

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 19, 2015

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; 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

20	8 AM	Easter Weekday †Martin Morris	RP
21	8 AM	St. Anselm Shirley Pearson, SI	RE
22	8 AM	Easter Weekday †Constance O'Hara-Ullrich	RP
23	8 AM	St. George; St. Adalbert †Agnes Flavin	RP
24	8 AM	St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen George & Espy Kresge, SI	RP
25	8 AM	St. Mark †Nicholas Banfield	RE
26	5:15 PM	†Martin Morris	MT
	8:30 AM	Kaitlin Rodriquez, SI	RE
	10:00 AM	†Eva Pinchero	RE
	11:30 AM	†William Kennedy	MT
	5:15 PM	†People of Immaculate Conception	MT

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

20	Rev. Arnold Tadena
21	Rev. Thomas Thompson
22	Rev. J. Noel Thompson
23	Rev. Lucas Thumma
24	Rev. Harold Tindall
25	Rev. Joselito Tiongson
26	Rev. Christopher Tozzi

PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

Monday: Acts 6:8-15; Ps 119:23-30; Jn 6:22-29
 Tuesday: Acts 7:51-8:1; Ps 31:3-21; Jn 6:30-35
 Wednesday: Acts 8:1-8; Ps 66:1-7; Jn 6:35-40
 Thursday: Acts 8:26-40; Ps 66:8-20; Jn 6:44-51
 Friday: Acts 9:1-20; Ps 117:1-2; Jn 6:52-59
 Saturday: 1 Pt 5:5-14; Ps 89:2-17; Mk 16:15-20

PRAY FOR THE SICK

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

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, Frank 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, Emilie Graham.
--	---	---

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.
---	--

†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
---	--

THE CHALLENGE: PRUNING OUR LIVES

—Rebecca Hagelin

FROM THE PASTOR

Jesus often taught through metaphors and parables, using tangible truths to shed light on spiritual matters. It makes sense that he taught this way, not simply because physical things are easier to understand, but because God patterned the world so we can look for and discover His truth everywhere we turn.

One of Jesus' most recognizable metaphors is one he shared with his disciples at the last supper, on the eve of his crucifixion. His image of a gardener at work can be found in John 15. It begins, "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener..."

A vinedresser constantly watches over his vineyard, cutting away and pruning branches as they grow and decay and harvesting the fruit as it ripens. But though his care is constant, the dormant season just before spring is reserved for heavy pruning—when the gardener cuts away drastically to ready the vine for new growth. Just before Jesus goes to the cross, he tells them about this; this cutting away that is necessary if believers are to grow in the new life he is about to die to offer them.

Here in the northern hemisphere, the Lenten season lines up with this pruning season. It's the time when many Christians concentrate as a community on repentance, allowing God to prune the church, making it ready for the growth that breaks through as the Easter sun rises after a long winter. If you have neglected to examine your own life and allow Christ to prune what is harmful and painful from your heart, mind and soul, it's not too late to make room for new joy and growth to take place in your life!

Jesus said, "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more." Pruning is absolutely necessary for a good harvest. Vinedressers cut away the tangled, useless, dead branches that suffocate and disrupt growth. They cut away branches to prevent disease from infecting and destroying the crop. They prune to direct growth in the right direction, and they prune to make the fruit grow bigger and sweeter.

He continued, "You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you." His message—the words, laws and teachings of God—are his cutting tool. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires." His word is the tool that cuts to remove the dying branches, but it's also the tool that cuts to bring life and health. It's one tool with two effects—life to one and death to the other.

The Hope: Live in Christ

So what determines which branches produce fruit and benefit from the cutting and which branches fail to produce fruit and are cut away? As Jesus continued, he

answered that question. The Message translation of his words explains it beautifully. It says, "Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can't bear fruit unless you are joined with me. When you're joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can't produce a thing. Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire." Christians and non-Christians alike are prone to try to be productive and to try to find life on their own, apart from Jesus, apart from the vine. And when we fail to believe that life can only be found in him, we begin to wither.

Then God's sharp words fall upon us and cut off every withered part. When we come in contact with them, they either prune us, restoring us to health and faith; or find us entirely dead already and then we fall away. But even then hope isn't lost—God has the power to bring dead branches back to life. Romans 11:23 says, "If they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again."

The point is that God's sharp and powerful words, His wisdom, laws and teachings only improve our lives when they find us alive—attached to Jesus through faith, receiving his power. When His words find us this way, the pruning that looks like conviction, repentance and the cutting away of doubt and sin is something to desire rather than fear.

When you find yourself discouraged or struggling with sin—that underlying unbelief that tempts you to try to find life on your own—the solution is always to remain in the vine. You do this by keeping "your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. *That* will shoot adrenaline into your souls!" (Hebrews 12:1-3, MSG).

