

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 Website: www.ic-sandiego.org

April 5, 2015

Rev. Richard L. Perozich, Pastor
pastor@ic-sandiego.org

Rev. Msgr. Robert Ecker, Weekend Associate

Deacon Robert H. Fitzmorris
rfitzmor@diocese-sdiego.org; 858 490-8332

Liz Fielder, Manager, Serra Gifts
fielder@ic-sandiego.org

Connie Rodriguez, Parish Secretary
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., 7:00 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.

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

06	8 AM	<i>Monday within Octave of Easter</i> †Marilyn Fike	RP
07	8 AM	<i>Tuesday within Octave of Easter</i> Phillip Burnett, SI	RE
08	8 AM	<i>Wednesday within Octave of Easter</i> †Jack Corridi	RP
09	8 AM	<i>Thursday within Octave of Easter</i> †Martin Morris	RP
10	8 AM	<i>Friday in the Octave of Easter</i> Jim Scolett, SI	RP RP
11	8 AM	<i>Saturday in the Octave of Easter</i> †Martin Morris	RP
	5:15 PM	†Jack Corridi	RP
12	8:30 AM	People of Immaculate Conception	
	10:00 AM	†Irene Parosky	
	11:30 AM	†William Kennedy	
	5:15 PM	†Jose Mendez & Jacinta Vargas	

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

APRIL: Intentions of the Holy Father

Universal: That people may learn to respect creation and care for it as a gift of God.

Evangelization: That persecuted Christians may feel the consoling presence of the Risen Lord and the solidarity of all the Church.

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 McWeeney 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

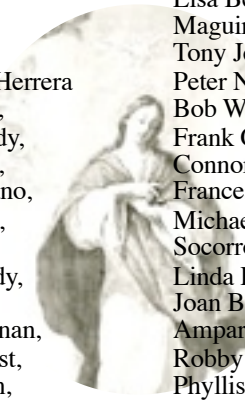
06	Rev. Msgr. William Shipley
07	Rev. Keith Shuley
08	Rev. Michael Sinor
09	Rev. Romeo Smith
10	Rev. Louis Solcia, CRSP
11	Rev. John Sostrich
12	Rev. Matthew Spahr

PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

Monday: Acts 2:14-33; Ps 16:1-11; Mt 28:8-15
 Tuesday: Acts 2:36-41; Ps 33:4-22; Jn 20:11-18
 Wednesday: Acts 3:1-10; Ps 105:1-9; Lk 24:13-35
 Thursday: Acts 3:11-26; Ps 8:2-9; Lk 24:35-48
 Friday: Acts 4:1-12; Ps 118:1-27; Jn 21:1-14
 Saturday: Acts 4:13-21; Ps 118:1-21; Mk 16:9-15

PRAY FOR THE SICK

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

Albina Farrie, Julie Fish, Esther Fitch, Lydia Castillo Herrera Margaret Kelly, Patricia Kennedy, Dorothy Kleint, Deena Marchiano, Dena Mendoza, Jean Miller, Patricia O'Grady, Lupe Riccio, Mary Jane Tiernan, Marguerite Vorst, Marie Whitman, Martha Zamudio, Carlos Amaya, Fred Levine, Mike Rodriguez,		Lisa Becerra, Maguire Fitzpatrick, Tony Jenkins, Peter Nalwalker, Bob Witt, Franko Garay, Connor Domsitz, Frances Garcia, Michael Blase Ambuul, Socorro Pacheco, Linda Lee, Joan Busalacchi, Amparo Valenzuela, Robby Witt, Phyllis Altomare, Denise Cooney, Alicia Ambrose, Shirley Pearson Diego Cárdenas
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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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†PRAY FOR OUR DECEASED†

