

The Catholic Church of the  
**Immaculate Conception**

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

**January 31, 2016**

**Rev. Richard L. Perozich, Pastor**  
[parish@ic-sandiego.org](mailto:parish@ic-sandiego.org) 619-295-4141 x 11

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

**Liz Fielder, Manager, Serra Gifts**  
[fielder@ic-sandiego.org](mailto:fielder@ic-sandiego.org) 619-297-3426

**Connie Rodriguez, Parish Secretary**  
[parish@ic-sandiego.org](mailto:parish@ic-sandiego.org) 619-295-4141 x 10

**Marsha Long, Music**  
[pictures@marshalong.com](mailto:pictures@marshalong.com)

**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: 8:30 AM, 10:00AM, 11:30 AM, 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@sdcatholic.org](mailto:rfitzmor@sdcatholic.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 Saint Junípero 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

01	8 AM	<i>Weekday</i> Onur Turek, SI	RP
02	8 AM	<i>The Presentation of the Lord</i> Priest's Intentions	RE
03	8 AM	<i>St. Blaise; St. Ansgar</i> †Robert McMahon	RP
04	8 AM	<i>Weekday</i> †Martin Morris	RP
05	8 AM	<i>St. Agatha</i> Priest's Intentions	RP
06	8 AM	<i>St. Paul Miki &amp; Companions</i> Priest's Intentions	RP
	5:15 PM	†Gustavo Sosa	RP
07	8:30 AM	†Tom Alcaraz	RP
	10:00 AM	People of Immaculate Conception	RE
	11:30 AM	†William Kennedy	RE
	5:15 PM	Priest's Intentions	RP

## APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

### February: Intentions of the Holy Father

**Universal:** That we may take good care of creation--a gift freely given--cultivating and protecting it for future generations.

**Evangelization:** That opportunities may increase for dialogue and encounter between the Christian faith and the peoples of Asia.

## PRAY: SEMINARIANS IN THEOLOGY

1st	Manuel Del Rio, St. John's Seminary, Camarillo
4th	David Exner, North American College, Rome
4th	Brian Frice, Mt. Angel Seminary, OR
2nd	Oscar Lopez, St. John's Seminary, Camarillo
3rd	Nathan McWeeney, Mt. Angel Seminary, OR
1st	Raymond Napuli, Mt. Angel Seminary, OR
1st	Michael O'Connor, 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

01	Pope Francis
02	Bishop Robert McElroy
03	Bishop Robert Brom
04	Bishop Gilbert Chavez
05	Rev. Ronald Pachence
06	Rev. Gerald Palcheck
07	Rev. Msgr. Francis Pattison

## PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

Monday: 2 Sm 15:13-30; 16:5-13; Ps 3:2-7; Mk 5:1-20  
 Tuesday: Mal 3:1-4; Ps 24:7-10; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40  
 Wednesday: 2 Sm 24:2-17; Ps 32:1-7; Mk 6:1-6  
 Thursday: 1 Kgs 2:1--12; 1 Chr 29:10-12; Mk 6:7-13  
 Friday: Sir 47:2-11; Ps 18:31- 51; Mk 6:14-29  
 Saturday: 1 Kgs 3:4-13; Ps 119:9-14; Mk 6:30-34  
 Sunday: Is 6:1--8; Ps 138:1--8; 1 Cor 15:1-11; Lk 5:1-11

## PRAY FOR HEALING

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

Esther Fitch	Amparo Valenzuela
Margaret Kelly	Robby Witt
Patricia Kennedy	Phyllis Altomare
Dorothy Kleint	Alicia Ambrose
Deena Marchiano	Shirley Pearson
Dena Mendoza	Inez Cerda Bull
Jean Miller	Cosmo Busalacchi
Patricia O'Grady	Maria Casanova
Mary Jane Tiernan	Steve Stone
Marguerite Vorst	Maria Esperanza Kramer
Marie Whitman	Joan Busalacchi
Martha Zamudio	Mark Brandon.
Carlos Amaya	Jeanne Pontius
Fred Levine	Esther Salazar
Mike Rodriguez	Joane Anderson
Lisa Becerra	Janet Meyers
Maguire Fitzpatrick	Yolanda Garcia
Tony Jenkins	Susan Rykowski
Peter Nalwalker	Elias Barajas
Bob Witt	Shirley Ilog
Frank Garay	Olivia Ingram
Frances Garcia	Grace Mulvanity
Socorro Pacheco	Angelica Ortega
Linda Lee	Barbara Driscoll