Your faith in Jesus is what will keep you in the vine, and 2 Peter 1:5-11 lists out actions you can take to strengthen your faith. It says to supplement it with:

1. "Moral excellence"—deliberately do good to others and keep a clear conscience
2. "Knowledge"—study scripture.
3. "Self-control"—practice spiritual disciplines.
4. "Patient endurance"—remain strong in the face of adversity.
5. "Godliness"—devote yourself to God each day.
6. "Brotherly affection"—find encouragement in Christian community.
7. "Love for everyone"—try to see others as God sees them. "The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be" (2 Peter 1:8). May we all grow with new, powerful and impactful lives in Christ this Spring!

AROUND THE PARISH

Gifts of Treasure

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

April 12, 2015

Total Collection: \$5725.26
Envelopes: \$ 3992.00 Plate: \$1733.26
Total contributing households: 99

5:15 Sat	\$ 616.00
8:30 Sun	\$1196.00
10:00 Sun	\$1511.02
11:30 Sun	\$ 770.00
5:15 Sun	\$ 689.50
Mailed	\$942.74

Annual Catholic Appeal

Goal: \$27,000

Paid to date: \$24,817.50
 Pledged to date: \$37,022.50

EXPENSES

April 6-10, 2015

Gas & Electric	\$430.08
Janitorial Supplies	\$ 56.87
Music Ministry	\$1765.00
Priest Supply	\$850.00
Supplies - Ministry	\$609.00
Water Utility	\$1052.98

Total: \$4,763.93

FAMILY CATECHESIS

Continues on **April 19** 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

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 _____

BABY BOTTLE DRIVE--April 19, 2014
Culture of Life Family Services

Fill a Bottle--Save a Life!

Support women in crisis pregnancies. This weekend is the Baby Bottle Drive. We provide the baby bottles, you provide the cash, check, or change!

See enclosed flyer for details.



2015 Baptism Schedule

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

Welcome Reception for New Parishioners

If you are a new parishioner (within last year), you are invited to the Welcome Reception on Wednesday, April 22, at 6:30 p.m. in Serra Hall. Come meet and greet our pastor and our parish leadership.

from Office for Young Adult Ministry

Theology on Tap: Mondays in April at Off Shore Tavern, 2253 Morena Blvd, San Diego, 6:30 p.m. Go to www.yamsd.org for information.

Ronald McDonald House Charities: Community service program, Wed., April 29, 4:45-8:00 p.m. Contact Matt at 619-212-0939 or mmekany@gmail.com.

Marriage Programs

Natural Family Planning: Sympto-thermal method. Moral, healthy, and 99.6% effective in preventing pregnancy. For information, contact Don or Dorene at 858-663-9095 or 858-663-6971. Next class begins May 14.

Marriage Encounter: Renew your relationship. May 29-31, 2015. To register, call Mike or Anita at 619-445-0564 or apply online at wwme-sandiego.org

AROUND THE PARISH

Parish Calendar

April

19	COLFS Baby Bottle Drive Family Catechesis	9:45 a.m.
21	Gentle Stretch Class	5:00 p.m.
22	Choir Practice Welcome Reception	5:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m.
23	Centering Prayer	7:00 p.m.
26	Quarters & Cans Sunday	
28	Gentle Stretch Class	5:00 p.m.
29	Choir Practice RCIA	5:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.

May

02	Old Town Cinco de Mayo Festivities	
03	Old Town Cinco de Mayo Festivities	
04	I.C. Seniors Luncheon	11:00 a.m.
05	Gentle Stretch Class	5:00 p.m.
06	Choir Practice	5:30 p.m.
07	Centering Prayer	7:00 p.m.

**Quarters and Cans Sunday
April 26, 2015**

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 and put the Holy Gospel into action.

Centering Prayer Group

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

Thursday Evening-April 23 7:00-8:30 pm
Immaculate Conception—Serra Hall

The framers of our Constitution meant we were to have freedom of religion, not freedom from religion.

— *Billy Graham*

SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL: LUMEN GENTIUM

THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

10. Christ the Lord, High Priest taken from among men, made the new people "a kingdom and priests to God the Father". The baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are consecrated as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, in order that through all those works which are those of the Christian man they may offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the power of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. Therefore all the disciples of Christ, persevering in prayer and praising God, should present themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. Everywhere on earth they must bear witness to Christ and give an answer to those who seek an account of that hope of eternal life which is in them.

Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ. The ministerial priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, teaches and rules the priestly people; acting in the person of Christ, he makes present the Eucharistic sacrifice, and offers it to God in the name of all the people. But the faithful, in virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist. They likewise exercise that priesthood in receiving the sacraments, in prayer and thanksgiving, in the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity.