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

Bette June Marciel, Kianna Meade, Julia M. Ocampos, Ernie Proo, Joan Schmittin, Karina Sosa, Clyde Southern, Jr., Mariana S. Tadena, William Kennedy, Robert McMahon, David Diaz, Margie Gautier, Patrick Piggot, Rodney Serrano, Concepción Garza,	Richard Solís Moreno, Laura Marks, Alvin Weaver, William Bethel, Lillian Sinclair, Olga Hritz, Imelda Hoeckelmann, Angelina Olivarez, Alice Perry, Joseph Moreno, Louie Serrano, Gustavo Sosa, Floyd Watson Iola Torre Thomas Briggs
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**POPE FRANCIS DECLARES
HOLY YEAR FOR MERCY**

—*Elise Harris*

FROM THE PASTOR

Rome, Italy, Mar 13,
2015 / 10:05 am (CNA/EWTN

News).- During his homily for a Lenten penitential service, Pope Francis announced an extraordinary Jubilee to start at the end of the year, which will be dedicated to a theme close to the pontiff's heart: mercy.

"Dear brothers and sisters, I have thought about how the Church can make clear its mission of being a witness of mercy," the Pope told attendees of his March 13 penitential liturgy in St. Peter's Basilica.

"It's a journey that starts with a spiritual conversion. For this reason I have decided to declare an Extraordinary Jubilee that has the mercy of God at its center. It will be a Holy Year of Mercy."

The biblical passage for the Holy Year's theme is from Luke Chapter 6 verse 36, in which Jesus tells his disciples, "Be merciful as your Father is merciful."

"I am convinced that the whole Church will be able to find in this Jubilee the joy of rediscovering and making fruitful the mercy of God, with which we are all called to give consolation to every man and every woman of our time," Francis said, and entrusted the Holy Year to Mary, Mother of Mercy.

Pope Francis made his announcement during a penitential liturgy opening the second "24 Hours for the Lord" event, which he originally called for in Lent of last year.

An initiative of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, the event is designed to widen access to the Sacrament of Confession by having parishes open their doors for an extended period of time with priests available to those who come.

Francis' announcement of the Extraordinary Jubilee for mercy not only falls on the opening of the 24 hours for the Lord event, which follows the theme "God rich in mercy," but also the two year anniversary of his pontificate.

The Jubilee, also called a Holy Year, will open this year on Dec. 8 – the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception – and will close Nov. 20, 2016 with the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

It will also coincide with the 50th anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council in 1965. The Jubilee will be organized by the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization.

Sunday readings during Ordinary Time for the Holy Year will be taken from the Gospel of Luke, as he is often referred to as "the evangelist of mercy." Among the well-known parables of mercy present in Luke's Gospel are those of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the merciful father.

The official announcement of the Jubilee will take place on Divine Mercy Sunday, the Sunday after Easter, with a public proclamation in front of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica.

Each of the four papal basilicas in Rome has a holy door, which are normally sealed shut from the inside so that they cannot be opened. The doors are only opened during Jubilee years so that pilgrims can enter through them in order to gain the plenary indulgence that is connected with the Jubilee.

The rite of the opening of the Holy Door is intended to symbolically illustrate the idea that the Church's faithful are offered an "extraordinary path" toward salvation during the time of Jubilee.

After the Holy Door opens in St. Peter's Basilica, those of the other three Roman basilicas, St. John Lateran, St. Paul Outside the Walls and St. Mary Major, will be opened.

In ancient Hebrew tradition, the Jubilee Year was celebrated every 50 years and was intended to restore equality among the children of Israel by providing opportunities for families who had lost their property and even their personal freedom to regain them.

It was also a year in which the wealthy were reminded that their Israelite slaves would again become their equals and regain their rights.

The Catholic tradition of practicing the Holy Year began with Pope Boniface VIII in 1300, and since 1475 an Ordinary Jubilee has been celebrated every 25 years in order to allow each generation to experience at least one during their lifetime.

However, as is the case with Pope Francis' 2016 Holy Year of Mercy, an extraordinary Jubilee can be called for a special occasion or for an event that has a particular importance.

Until now there have only been 26 ordinary Jubilee celebrations, the last of which was the Jubilee of 2000.

