

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

June 07, 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

08	8 AM	<i>Weekday</i> Patricia Ann Werner, SI	RP
09	8 AM	<i>St. Ephrem</i> David & Fae Aquinoco, SI	RE
10	8 AM	<i>Weekday</i> †John Phelan Family	RP
11	8 AM	<i>St. Barnabas</i> Fred & Nina Camacho, SI	RP
12	8 AM	<i>The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus</i> Violet Amaro, SI	RP
13	8 AM	<i>The Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i> Michael S. Balich, SI	RP
14	5:15 PM	†Jose Mallari	RP
	8:30 AM	†Ismael & Helen Ruiz	RP
	10:00 AM	Patricia Haase, SI	RP
	11:30 AM	†William Kennedy	RE
	5:15 PM	People of Immaculate Conception	RP

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

June: Intentions of the Holy Father

Universal: That immigrants and refugees may find welcome and respect in the countries to which they come.

Evangelization: That the personal encounter with Jesus may arouse in many young people the desire to offer their own lives in priesthood or consecrated life.

PRAY: SEMINARIANS IN THEOLOGY

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

PRAY FOR OUR PRIESTS

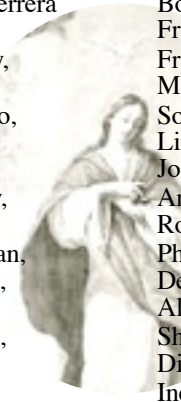
08	Rev. Caesar Bertolacci, MC
09	Rev. Jacob Bertrand
10	Rev. B. Jeffrey Blangiardi, SI
11	Rev. Msgr. William Bolger
12	Rev. Michael Booth
13	Rev. Peter Bosque
14	Rev. Burt Boudoin

PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

Monday: 2 Cor 1:1-7; Ps 34:2-9; Mt 5:1-12
 Tuesday: 2 Cor 1:18-22; Ps 119:129-135; Mt 5:13-16
 Wednesday: 2 Cor 3:4-11; Ps 99:5-9; Mt 5:17-19
 Thursday: Acts 11:21-26, 13:1-3; Ps 98:1-6; Mt 5:20-26
 Friday: Hos 11:1-9; (Ps) Is 12:2-6; Eph 3:8-19; Jn 19:31-37
 Saturday: 2 Cor 5:14-21; Ps 103:1-12; Mt 5:33-37

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, 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 Rose McBrien Cosmo Busalacchi
--	---	--

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.
---	--

†PRAY FOR OUR DECEASED†

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

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 Angela Cordova
--	--

THE EUCHARIST

—St. Cyril of Jerusalem

FROM THE PASTOR

On the night he was betrayed our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples and said: *“Take, eat: this is my body”*. He took the cup, gave thanks and said: *“Take, drink: this is my blood”*. Since Christ himself has declared the bread to be his body, who can have any further doubt? Since he himself has said quite categorically, This is my blood, who would dare to question it and say that it is not his blood?

Therefore, it is with complete assurance that we receive the bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ. His body is given to us under the symbol of bread, and his blood is given to us under the symbol of wine, in order to make us by receiving them one body and blood with him. Having his body and blood in our members, we become bearers of Christ and sharers, as Saint Peter says, in the divine nature.

Once, when speaking to the Jews, Christ said: *Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you shall have no life in you*. This horrified them and they left him. Not understanding his words in a spiritual way, they thought the Savior wished them to practice cannibalism.

Under the old covenant there was showbread, but it came to an end with the old dispensation to which it belonged. Under the new covenant there is bread from heaven and the cup of salvation. These sanctify both soul and body, the bread being adapted to the sanctification of the body, the Word, to the sanctification of the soul.

Do not, then, regard the eucharistic elements as ordinary bread and wine: they are in fact the body and blood of the Lord, as he himself has declared. Whatever your senses may tell you, be strong in faith.

