editorial boards of major newspapers, will not be at home on most university faculties, will not have successful careers as actors and entertainers. Nor will their children, who will also be suspect. Since all public institutions, no matter who owns or operates them, will be agents of the government and conform their activities to the demands of the official religion, the practice of medicine and law will become more difficult for faithful Catholics. It already means in some States that those who run businesses must conform their activities to the official religion or be fined, as Christians and Jews are fined for their religion in countries governed by Sharia law.

A reader of the tale of two churches, an outside observer, might note that American civil law has done much to weaken and destroy what is the basic unit of every human society, the family. With the weakening of the internal restraints that healthy family life teaches, the State will need to impose more and more external restraints on everyone's activities. An outside observer might also note that the official religion's imposing whatever its proponents currently desire on all citizens and even on the world at large inevitably generates resentment. An outside observer might point out that class plays a large role in determining the tenets of the official State religion. "Same-sex marriage," as a case in point, is not an issue for the poor or those on the margins of society.

How does the tale end? We don't know. The actual situation is, of course, far more complex than a story plot, and there are many actors and characters, even among the ruling class, who do not want their beloved country to transform itself into a fake church. It would be wrong to lose hope, since there are so many good and faithful people.

Catholics do know, with the certainty of faith, that, when Christ returns in glory to judge the living and the dead, the church, in some recognizable shape or form that is both Catholic and Apostolic, will be there to meet him. There is no such divine guarantee for any country, culture or society of this or any age.