The Holy Year is traditionally a year of forgiveness of sins and also the punishment merited by one's sins. It is also a year for reconciliation between enemies, conversion and receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The first extraordinary Jubilee was called in 16th century, and the most recent have been in 1933, when Pope Pius XI called one to celebrate 1900 years of Redemption, and in 1983 when St. John Paul II proclaimed one to honor 1950 years of Redemption.

Mercy is a theme that is dear to Francis, and is the central topic of his episcopal motto "miserando atque eligendo," which he chose when ordained a bishop in 1992.

One translation of the motto, taken from a homily given by St. Bede on Jesus' calling of St. Matthew, is "with eyes of mercy."

In his first Angelus address as the Bishop of Rome, March 17, 2013, Francis spoke of "Feeling mercy...this word changes everything."

Mercy, he said then, "is the best thing we can feel: it changes the world. A little mercy makes the world less cold and more just. We need to understand properly this mercy of God, this merciful Father who is so patient."

In the English version of his first Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Gaudium," the word "mercy" appears 32 times.

AROUND THE PARISH

Gifts of Treasure

Publication deadline prevented us from providing a summary of the March 29 collection. We thank parishioners and visitors who made a joyful return to the Lord.

March 22, 2015

Total Collection: \$5,781.03

Parishioners: \$3495.25 Visitors: \$2285.78
Total contributing households: 94

5:15 Sat	\$766.37
8:30 Sun	\$1224.00
10:00 Sun	\$1497.44
11:30 Sun	\$1297.11
5:15 Sun	\$ 526.11
Mailed	\$470.00

Annual Catholic Appeal

Goal: \$27,000

Paid to date: \$22,217.50
Pledged to date: \$34,272.50

EXPENSES

March 23-27, 2015

Janitorial Supplies	\$257.87
Maintenance Supplies	\$217.69
Music Ministry	\$1,010.00
Supplies-Ministry	\$567.42
Supplies-Office	\$42.25

Total: \$2,095.23

Building Fund: 1,250.00



Fr. Richard and the staff of Immaculate Conception wish all parishioners and visitors a happy Easter.

Alleluia, the Lord is risen!

FAMILY CATECHESIS

Continues on **April 5** from 9:45 - 10:45. Immaculate Conception offers Family Catechesis in the brides' room of the hall to prepare children and parents the faith. Classes meet every two weeks

iPhone Apps

Catholic apps available include **iBreviary** (free) which is available in English and Spanish, and **iMissal** (usually priced at \$4.99).

SPECIAL RETREAT

God's Healing Love - April 13th, 14th and 15th
Praise, worship and prayer with Fr. Greg Bramlage
St. Therese of Carmel Parish
Questions: tcolumbo@stocsd.org or 858 481-3232

Magnificat Prayer Breakfast

Marie Finn, well-known prayer warrior and co-founder of the St. Dismas Guild, will share her powerful witness and speak on the Counsel of the Holy Spirit, **Sat., April 18** from 9:30 am-12:30 pm at the Mission Valley Sheraton...\$30. Please contact (619) 701-2718 or SDMagnificat@gmail.com to make reservation by April 13th.



2015 Baptism Schedule

May 04 Class
May 10 Baptisms
(see ic-sandiego.org for more dates)

San Diego Breath of Hope Lung Cancer Walk

Sunday, April 19, 2015
Registration: 7:30 a.m.
Event: 9 am - Noon
Harbor Island

Register : sdbreathofhope.ucsd.edu
Questions: 858.246.1230
hsdevents@ucsd.edu

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 _____

AROUND THE PARISH

Parish Calendar

April

- 05 Easter Sunday: Regular Mass Schedule
Serra Gifts closed
- 06 Easter Monday: Parish Office & Serra Gifts closed
No I.C. Seniors Luncheon
- 07 Gentle Stretch Class 5:00 p.m.
Pastoral Council (members only) 6:00 p.m.
- 08 Choir Practice 5:30 p.m.
RCIA 7:00 p.m.
- 12 Parish Registration Sunday
Parish Pancake Breakfast 9:30 a.m.
- 13 I.C. Seniors Luncheon Meeting 11:00 a.m.
- 14 Gentle Stretch Class 5:00 p.m.
- 15 Choir Practice 5:30 p.m.
RCIA 7:00 p.m.
- 19 COLFS Baby Bottle Drive
Family Catechesis 9:45 a.m.
- 21 Gentle Stretch Class 5:00 p.m.
- 22 Choir Practice 5:30 p.m.
RCIA 7:00 p.m.
- 26 Quarters & Cans Sunday
- 28 Gentle Stretch Class 5:00 p.m.
- 29 Choir Practice 5:30 p.m.
RCIA 7:00 p.m.