## PRAY FOR OUR DEPLOYED MILITARY

*Jesus protect all who serve our country.*

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

## † PRAY FOR OUR DECEASED †

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

William Kennedy	Emilie Graham
Joan Schmitt	Angela Cordova
Robert McMahon	Ramiro Moreno
Concepción Garza	Alexander Toczko
Richard Solís Moreno	Jeanette Toczko
Alvin Weaver	José Teofilo Solorio
William Bethel	Ray & Betty Jackson
Lillian Sinclair	Denise Cooney
Olga Hritz	Joanne Mangiameli
Imelda Hoeckelmann	Edna Moore
Angelina Olivarez	Paul Ramirez
Alice Perry	Isabella Asaro
Joseph Moreno	Maude Laracy
Louie Serrano	Helen Peña
Gustavo Sosa	Lydia Castillo Herrera
Floyd Watson	Maria Necochea
Iola Torre	Bertha Lockwood

**FREE HEARTS AND A FREE NATION**

Rev. Mark H. Creech

**FROM THE PASTOR**

Why would God wrap himself in human flesh to dwell among men? Some would argue that he did it to save those who are lost in sin. Some would contend to destroy the works of the devil. Others would say to establish justice and peace throughout the world. Each of these responses would be correct, but few would mention Christ came to lay down the means for external political freedom.

In the third chapter of the book of Genesis is seen the fall of humanity. When Adam and Eve rebelled against the will of God, man lost his ability to be self-governed. Thenceforth, history demonstrates one form after another of external governmental tyranny.

Christ restores the potential for man to govern himself once again under the authority of God. Thus, the pathway to political liberty is from the internal to the external. Look carefully through the annals of history and it will be discovered that only where Christianity in its purest form has flourished have people truly been free.

Stephen McDowell and Mark Beliles have beautifully expounded upon these truths in their book *Liberating the Nations*. They write:

*"The Bible reveals that 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty' (II Cor. 3:17). When the Spirit of the Lord comes into the heart of man, that man is liberated. Likewise, when the Spirit of the Lord comes into a nation, that nation is liberated. The degree to which the Spirit of the Lord is infused into a society (through its people, laws and institutions), is the degree to which that society will experience liberty in every realm (civil, religious, economic, etc.) Christ came to set us free (Gal. 5:1, 3). Spiritual freedom or liberty ultimately produces political freedom. External political slavery reflects internal spiritual bondage."*

Just a few days ago, I came across something written by Dr. Brian Harbour about this season of the year that especially caught my attention. He said:

*"Ironically, in our day when the watchwords are freedom and liberty, man is more in bondage than he has ever been. We were created to express our consciousness through prayer, to extend our hands in service, to express our thanks with joy, to expend our energies with wisdom, to exemplify our love by deeds. But our prayers have been silenced by our sin, our hands of service bound by our selfishness, our joy eclipsed by our sorrow, our energies stifled by our slothfulness, and our deeds of mercy eliminated by our self-centeredness."*

*"In the Christmas season, we are reminded again of a peace we do not experience and a joy we do not feel and a brotherhood we do not have. More*

*so than at any other time of the year, Christmas confronts us with the reality of our bondage. Above the muffled carols and the mock hilarity of the season, there sounds the agonizing cry of the multitudes in their sin: 'Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death' (Rom. 7:24)? Who will liberate us from our bondage?"*

Harbour penned those words in 1982, but more than 30 years later they are more pertinent than ever before.

Most polls show that Americans believe our nation is on the wrong track. Still, instead of looking within to discover the problem, we have looked outside of ourselves. It was the same response from Adam and Eve when they lost their first estate; the man blamed the woman, and the woman blamed the serpent.

Today liberty is in jeopardy more than ever before. Never has there been a time when there was more lawlessness in both public and private life. Our economy is in tremendous peril. One by one our constitutional freedoms are shredded. Sinister foreign powers driven by dangerous ideologies threaten to overpower us.

More than two millennia ago, we can see a rebuke to our nation in the circumstances surrounding Christ's birth. God appointed the Son of God both an earthly mother and father to keep and raise Him to adulthood. Poor shepherds found hope for their plight in the Christ-child, not the state. Wise men and potentates sought Him out and acknowledged His Lordship.

Let people pontificate erroneous notions about "separation of church and state," and the alleged value of a government devoid of religious influence, more specifically Christian influence. It remains a constant, however, that internal or external freedom is impossible outside that great Emancipator who was born of a virgin, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lay in a manger.

