

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

May 03, 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
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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

04	8 AM	Easter Weekday †Floyd Watson	MT
05	8 AM	Easter Weekday †Vince Cangiano	RE
06	8 AM	Easter Weekday †Joseph Gonsalves	RE
07	8 AM	Easter Weekday †Richard Green	MT
08	8 AM	Easter Weekday Olivia Ingram, SI	RE
09	8 AM	Easter Weekday Steve Everett, SI	RE
10	5:15PM	†Felicidad Tanjuan	MT
	8:30 AM	Bruce Johnson, SI	RE
	10:00 AM	Mother's Day Novena	WK
	11:30 AM	†William Kennedy	RE
	5:15 PM	†Laureana Asayas	MT

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

May: Intentions of the Holy Father

Universal: That, rejecting the culture of indifference, we may care for our neighbors who suffer, especially the sick and the poor.

Evangelization: That Mary's intercession may help Christians in secularized cultures be ready to proclaim Jesus.

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

04	Rev. Bishop Gilbert Chavez
05	Rev. José Arturo Uribe, CSsR
06	Rev. Danila Valdepeñas
07	Rev. Luis Valenciano
08	Rev. Nelson Vencilao
09	Rev. Mario Vesga
10	Rev. Manuel Villareal

PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

Monday: Acts 14:5-18; Ps 115:1-16; Jn 14:21-26
 Tuesday: Acts 14:19-28; Ps 145:10-21; Jn 14:27-31
 Wednesday: Acts 15:1-6; Ps 122:1-5; Jn 15:1-8
 Thursday: Acts 15:7-21; Ps 96:1-10; Jn 15:9-11
 Friday: Acts 15:22-31; Ps 57:8-12; Jn 15:12-17
 Saturday: Acts 16:1-10; Ps 100:1-5; Jn 15:18-21

PRAY FOR THE SICK

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

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. Inez Cerda Bull Joanne Mangiamelli
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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. Moralez, 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.

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 Emilie Graham
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SONG OF LOVE

—*St. Augustine*

FROM THE PASTOR

Sing to the Lord a new song; his praise is in the assembly of the saints. We are urged to sing a new song to the

Lord, as new men who have learned a new song. A song is a thing of joy; more profoundly, it is a thing of love. Anyone, therefore, who has learned to love the new life has learned to sing a new song, and the new song reminds us of our new life. The new man, the new song, the new covenant, all belong to the one kingdom of God, and so the new man will sing a new song and will belong to the new covenant.

There is not one who does not love something, but the question is, what to love. The psalms do not tell us not to love, but to choose the object of our love. But how can we choose unless we are first chosen? We cannot love unless someone has loved us first. Listen to the apostle John: *We love him, because he first loved us.* The source of man's love for God can only be found in the fact that God loved him first. He has given us himself as the object of our love, and he has also given us its source. What this source is you may learn more clearly from the apostle Paul who tells us: *The love of God has been poured into our hearts.* This love is not something we generate ourselves; it comes to us *through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*

Since we have such an assurance, then, let us love God with the love he has given us. As John tells us more fully: *God is love, and whoever dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him.* It is not enough to say: *Love is from God.* Which of us would dare to pronounce the words of Scripture: *God is love?* He alone could say it who knew what it was to have God dwelling within him. God offers us a short route to the possession of himself. He cries out: Love me and you will have me for you would be unable to love me if you did not possess me already.

My dear brothers and sons, fruit of the true faith and holy seed of heaven, all you who have been born again in Christ and whose life is from above, listen to me; or rather, listen to the Holy Spirit saying through me: *Sing to the Lord a new song.* Look, you tell me, I am singing. Yes indeed, you are singing; you are singing clearly, I can hear you. But make sure that your life does not contradict your words. Sing with your voices, your hearts, your lips and your lives: *Sing to the Lord a new song.*

Now it is your unquestioned desire to sing of him whom you love, but you ask me how to sing his praises. You have heard the words: *Sing to the Lord a new song,* and you wish to know what praises to sing. The answer is: *His praise is in the assembly of the saints;* it is in the singers themselves. If you desire to praise him, then live what you express. Live good lives, and you yourselves will be his praise.

MAY I FIND MY JOY IN YOU

—*St. Anselm of Canterbury*

My soul, have you found what you are looking for? You were looking for God, and you have discovered that he is the supreme being, and that you could not possibly imagine anything more perfect. You have discovered that this supreme being is life itself, light, wisdom, goodness, eternal blessedness and blessed eternity. He is everywhere, and he is timeless.