You have been taught and you are firmly convinced that what looks and tastes like bread and wine is not bread and wine but the body and the blood of Christ. You know also how David referred to this long ago when he sang: *Bread gives strength to man’s heart and makes his face shine with the oil of gladness*. Strengthen your heart, then, by receiving this bread as spiritual bread, and bring joy to the face of your soul.

May purity of conscience remove the veil from the face of your soul so that be contemplating the glory of the Lord, as in a mirror, you may be transformed from glory to glory in Christ Jesus our Lord. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Catholics don’t just go to church on Sunday, like other Christians. They go to Mass. Christmas, New Years, weddings, funerals. It seems that we just can’t seem to do anything important without this ceremony which some regard as a sacrifice and others as a fellowship meal and still others as “the real presence.”

...When I first read the account of Moses asking Pharaoh to “let my people go,” I thought that Moses was using a God-sanction ruse when he told Pharaoh that the reason he wanted to take the people and their flocks out of Egypt was that they could offer a sacrifice to their God in the desert.

But that was indeed the real reason after all. God liberated them from slavery to Pharaoh so that they could be free to enter into an exclusive, intimate relationship with Himself, a covenant. He gave them the law that would be the condition of this covenant on Mt. Sinai, and, after they said “I do,” they sealed the deal through a rather strange ritual. It was strange, by the way, even for them. Oh, sacrifice was normal enough. You offer the best animals you have to God. Sometimes you poured out their blood to God, then burned the entire animal. Other times you offered a perfect animal to God as atonement for sin, with the blood and fat going to God and the choicest portions going to feed the priests, God’s representatives. Most often, though, the blood and fat went to God, and the rest of the animal was solemnly eaten by those offering the sacrifice (often called a “Peace Offering”) in a special thanksgiving meal, a sign of communion with God, who was considered to be present at the meal (Ex 18:12). For after all, what more universal sign of sharing a common life is there than taking a meal together?

But the sacrifice to seal the first covenant was different. Half of the blood of the sacrificed animals was poured out to God at the base of the altar. The other half was sprinkled upon the people. Blood equaled life in the mind of the ancient Israelites, and it was forbidden to consume blood, since all life belonged to God. Here Israel and God are bound by a blood ceremony, becoming intimate kin, a family. Then Moses and the elders further celebrated their new blood relationship with God by eating the sacrificed animals in God’s presence, on the Holy Mountain (that’s what Exodus 24:11 means—after seeing God, they could still eat and drink).

In the New Covenant, God takes things a step further. The liberation is not just from the drudgery of Pharaoh’s building projects, but from sin, Satan, and even death. To win this prize, God the Son becomes man and offers his body as the ultimate sacrifice that takes away sin and creates a degree of fellowship between God and man hitherto inconceivable. Not only is his blood poured out at the base of the altar of the cross, as an offering of his life to the Father, but it is given to his disciples to drink, under the sacramental form of wine. This is a symbol that actually *is* what it symbolizes, and transmits what it contains—the immortal life of the God-man, which binds us to God like nothing else ever could, and empowers us to be like him, live like him, indeed become him. You are what you eat. The Body and blood of Christ are given as our food that we may become the Body of Christ and his very life coursing through our veins.

AROUND THE PARISH

TRANSPARENCY

Canon Law codifies what pastors already know is required of them: teaching, guiding, and sanctifying the flock through preaching, the sacraments, and forming souls to a good holy life: Mass, confessions, preaching, catechesis, moral and theological formation

Although it does state the need of a parish finance council, how such a body operates is not clearly defined, so each priest uses his skill set of worldly ability to manage funds.

A parish needs to pay all its regular bills out of the collection. At Immaculate Conception this is challenging because our 300-family congregation provides the 2/3 financial support against the larger visitor congregation which provides 1/3 support for expenses which average about \$5,000.00/week. Thanks to all of you.

Extra funds from designated donations must be used for specified designated donation such as the new sanctuary lamp for example. Besides paying bills, a savings account is necessary for future needs such as repairs for roof, new air conditioners when necessary, replacing carpet, paint, and other normal wear and tear. We are doing this now at IC.