May

- 02 Old Town Fiesta Cinco de Mayo
- 03 Old Town Fiesta Cinco de Mayo
- 04 I.C. Seniors Luncheon 11:00 a.m.
- 05 Gentle Stretch Class 5:00 p.m.
- 06 Choir Practice 5:30 p.m.
- 12 Gentle Stretch Class 5:00 p.m.
- 13 Choir Practice 5:30 p.m.

Centering Prayer Group

welcomes newcomers to attend and learn the method of Christian contemplative prayer.

Thursday Evening-April 9 7:00-8:30 pm
Immaculate Conception—Serra Hall

If the sacrament of the Lord's passion is to work its effect in us, we must imitate what we receive and proclaim to mankind what we revere. The cry of the Lord finds a **hiding place** in us if our lips fail to speak of this, though our hearts believe in it. So that his cry may **not** lie concealed in us it remains for us all, each in his own measure, to make known to those around us the mystery of our new life in Christ. *Gregory the Great*

SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL: LUMEN GENTIUM

THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

9. At all times and in every race God has given welcome to whosoever fears Him and does what is right. God, however, does not make men holy and save them merely as individuals, without bond or link between one another. Rather has it pleased Him to bring men together as one people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness. He therefore chose the race of Israel as a people unto Himself. With it He set up a covenant. Step by step He taught and prepared this people, making known in its history both Himself and the decree of His will and making it holy unto Himself. All these things, however, were done by way of preparation and as a figure of that new and perfect covenant, which was to be ratified in Christ, and of that fuller revelation which was to be given through the Word of God Himself made flesh. "Behold the days shall come saith the Lord, and I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel, and with the house of Judah . . . I will give my law in their bowels, and I will write it in their heart, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people . . . For all of them shall know Me, from the least of them even to the greatest, saith the Lord.(Christ instituted this new covenant, the new testament, that is to say, in His Blood, calling together a people made up of Jew and gentile, making them one, not according to the flesh but in the Spirit. This was to be the new People of God. For those who believe in Christ, who are reborn not from a perishable but from an imperishable seed through the word of the living God, not from the flesh but from water and the Holy Spirit, are finally established as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people . . . who in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God".

PARISH & COMMUNITY

SHOP IS IN NEED OF VOLUNTEERS!!

The Gift Shop volunteers act as liaison for Immaculate Conception Church by giving out general information of the area to all visitors.

Whether you want to volunteer once a week, once a month or more, and enjoy meeting people and making new friends...**This is for you!**

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Liz Fielder, Gift Shop Manager at 619.295.4141, ext. 13, or email lfielder@ic-sandiego.org for more information.

Courtesy Announcements

Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court Immaculata #1854

Card Party at St. Mary Magdalene Parish Hall
Saturday, April 11
11 AM to 3 PM

Call Delphine (619-742-1935) or Donna (760-788-0849) for information

Office for Young Adult Ministry

Theology on Tap

Mondays in April at Off Shore Tavern, 2253 Morena Blvd., San Diego

April 6--Easter: "How Jesus fulfills the series of your heart!" Andrew Dennis, speaker.
April 13--St. Augustine: "Why everyone can read, know, and love the Theologian St. Augustine." Fr. Mark Menegatti, speaker.
April 20--Relationships: "Vocation to Love!" Peggy & Ralph Skiano, speakers

Service Opportunities:

St. Vincent de Paul Village
Tuesday, April 7--4 to 7pm
Contact katiebriggs7@gmail.com

Ronald McDonald House Charities
Wednesday, April 29--4:45-8pm
Serve dinner to children and their families
Contact Matt 619-212-0939 or mmekany@gmail.com

Limited space available for both events.