Lord my God, you gave me life and restored it when I lost it. Tell my soul that so long as for you what else you are besides what it has already understood, so that it may see you clearly. It stands on tiptoe to see more, but apart from what it has seen already, it sees nothing but darkness. Of course it does not really see darkness, because there is no darkness in you, but it sees that it can see no further because of the darkness in itself.

Surely, Lord, inaccessible light is your dwelling place, for no one apart from yourself can enter into it and fully comprehend you. If I fail to see this light it is simply because it is too bright for me. Still, it is by this light that I do see all that I can, even as weak eyes, unable to look straight at the sun, see all that they can by the sun's light.

The light in which you dwell, Lord, is beyond my understanding. It is so brilliant that I cannot bear it, I cannot turn my mind's eye toward it for any length of time. I am dazzled by its brightness, amazed by its grandeur, overwhelmed by its immensity, bewildered by its abundance.

O supreme and inaccessible light, O complete and blessed truth, how far you are from me, even though I am so near to you! How remote you are from my sight, even though I am present to yours! You are everywhere in your entirety, and yet I do not see you; in you I move and have my being, and yet I cannot approach you; you are within me and around me, and yet I do not perceive you.

O God, let me know you and love you so that I may find my joy in you; and if I cannot do so fully in this life, let me at least make some progress every day, until at last that knowledge, love and joy come to me in all their plenitude.

While I am here on earth let me learn to know you better, so that in heaven I may know you fully; let my love for you grow deeper here, so that there I may love you fully. On earth then I shall have great joy in hope, and in heaven complete joy in the fulfillment of my hope.

O Lord, through your Son you command us, no, you counsel us to ask, and you promise that you will hear us so that our joy may be complete. Lord, I am making the request that you urge us to make through your Wonder-Counselor. Give me then what you promise to give through your Truth. You, O God, are faithful; grant that I may receive my request, so that my joy may be complete.

Meanwhile, let this hope of mine be in my thoughts and on my tongue; let my heart be filled with it, my voice speak of it; let my soul hunger for it, my body thirst for it, my whole being yearn for it, until I enter into the joy of the Lord, who is Three in One, blessed for ever. Amen.

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 26, 2015

Total Collection: \$4,314.03
Envelopes: \$2599.50 Plate: \$1714.53
Total contributing households: 85

5:15 Sat	\$ 609.00
8:30 Sun	\$ 947.00
10:00 Sun	\$1203.95
11:30 Sun	\$ 631.62
5:15 Sun	\$ 427.46
Mailed	\$495.00

Quarters and Cans
 \$1090.00

EXPENSES
 April 20-24, 2015

Gas & Electric	\$332.72
Internet	65.00
Ministry Supplies	\$266.43
Music Ministry	\$1110.00
Office Supplies	\$161.06
Pest Control	\$100.00

Total: \$2,035.21



2015 Baptism Schedule

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

Traditional Latin Mass

Saturday, **May 9** at 10:00 a.m.

The choir will be manned by the Brothers of the Little Oratory who will also serve at the altar.

...from the Office of Young Adult Ministry

XLT: Adoration, Praise and Worship
Friday, May 15-- 7-8:30pm at
Good Shepherd Catholic Church

Gather with young adults from all over San Diego for XLT (short for "Exalt"), night of Adoration, Prayer, Reflection, and Praise & Worship. Music will be led by a team of young adult musicians from different parishes across the Diocese. Come to know Christ in the Blessed Sacrament and be transformed in your encounter with the living God! For more info, contact Jeannie at jeannie.v.nguyen@gmail.com

FAMILY CATECHESIS

Continues on **May 17** 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

I.C. SENIORS

Monthly luncheon meeting on Monday, May 4.
 11:00 a.m.
 Serra Hall

Bring a friend and renew friendships.
 Hot lunch for only \$5 per person, includes coffee.

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 _____

Rock 'n Roll Marathon
Coming Sunday, May 31

Flyers with alternate routes will be provided the weekend of May 23-24

Marriage Programs

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

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.
09	Latin Mass	10:00 a.m.
12	Gentle Stretch Class	5:00 p.m.
13	Choir Practice	5:30 p.m.
17	Parish Pancake Breakfast Know Your Parish Sunday	9:30 a.m.
19	Gentle Stretch Class	5:00 p.m.
20	Choir Practice	5:30 p.m.

Centering Prayer Group

The group is now meeting at St. Brigid parish until further notice. For information, contact Bernie Kleinke at 619-297-4437.

Patrick Coffin, national radio host, will be giving a talk, **“Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?”** at Our Lady of Grace Church in El Cajon, Wednesday, May 6 at 7 p.m. A very important topic for Catholics today Get tickets online here: www.mkt.com/innoculata. Seating is limited. Bring a friend!

SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL: LUMEN GENTIUM

THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

11. It is through the sacraments and the exercise of the virtues that the sacred nature and organic structure of the priestly community is brought into operation. Incorporated in the Church through baptism, the faithful are destined by the baptismal character for the worship of the Christian religion; reborn as sons of God they must confess before men the faith which they have received from God through the Church . They are more perfectly bound to the Church by the sacrament of Confirmation, and the Holy Spirit endows them with special strength so that they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith, both by word and by deed, as true witnesses of Christ . Taking part in the Eucharistic sacrifice, which is the fount and apex of the whole Christian life, they offer the Divine Victim to God, and offer themselves along with It. Thus both by reason of the offering and through Holy Communion all take part in this liturgical service, not indeed, all in the same way but each in that way which is proper to himself. Strengthened in Holy Communion by the Body of Christ, they then manifest in a concrete way that unity of the people of God which is suitably signified and wondrously brought about by this most august sacrament.

COURTYARD PROJECT STATUS

Dear Parishioners of Immaculate Conception,

As many of you know, the Parish Finance Council has determined that improvements to the courtyard of Immaculate Conception are important for several reasons: Respecting the historical nature of the Church, improving access to the Hall and the Church, improving drainage, removing the old planters where the Canary Palms once stood, improving the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe and making a better outdoor gathering place for events. The new design includes a beautiful, artistically designed and landscaped Shrine with seating and kneeling, shaded seating areas, more level open space, irrigation and lighting. Some donor funds have been located for this purpose and in the last few months our design has developed, as shown on the boards in the Hall.

We are now very near to obtaining bids for the construction of the New Courtyard! As a part of the construction, there will be offered the opportunity for Parishioners and others who have been touched by Immaculate Conception, to participate financially in the construction, in two ways:

(1) purchase a commemorative paver in the concrete paver accent stripes for as little as \$200 (a 6" x 6" paver), \$800 (a 12"x 12" paver) or \$1600 (a limited number of corner 12" x 12" pavers); (2) sponsor a portion of the Courtyard, such as The Shrine, parts of The Shrine, landscaping and benches.

Any such sponsorship will include appropriate commemoration if you wish, and the level of such participation will be fairly negotiated with Father Richard and the Parish Finance Council.

If you wish to purchase pavers or participate in sponsorship, please contact Glen Rasmussen or Fr. Richard.

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.

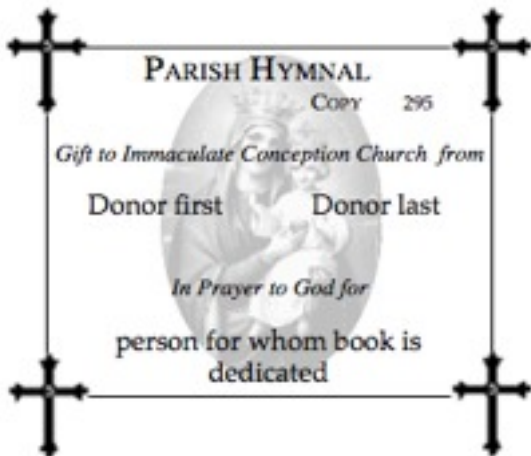
If someone needs to read the readings of the Mass, a personal subscription to Magnificat or Living with Christ would be a good substitute to the parish's paying for the missalettes. A committee has reviewed several hymnals and their songs.

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

55 One cause of this situation is found in our relationship with money, since we calmly accept its dominion over ourselves and our societies. The current financial crisis can make us overlook the fact that it originated in a profound human crisis: the denial of the primacy of the human person! We have created new idols. The worship of the ancient golden calf has returned in a new and ruthless guise in the idolatry of money and the dictatorship of an impersonal economy lacking a truly human purpose. The worldwide crisis affecting finance and the economy lays bare their imbalances and, above all, their lack of real concern for human beings; man is reduced to one of his needs alone: consumption.

56 While the earnings of a minority are growing exponentially, so too is the gap separating the majority from the prosperity enjoyed by those happy few. This imbalance is the result of ideologies which defend the absolute autonomy of the marketplace and financial speculation. Consequently, they reject the right of states, charged with vigilance for the common good, to exercise any form of control. A new tyranny is thus born, invisible and often virtual, which unilaterally and relentlessly imposes its own laws and rules. Debt and the accumulation of interest also make it difficult for countries to realize the potential of their own economies and keep citizens from enjoying their real purchasing power. To all this we can add widespread corruption and self-serving tax evasion, which have taken on worldwide dimensions. The thirst for power and possessions knows no limits. In this system, which tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits, whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenseless before the interests of a deified market, which become the only rule.

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.
Columbian Madonnas available for Mother's Day.