In July 2014 IC had a \$100,000.00 debt to the diocese because previous pastors spent all the savings and others borrowed to pay regular bills. The current IC finance council and pastor eliminated as much extra expense as possible. With a few special donations and re-designation of funds received outside the collection, the debt is now \$15,000.00 and all bills are paid weekly from the collection.

Since some of you ask, here are some of the fixed expenses, not including occasional extra ones for worship. Priests, musicians, secretaries, and cleaning people work for little, but we cannot work for nothing.

Pastor Salary	\$20,700/year or \$1,725/month
Priest's Food Ration	\$500/month
Priest car insurance	\$1,600/yr max with \$300k/\$100k liabilities
Priest pension % to diocese	\$934 per month
Priest's Wedding stipend	\$30 from the donation to parish
Priest's Funeral stipend	\$25 from the donation to parish
Social Security Assistance	\$2,000/year (priests must pay IRS 15% SS tax)
Retirement Allowance	\$3,000/year to IRA
Priest Health Insurance	\$1,400/month
Pastor Masses	Supply needed— priests may say 2 or 3 max Masses Sundays
Supply priest	\$75 first Sunday Mass/\$50 second Mass
Supply priest	\$50 for daily Mass
Regular flowers	\$100/month

Organists	\$100/service here. Other parishes pay much more
Cantor	\$85. Other places pay much more
Wine for Mass	\$1,250/year
Hosts	\$790/year
Missalettes	\$2,500/year
Candles	\$1,500/year
Reader workbooks	\$450/year
3 employees only	
Required Bookkeeper	<\$25,000/year for part time
Maintenance	\$12/hour for 19 hours max
Housekeeper	\$11/hour for 19 hours max
FICA/SSI	vary according to hours worked
Office Expenses	Internet, postage, stationery, etc
Household	Cleaning supplies for church and rectory
Water & Sewer	\$500/month
SDGE	\$550/month (excludes gift shop)
Waste Management	\$360/month
Courtyard Project	\$150,000 underwritten by a single donor, no cost to parish
Parish breakfasts	Break even
Serra Gifts	After expenses, profits now go to savings and not budget
Designated Donations <i>not from the collection</i>	The tabernacle The carillon system Sanctuary lamp Courtyard project The altar area New Jesus image on the cross The new song books Gifts for debt reduction Bequests from wills to debt reduction New vestments The new altar cover Volunteer services of choir, altar servers, readers, ushers ministers, flower arrangements laundering of altar linens

Immaculate Conception Church is a treasure in its building and in its parishioners serving Old Town since 1848 and into the future. Thank you. — Fr. Perozich

AROUND THE PARISH

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

May 31, 2015

Total Collection: \$3,703.27
Envelopes: \$3239.00 Plate: \$1464.27
Total contributing households: 75

5:15 Sat	\$ 890.21
8:30 Sun	\$ 667.00
10:00 Sun	\$ 589.35
11:30 Sun	\$ 471.00
5:15 Sun	\$ 858.71
Mailed	\$ 227.00

EXPENSES
 May 25-29, 2015

Cable Service	\$86.24
Diocesan Tax	\$4269.14
Gas & Electric Utilities	\$429.49
Health Insurance	\$385.89
Janitorial Supplies	\$18.35
Music Ministry	\$ 600.00
Payroll (incl. tax)	\$3070.22
Payroll Service	\$46.45
Pension	\$ 195.15
Pest Control	\$ 100.00
Supplies-Ministry	\$41.73

Total: \$9,242.66

NEW HYMNAL

After consultation with those on our liturgy committee and evaluating your suggestions for hymns, father has purchased the St. Michael Hymnal to serve our parish for the near future. For a \$20/hymnal donation you may dedicate a hymnal. Your name may be printed as donor (or it can be left blank) and you may have the name of a person living, or add a † if deceased. Submit name and donation to rectory or put into collection basket.