EVANGELII GAUDIUM- Pope Francis

50. Before taking up some basic questions related to the work of evangelization, it may be helpful to mention briefly the context in which we all have to live and work. Today, we frequently hear of a "diagnostic overload" which is not always accompanied by improved and actually applicable methods of treatment. Nor would we be well served by a purely sociological analysis which would aim to embrace all of reality by employing an allegedly neutral and clinical method. What I would like to propose is something much more in the line of an evangelical discernment. It is the approach of a missionary disciple, an approach "nourished by the light and strength of the Holy Spirit".

51. It is not the task of the Pope to offer a detailed and complete analysis of contemporary reality, but I do exhort all the communities to an "ever watchful scrutiny of the signs of the times". This is in fact a grave responsibility, since certain present realities, unless effectively dealt with, are capable of setting off processes of dehumanization which would then be hard to reverse. We need to distinguish clearly what might be a fruit of the kingdom from what runs counter to God's plan. This involves not only recognizing and discerning spirits, but also – and this is decisive – choosing movements of the spirit of good and rejecting those of the spirit of evil. I take for granted the different analyses which other documents of the universal magisterium have offered, as well as those proposed by the regional and national conferences of bishops. In this Exhortation I claim only to consider briefly, and from a pastoral perspective, certain factors which can restrain or weaken the impulse of missionary renewal in the Church, either because they threaten the life and dignity of God's people or because they affect those who are directly involved in the Church's institutions and in her work of evangelization.

Serra Gifts...

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, for your family and friends, and for the holiday season.

Remember, your purchases help to support our parish.

Re-usable shopping bags with Immaculate Conception logo,

Check out new items that arrive weekly.

See our online catalog at:
<http://www.ic-sandiego.org/gift-shop>

CATHOLICISM AND THE IDEOLOGICAL TEMPTATION

— James Kalb

Stubborn differences on political and social issues usually come out of problems regarding basic understandings. It's not always obvious what the problems are. Most often they have to do with something that goes without saying for at least some of those involved. The result of that situation is that people see their opponents as willful, perverse, or irrational—as people who simply refuse to accept what's obviously right.

Examples include "gay marriage" and other issues relating to sex. Those who see man as self-defining and the physical world as raw material for his projects see the issues one way. We write our own ticket in sexual matters, and anyone who disapproves is a bigot, would-be oppressor, and probably psychologically disordered. Those who see man as social, the physical world as meaningful, and the family as basic to society see them quite another.

Another example is the dispute between "social justice" Catholics who emphasize government protections and benefits, and their less statist, more distributist, or more libertarian counterparts, who emphasize the role of individual, family, local, religious, and other non-governmental arrangements, and therefore limit the direct role of government.

How the dispute plays out is somewhat complicated. It should be a matter of emphasis rather than principle, since Catholicism is prudent and moderate on such matters. It rejects libertarianism, which dissolves the common good into private goods, so that the function of government is reduced to protecting individuals from physical assault and violation of property rights, and also socialism, which dissolves private goods into the public good, and wants government to administer both as part of a single comprehensive system. Both views go astray by trying to impose a single principle on everything. They ignore the complexity of man as a being that is at once individual, material, social, and spiritual, and of society as a system made up of infinitely varied forms of cooperation and competition with respect to the whole range of human concerns.

In contrast, Catholics recognize that government should look after the common good, defined as "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily," but in accordance with subsidiarity, less by direct action than by establishing standards and a framework that facilitate the efforts of a variety of actors to realize private and public goods. Catholics also insist that some of those actors—such as individuals, families, and the Church—have an integrity, status, and authority that is independent of state and market and must be respected.

The complexity of the situation makes the right balance between *laissez faire* and government intervention hard to find. It's especially hard today when government and other leading institutions have no interest in doing so. The balance must be determined by reference to human nature and the good life, as well as current and historical circumstances. Current public discussion, which downplays human nature and identifies the good life with a combination of choice and security to be realized technologically, has no remotely adequate understanding of such things.