PARISH & COMMUNITY

HELP FATHER CHOOSE A HYMN BOOK

As part of balancing our budget at IC, the finance council has addressed with the pastor the need to eliminate whatever recurring expenses that we can.

Liturgy is a large ministry here, offering the Holy Mass daily and on weekends for our parishioners and visitors. Music is among the highest expenses. Some parishioners have expressed to me that musicians should be volunteers. The reality is that they need to live just as we all do. Our musicians actually have compromised to receive less than surrounding parishes because of their love of God and loyalty to the parish.

The parts of music expense that we can eliminate are the disposable hymnals and worship aids, allowing people to hear the word of God instead of read it, and to acquire a permanent hymnal rather than buy new disposable ones each year. This is a considerable expense for us at IC who are struggling to break even each week in our small but very dedicated parish.

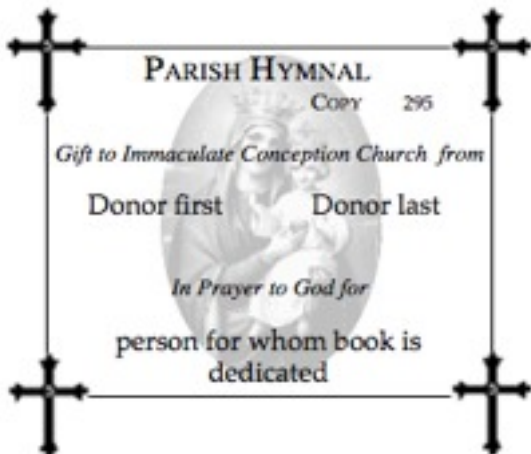
If someone needs to read the readings of the Mass, a personal subscription to Magnificat or Living with Christ would be a good substitute to the parish's paying for the missalettes. A committee has reviewed several hymnals and their songs.

To help the pastor to choose a permanent hymnal, I am asking every registered parishioner who wishes to have input please to email or postal mail to me a list of 10 favorite hymns you would like to see in a permanent hymnal, and to include your name and your envelope number.

As pastor I will make a data base to add your input to that of the committee to help me to make a decision.

Once a hymnal is selected, the parish will offer the opportunity to you do donate one or more hymnals in prayer for or in memory of a loved one with a dedication placed inside the front cover.

My email address for your 10 selections, name and envelope # is: pastor@ic-sandiego.org.



EVANGELII GAUDIUM- Pope Francis

53. Just as the commandment “Thou shalt not kill” sets a clear limit in order to safeguard the value of human life, today we also have to say “thou shalt not” to an economy of exclusion and inequality. Such an economy kills. How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly home- less person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points? This is a case of exclusion. Can we continue to stand by when food is thrown away while people are starving? This is a case of inequality. Today everything comes under the laws of competition and the survival of the fittest, where the powerful feed upon the powerless. As a consequence, masses of people find themselves excluded and marginalized: without work, without possibilities, without any means of escape.

Human beings are themselves considered consumer goods to be used and then discarded. We have created a “throw away” culture which is now spreading. It is no longer simply about exploitation and oppression, but something new. Exclusion ultimately has to do with what it means to be a part of the society in which we live; those excluded are no longer society’s underside or its fringes or its disenfranchised – they are no longer even a part of it. The excluded are not the “exploited” but the outcast, the “leftovers”.

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>

IDEALS AND NORMS

You can affirm the truth of a moral doctrine while at the same time undercutting it in practice—by treating the doctrine as an ideal rather than a norm.

—Russell Shaw

Lately the idea has been gaining currency among some responsible conservative Catholics that unless the synod of bishops or the Pope specifically repudiates a settled Church doctrine—which is highly unlikely—there's no immediate cause for alarm. I wish it were that simple, but it isn't.

Philip Lawler, paraphrasing Ross Douthat, gives this summary account of the viewpoint in question: "The tensions between the Pope and doctrinal conservatives *could* become enormously important *if* the Pope makes an effort to change established Church teaching. Unless and until that happens... it's a gross exaggeration to say that the conflict is tearing up the Church."

And, one might add, since that effort to change Church teaching almost certainly isn't in the cards, what's to worry?

Alas, this way of thinking could be an unintended invitation to complacency. For it's possible sincerely to affirm the truth of a moral doctrine while at the same time undercutting it in practice. The way to do that is to treat the doctrine as an ideal rather than a norm.

Right here it is important to say that I don't know exactly what Pope Francis thinks about all this. What I do know is that he has said repeatedly that, as a loyal son of the Church, he has absolutely no intention of overturning any Catholic doctrine. In saying this, he obviously means it, and I applaud him for that.