2015 Baptism Schedule

July 06 Class
July 12 Baptisms

(See ic-sandiego.org for more dates.)

I. C. SENIORS

Are you 55 or over? Consider joining the I.C. Seniors group. We meet for lunch the first Monday of each month and the cost is only \$5. Plans are being made for special programs of interest to seniors and occasional day trips. For information, please contact Marie Wagner at 858-273-0789. Join us Monday, July 6 at 11 a.m.

Peter's Pence Special Collection

Next week the Peter's Pence Collection provides Pope Francis with the funds he needs to carry out his charitable works around the world. The proceeds benefit the most disadvantaged: victims of war, oppression, and disasters. Join our Holy Father as a witness of charity to those who are suffering. Envelopes are provided in the pews.

SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL: LUMEN GENTIUM
THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

This Sacred Council wishes to turn its attention firstly to the Catholic faithful. Basing itself upon Sacred Scripture and Tradition, it teaches that the Church, now sojourning on earth as an exile, is necessary for salvation. Christ, present to us in His Body, which is the Church, is the one Mediator and the unique way of salvation. In explicit terms He Himself affirmed the necessity of faith and baptism and thereby affirmed also the necessity of the Church, for through baptism as through a door men enter the Church. Whosoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by Christ, would refuse to enter or to remain in it, could not be saved.

They are fully incorporated in the society of the Church who, possessing the Spirit of Christ accept her entire system and all the means of salvation given to her, and are united with her as part of her visible bodily structure and through her with Christ, who rules her through the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops. The bonds which bind men to the Church in a visible way are profession of faith, the sacraments, and ecclesiastical government and communion. He is not saved, however, who, though part of the body of the Church, does not persevere in charity. He remains indeed in the bosom of the Church, but, as it were, only in a "bodily" manner and not "in his heart." All the Church's children should remember that their exalted status is to be attributed not to their own merits but to the special grace of Christ. If they fail moreover to respond to that grace in thought, word and deed, not only shall they not be saved but they will be the more severely judged.

Catechumens who, moved by the Holy Spirit, seek with explicit intention to be incorporated into the Church are by that very intention joined with her. With love and solicitude Mother Church already embraces them as her own.

PARISH & COMMUNITY

Parish Calendar

June

09	Gentle Stretch Class	5:00 p.m.
10	Choir Practice	5:30 p.m.
12	Vespers	7:00 p.m.
13	Traditional Latin Mass	10:00 a.m.
14	Peter's Pence Special Collection Parish Registration Sunday Parish Pancake Breakfast	9:30 a.m.
16	Gentle Stretch Class	5:00 p.m.
17	Choir Practice	5:30 p.m.
21	Quarters and Cans Sunday	
23	Gentle Stretch Class	5:00 p.m.
24	Choir Practice	5:30 p.m.
28	Missionary Coop Plan Sunday	
30	Gentle Stretch Class	5:00 p.m.

July

01	Choir Practice	5:30 p.m.
03	Independence Day Holiday Observed Parish Office Closed	
04	Independence Day	
06	I.C. Seniors Luncheon	11:00 a.m.

EVANGELII GAUDIUM- Pope Francis

63. The Catholic faith of many peoples is nowadays being challenged by the proliferation of new religious movements, some of which tend to fundamentalism while others seem to propose a spirituality without God. This is, on the one hand, a human reaction to a materialistic, consumerist and individualistic society, but it is also a means of exploiting the weaknesses of people living in poverty and on the fringes of society, people who make ends meet amid great human suffering and are looking for immediate solutions to their needs. These religious movements, not without a certain shrewdness, come to fill, within a predominantly individualistic culture, a vacuum left by secularist rationalism. We must recognize that if part of our baptized people lack a sense of belonging to the Church, this is also due to certain structures and the occasionally unwelcoming atmosphere of some of our parishes and communities, or to a bureaucratic way of dealing with problems, be they simple or complex, in the lives of our people. In many places an administrative approach prevails over a pastoral approach, as does a concentration on administering the sacraments apart from other forms of evangelization.