The problem comes up vividly in connection with direct government responsibility for the problems of particular people. All or almost all agree the public interest requires government to come to the direct assistance of individuals in protecting them from force, theft, and fraud. So everyone or almost everyone thinks government should establish an army, police force, criminal justice system, and civil courts.

But what about other serious concerns individuals often have, such as the lack of goods considered basic? Should government protect each of us from lack of food, clothing, shelter, and medical care? If so, up to what standard? Bare survival? Cots, soup kitchens, and emergency clinics? Customary standards of comfort and decency? And what about other more intangible problems like social exclusion?

Widespread prosperity, the decline of family and other informal local connections, the penetration of commercial and bureaucratic ways of doing things into all corners of life, and an ever broader conception of human rights, and more individualistic and egalitarian understanding of social justice have led to the view that government should

take care of all those things. It should not only promote the common good but act as universal guarantor of the well-being of every individual. Where that view is not held explicitly it is often simply assumed, so that every instance of individual hardship is considered an instance of government failure.

However, the same tendencies have also led to a growing understanding of government as properly neutral among ways of life. The universally-active secular liberal state says it has no official version of the good life, but simply wants to facilitate whatever versions its people adhere to individually. The result is that people expect government to be not at all involved in their lives from the standpoint of *how* they live, but totally involved from the standpoint of supporting their well-being.

The expectation doesn't make sense, and something has to give. What's given for the most part is the view that government should let us live as we choose. We're allowed to do so in theory, but only when our choices are consistent with the efficiency, stability, and effectiveness of an increasingly comprehensive system of social management. So we have a constitutional right to virtual kiddie porn, but are subject to an ever more comprehensive system of controls designed to keep us safe, healthy, and free from oppressions and microaggressions in daily life. The result is a sort of neo-socialism with elements of crony capitalism that accepts markets and private property as necessary mechanisms but tries to integrate them as much as possible into a comprehensive system of bureaucratic control.

Neo-socialism naturally leads to a quasi-libertarian backlash. People in America used to say "it's a free country," but no more, and that bothers many of them. All mainstream voices agree security and choice are the goals, but where the party that dominates high-end public discussion interprets them in an ever broader sense as things to be secured for all by comprehensive government intervention, a more libertarian party would like to interpret security as government suppression of theft, violence, and foreign threats, and promotion of choice as less government involvement in social and economic life.

That situation makes life difficult for Catholics. They'd rather not be neo-socialists or quasi-libertarians, but public life has to be based on commonly shared understandings, and that makes it hard to participate fully today without becoming one or the other. A principled alternative to collectivism and individualism would require a conception of the human good as more than choice and security, and acceptance of authoritative institutions like family and Church that don't reduce to property, markets, or the state bureaucracy. The assumptions governing public life, which have to do with maximizing individual preference satisfaction by technological means, provide no grounding for such principles.

What decides the issue in favor of neo-socialism for many Catholics is concern for the poor and excluded, together with acceptance of rational bureaucratic organization as an effective or at least readily available way to get something done. What decides others in favor of quasi-libertarianism is the reflection that administered societies become nonfunctional, and concern that a comprehensive system of social administration will inevitably suppress Catholicism, along with other good things, because it imposes an overriding view of what life should be and where ultimate authority rests.

There's no way to deal with the issue intelligently while participating in public life in accordance with current assumptions. What Catholics need to do politically, then, in addition to protecting the Church's ability to function and her members' ability to live in accordance with Catholic principle, is overthrow the assumptions that make equality, economic utility, and technology the supreme standards for public discussion.

Those concerns have their place, but public life becomes tyrannical and inhuman when it excludes God and an adequate understanding of human nature. We should therefore focus our public efforts on insistent proclamation of the principles that are missing.

Technocratic assumptions are deeply rooted today, so the effort to change them is not likely to yield practical results any time soon. That effort is nonetheless what the Church is called to pursue in public life today. Her mission is to proclaim the truth about man and the world, and that mission comes ahead of political alliances for limited goods that are quite obviously intertwined with intrinsic evils.