At the same time, Francis also has provided two synods as forums in which people who wish to divorce pastoral practice from doctrine and treat the doctrine as an ideal rather than a norm have been given the opportunity to publicize and press their view.

Now Vaticanologist Sandro Magister reports from Rome that the Pope has shown signs of transferring his favor from Cardinal Walter Kasper, the best-known champion of communion for divorced and remarried Catholics whose first marriages haven't been annulled, to Cardinal Carlo Caffarra of Bologna, a moral theologian who strongly opposes this idea on the grounds that it would undercut the doctrine that marriage is indissoluble. But if that's so, what does it mean? Tune in again...

The Pope aside, there is plenty of evidence that the problem I speak of exists in other highly-placed quarters.

Cardinal Luis Tagle of Manila recently expressed the opinion that the Church cannot limit itself to just "one formula" when deciding whether to offer communion to divorced and remarried Catholics. Since each situation is "quite unique," said Cardinal Tagle, who is sometimes mentioned as a possible pope of the future, the Church should look for ways of "addressing each case individually."

Note that this doesn't directly cast doubt on the truth that a valid sacramental marriage is indissoluble. What it does is emphasize the obvious fact that every case has its own special features. The implication is that this somehow dilutes the force of the moral norm embodied in the doctrine of indissolubility. But it doesn't. The Cardinal is correct that every case is different, but this conclusion doesn't follow.

Cardinal Reinhard Marx of Munich-Freising carried this kind of thinking into the sphere of ecclesiology with a declaration in which he embraced a Germanic brand of Gallicanism as his default position in the communion-for-the-divorced-and-remarried debate.

Saying "the German Church has to teach the gospel in her own way," Cardinal Marx, chairman of the German

episcopal conference and an outspoken member of the group of nine cardinals who serve as hand-picked advisors to the Pope, asserted that Germany cannot "wait for a synod in Rome to tell us how we deal with matters of marriage and family."

Happily, not everyone thinks this way. For example, Archbishop Joseph Kurtz of Louisville, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and an elected U.S. delegate to next fall's synod on the family (he attended last October's synod, too), evidently gets the point that pastoral practice and doctrine cannot—or anyway should not—be separated.

Asked by the *National Catholic Register's* Joan Frawley Desmond what message he would take to the synod later this year, he replied: "The dimension that I would bring is the unity and integrity of how we worship, how we believe and how we provide pastoral care. It will be very important that there is not a gap..."

Such as, one hopes, a gap between the normative implications of indissolubility and relaxed pastoral practice in the matter of communion for validly married Catholics who've entered into new unions.

But what exactly is wrong with the idea that the indissolubility of marriage is an ideal rather than a norm? To answer that, I turn to the eminent American ethicist and moral theologian Germain Grisez. In *Christian Moral Principles*, the first volume of his magisterial three-volume *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, he argues along the following lines.

To begin with, he writes, there is no objection to applying the term "ideals" to admittedly difficult norms "insofar as they are principles of faithful and determined effort." An example: the consistent practice of the norm of chastity is an ideal that many people realize "only gradually" and by way of considerable effort.

Even so, Grisez continues, the elements of Christian morality are not to be reduced to mere ideals. On the contrary, as Scripture, tradition, and the magisterial teaching of the Church all make clear, "they are to govern our lives as binding norms, not counsels." Every Christian has a real obligation to live a life "in accord with the love of God and in union with Jesus' redemptive act." And the outline of such a life is found in the moral teaching of Jesus as it is communicated by the authoritative teaching of the Church.

Communion for divorced and remarried Catholics whose first marriages haven't been declared null is an extremely clear instance of what is involved. Giving or withholding communion in such cases is not simply a pastoral practice, to be evaluated in its own right, without reference to doctrine. Rather, what one says about this question unavoidably bears upon indissolubility and the question of its character: norm or ideal?

In saying this, I don't suggest that anyone who considers indissolubility an ideal—admirable but in many cases unattainable—is consciously involved in a scheme to undermine Catholic moral teaching. But regardless of intentions, to act on this belief in the name of pastoral sensitivity is to engage in a kind of hollowing-out of moral doctrine—the creation of a Potemkin façade of moral formulae that conceals the absence of a normative core.

Pope Francis has announced that December 8, the 50th anniversary of the close of Vatican Council II, will be the start of a year-long "Jubilee of Mercy" intended to promote the practice of mercy as part of the Church's program and mission. This is a laudable goal. What makes some responsible conservatives nervous is the fact that it comes in the context of serious confusion—about moral norms and moral ideals, doctrine and pastoral practice. Perhaps some of the Jubilee observance should focus on getting our thinking straight.