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 _____

Serra Gifts...

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



Open 7 days a week
Monday - Friday 9:30 -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.

NOW is the time to shop for graduation and summer wedding gifts.

Remember, your purchases help to support our parish.

Note: Serra Gifts will close at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 14 and all day Monday, June 15 for inventory.

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

To those Catholic Young Men Entering Secular Society
— From Paul Lavin, Ph.D.

This letter is addressed to you – the young Catholic student who will soon be leaving home and entering the world. Perhaps you will be attending a college or university, learning a trade, or working at a job in the public or private sector. While this can be a new and exciting venture, it is a journey for which you will need to be prepared. The purpose of this letter is to stimulate your thinking about those challenges you will be facing and how you, a practicing Catholic, can maintain your Faith in the years to come.

... Many young Catholic men and women, like yourselves, become far less fervent in practicing their Faith once they leave home. They may stop attending Mass, fail to receive the sacraments, discontinue praying, and give up the Faith altogether. This is not an uncommon occurrence in today's society. The temptations to leave the Church are great, and the unprepared person can easily fall prey to them.

Even though some young people succumb to earthly temptations and leave the Church, this does not mean that the world is a gloomy place, from which you must hide or be constantly fearful. On the contrary! God created the world and everything in it. Therefore, it is filled with much good, provided that we use God's creation as He intended.

The secular society, which you will be entering, is concerned with our present life here on earth and the pursuit of worldly happiness. Secular society is not concerned with religion, the salvation of your soul, or that which is sacred to God. Enjoying worldly pleasures, acquiring wealth, attaining professional and social status, and achieving happiness here on earth are the goals for which secular thinking people strive. Secular thinking persons may be kind and considerate. They may perform many acts of charity and help the less fortunate. However, while these deeds are praise worthy, they are done out of the love of mankind, not for the love of God.

Right now you are probably surrounded by parents, relatives, and friends who, like you, are practicing Catholics. Catholic teaching encompasses almost all facets of your life. Saying Grace before and after meals, morning and evening prayers, going to Mass and receiving Holy Communion, the recitation of the rosary, frequent Confession, and devotion to our Blessed Mother and the Saints are a normal part of your everyday life.

Your Catholic upbringing has taught you to not only to be aware of God's Commandments, but also the importance of being diligent in keeping them. You have been taught that God is merciful and that He loves each and everyone of us. However, beside being merciful, God is just as well. Like our loving father here on earth, God expects us to obey His laws throughout our lifetime. Those who persist in this difficult task will be rewarded by going to Heaven. Those who fail to obey God will be punished and sent to Hell. This is what Our Lord has said time and time again. The good thing is that God promised not to abandon us. He promised to give each of us the sufficient Grace needed to save our souls. Notice that God doesn't force us to accept His grace or follow His laws. He has given us a free will to accept Him and His Church. He will not make us do that, which we do not want to do. We can cooperate with God's plan or reject it – the choice is ours.

... You will be entering a society, in which people have been taught that worldly happiness comes first. You will be told that God and His laws should not interfere with this goal. Because God is loving and merciful, you will be told that He would never condemn anyone to a place like Hell. You will be encouraged to relax your moral standards and not take life so seriously. You will be bombarded with phrases such as, "Lighten up" and "Go with the flow." You will be told to "Chill out and don't be so uptight," and to "Loosen up and have some fun." And when you see others behaving immorally, you will be told that "It's no big deal" and that "Everybody does it." These are just a few of the excuses or rationalizations that people will use to justify their sinful actions.

It is difficult to resist this kind of thinking because the people who encourage you to think this way will appear to be friendly and sincere. They will seem to be happy, popular, self-confident, and content with the direction that their lives have taken. They will hardly look like the Devil, with horns and expanded nostrils breathing fire. Like you, these young people will be energetic and intelligent. This is what will make saying *NO!* so difficult. It is normal to want to be "cool," and to fit in. So you may be tempted to "Go along to get along." This can

easily become the motivation for lowering your moral standards, behaving sinfully, and corrupting your soul.