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>

POPE FRANCIS AND HIS GROWING LITANY OF MODERN-DAY MARTYRS

Amid a torrent of recent news reports on persecuted Christians, Pope Francis reflected on those killed for their faith and said that these modern “Stephens” suffer as the Church’s first martyr did.

“The Church today is a Church of martyrs: they suffer, they give their lives and we receive the blessing of God for their witness,” Francis told attendees of his April 21 Mass, held in the Vatican’s Saint Martha guesthouse.

“In these days how many Stephens there are in the world!” he said, referring to the first apostle who was killed for proclaiming Jesus Christ, and is hailed as the Church’s first martyr.

“Let us think of our brothers whose throats were slit on the beach in Libya; let’s think of the young boy who was burnt alive by his companions because he was a Christian,” Francis said.

He also brought to mind “those migrants thrown from their boat into the open sea by other migrants because they were Christians; let us think – just the day before yesterday – of those Ethiopians assassinated because they were Christians...and of many others.”

The Pope also called attention to the many Christians suffering silently inside jail cells just because of their faith in Jesus Christ.

Among them is Pakistani Christian Asia Bibi, who in 2010 was convicted of violating Pakistan’s strict blasphemy laws, an allegation she denies. Her husband and daughter traveled to Rome last week, where they met with Pope Francis and received his blessing during his Wednesday general audience.

In February the Islamic State released a video depicting the decapitation of 20 Coptic Christians after they had gone missing near the coastal city of Surt, also known as Sirte, in Libya.

On Sunday another video was released by social media accounts associated with the ISIS showing the mass executions of Ethiopian Christians in Libya.

In an April 20 message sent to Abuna Matthias, patriarch of the Ethiopian Tewahedo Orthodox Church, Francis offered condolences and said that “It makes no difference whether the victims are Catholic, Copt, Orthodox or Protestant...Their blood is one and the same in their confession of Christ!”

The Pope’s comment on the Christian boy burned alive referred to a 14-year-old Pakistani named Nouman Masih, who passed away April 15 after being set on fire by two unknown men. After inquiring about his religion, the men doused Masih in kerosene and set him alight.

April 16 marks the day that another tragedy on Francis’ list took place when 12 passengers on a migrant boat traveling from Libya to Italy were thrown overboard by fellow migrants for being Christians.

Reports indicate that a disagreement sparked among passengers on a rubber boat bound for Italy and carrying 105 people, during which 15 Muslim passengers threatened to abandon at sea the Christians, who came from Nigeria and Ghana, based on their faith.

After a fight broke out 12 of the Christians were thrown overboard to their deaths, while others survived the attack by resisting the drowning attempt and forming a human chain. The Italian coast guard has arrested 15 people in association with the attack.

In his homily Tuesday, Pope Francis said that “the true history of the Church is that of the Saints and the martyrs.”

He recalled how the Apostle Stephan had to deal with false witnesses and the anger of those accusing him.

Stephan, the Pope noted, reminded the elders and scribes how their ancestors had persecuted other prophets, and when he described his vision of the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God they didn’t want to hear it, so they threw him out of the city and stoned him.

“God’s Word is always rejected by some. God’s Word is inconvenient when you have a stone heart, when you have a pagan heart,” he said.

Francis noted how the whole history of Revelation is marked by the many martyrs who have been killed “for their faith and loyalty towards God’s Word, God’s Truth.”

He closed his homily by pointing out that there are also many “hidden martyrs,” who are the faithful men and women that listen to the voice of God and look for new ways to help their brothers and sisters love the Lord.

These people, the Pope said, are often viewed with suspicion, vilified and persecuted by the modern “Sanhedrin’s” who think they possess the truth.

POPE FRANCIS ON MEN AND WOMEN

Dear Brothers and Sisters: Continuing our catechesis on the family, we recall God’s creation of man from the ground. He is placed in the garden, where he is to care for creation. Yet God sees that man is alone, and so he creates woman, someone complementary with whom man can share his life. Man and woman are created to live a life of reciprocity, to enter into a covenant together. Yet sin introduces discord into their relationship, lack of trust and suspicion. We see throughout history the fruit of this sin, especially towards women – oppression, violence and exploitation. Most recently, this mistrust and skepticism has led our culture to disregard the marriage covenant between a man and a woman, that covenant which deepens communion and safeguards the dignity of their uniqueness. When the stable and fruitful covenant between a man and a woman is devalued by society, it is a loss for everyone, especially the young. For all our sins and weaknesses, our vocation is to care for the covenant of marriage. It is a vital and energizing vocation, through which we cooperate with our heavenly Father, who himself always cares for and protects this great gift.