The worst part of becoming corrupted is that you won't even recognize that this is happening to you. Like a thief in the night, corruption sneaks up on you. It takes away your innocence before you realize what is happening. One sinful transgression easily leads to another and then another. Repeatedly sinful behavior clouds your mind and warps your judgment. It dulls your conscience and you lose your sense of right and wrong. But worst of all, it impairs your relationship with God and leads you away from Him.

Let me return to my mentioning of the devil. Unlike the past, the existence of the Devil is currently not taken seriously and his influence on human events is either minimized or ignored. This is a major mistake! Today, more than ever, satan is left undeterred in his efforts to spread evil throughout the world.

Keep in mind that the devil's goal is to capture your soul. In order to succeed in this endeavor, he will make worldly goods appear to be much more attractive than the true practice of your Catholic Faith. The more importance that you attach to achieving worldly goals, the less likely you will invest the time and energy in praying and receiving the sacraments. Remember that satan is called the Father of Lies for good reason. He is extremely clever in making evil appear as good and vice versa. Don't let him trick you into submission.

... the purpose of life is the salvation of your soul. Your view will not be the same as those persons who do not share your Catholic Faith. They will not agree that the salvation of one's soul is the most important priority in life. Moreover, many will argue that there is no God or life after death. If there is a God, they will contend that He is so merciful that He would never send anyone to Hell. These unfortunate persons suffer from the sin of presumption. Because they perform good deeds, they insist that God will not condemn them, even if they have violated His laws and those of His Church.

As a result of this thinking, many people no longer fear God or His justice. If they have no fear of God, they will have no fear of the Devil either. Denying or minimizing the influence of the devil and the reality of Hell are most dangerous to the salvation of one's soul. The devil, who is the Master of Deceit, is extremely effective in capturing the souls of those who fail to recognize his great powers of intellect and his ability to deceive human beings and lure them into damnation.

... take a few minutes and reflect on all that God has given you to nourish and protect your Faith: parents who care about your spiritual welfare; frequent Mass and Holy Communion; frequent confession; daily prayers including the rosary; devotion to our Blessed Mother and the Saints. I'm sure that many of you could add to this list. It is your daily practicing of your Catholic Faith that has kept the devil at bay throughout your most formidable years. Right now, he is patiently waiting until the circumstances are better suited to luring you away with his false promises. Your entrance into the secular world and the pomp, dazzling glitz, and enticing pleasures that it offers might turn the odds in his favor – at least that's what the Father of Lies hopes.

Lastly, the time to think about the future is now. If you are not mentally and spiritually prepared to sustain and defend your Faith, you can easily be caught off guard by those who are hostile toward the Catholic Church or any religion for that matter. Being caught off guard can make you appear to be foolish. This, in turn, can lead to feelings of inferiority, especially if your adversaries poke fun at you and openly ridicule your beliefs. Confused thinking, shameful feelings associated with being a Catholic, and an eventual disregarding or losing the Faith can soon follow. The Father of Lies will, of course, rejoice at achieving this goal. As you can see, a well thought out plan needs to be devised before, not after you have entered the secular world. Remember when you received the Sacrament of Confirmation. On this day you became a "Soldier for Christ." This not only intensified your bonding with God and His Church, but it further assured that your relationship with the Holy Ghost would be strengthened and that He would confer special gifts upon you. Those gifts, as you recall, are wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, fortitude, piety, and fear of our Lord.

Now is the time to call upon the Holy Ghost to help you to use these gifts so that you will have the strength to defend your Catholic Faith and to remain true to those vows that you have taken. May God bless you in this endeavor.

As Our Lord said on the Sermon on the Mount: "*You are the salt of the earth*" and "*the light of the world*," upon which the Catholic Faith, by your example, will flourish *CFNews 2014*