By Christ's life, sacrificial death and resurrection, freedom was purchased for all who will repent of their sins and believe. This current generation of Americans needs a great spiritual awakening that turns the feet of the masses in haste to Christ before freedom is lost forever.

We would do well to heed the words of the marvelous prince of preachers, Charles Spurgeon, who during the 19th century wrote:

*"Mark thee, man! If thou wilt come to Christ thou shalt be free this moment from every sort of bondage; but if thou wilt go hither and thither, and try this and that and the other, thou shalt find all thy tryings end in disappointment, and thou shalt lie down in sorrow and in shame; for none but Jesus – none but Jesus can make us free indeed. Real liberty cometh from him only."*

Yes, it is only free hearts that may enjoy and sustain the fruit of a free nation.

**AROUND THE PARISH**



**2016 Baptism Schedule**  
**February 02 Class**  
**February 07 Baptism**  
 Schedule is available on the parish website ([ic-sandiego.org](http://ic-sandiego.org)).

**31 JAN ... FAMILY CATECHESIS**  
 Parents and children as well as all interested adults are welcome to attend Family Catechesis in the bride's room of the parish hall every other week. The program continues on Sunday, January 31 at 9:45 right after the 8:30 AM Mass. All children must be accompanied by their parents at each session.

The **Prayer Chain Ministry** has been established in our parish. Our intention is to mobilize our parish community to pray for someone who has suddenly become ill, is going in for surgery, has a personal emergency or special needs they would like kept in prayer. Please contact Ruthe Jenkins if you are in need of prayers or if you are interested in being part of this powerful ministry on either the contact team or as part of the prayer chain. Email: [rutheis@cox.net](mailto:rutheis@cox.net) or phone 619-981-1424.

**Eyeglasses Needed**  
 Help Father Joe's Villages improve their clients' vision. Please donate eyeglasses --  
 \* New or gently used,  
 \* Prescription or magnifier,  
 \* Adult or child  
 A collection box is located in the parish hall.

**2015 Donations**  
 Letters substantiating tax-deductible donations of \$250 or more for the year were mailed out the week of January 25.  
 Should you have any questions after receiving your letter, please contact Connie at the parish office, 619-295-4141, ext. 10.

A nation or civilization that continues to produce soft-minded men purchases its own spiritual death on the installment plan.  
 — *Martin Luther King*

**Young Adult Ministry - Diocese of San Diego**  
 The purpose of our ministry is to connect 18-39 year old Catholic Young Adults to Christ and His Church. We do this by offering opportunities for spiritual development, by hosting social events and offering ways to serve within the community. Wherever you are in life: single, recently graduated high school or college, new to the area, married, or discerning the religious life, we desire to bring you to a closer communion with God. Come and satisfy that hunger for a strong spiritual awakening that stems from the need to discover who you are, who God is, and what His plan is for your life.  
 For more information, call 858-490-8260 or email [mmitre@sdccatholic.org](mailto:mmitre@sdccatholic.org).

**HARP MEDITATION**  
 Marsha Long, choir director and organist, will provide harp music for meditation on Thursdays during Lent from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm in the church.

**05 Feb ... Children of the Immaculate Heart**  
 Banquet & Silent Auction  
 to benefit human trafficking survivors  
 Our Mother of Confidence Church  
 No charge for dinner--RSVP required by January 30.  
 Contact Camille Mica at  
 281-832-5369 or [camillemica.cih@gmail.com](mailto:camillemica.cih@gmail.com)

**06 Feb ... 18th Annual Divine Mercy Conference**  
 Saturday, Feb. 6, 2016  
 San Juan Diego Center at Missions San Antonio  
 De Pala  
 3015 Mission Road  
 Pala, CA 92059  
 For more information  
 Phone: 619-276-6637

**01 Feb ... I. C. Seniors**  
 Enjoy a hot lunch and fellowship with other seniors in our community. Lunch includes coffee/cold drink.  
 Only \$5 per person.  
 Meeting begins at 11 a.m.  
 Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m.

**AROUND THE PARISH**

**Gifts of Treasure**

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

**January 24, 2016**

**Total Collection: \$4,210.54**  
**Envelopes: \$2,896.37 Plate: \$1,314.17**  
**Total contributing households: 79**

5:15 Sat	\$ 807.00
8:30 Sun	\$1170.75
10:00 Sun	\$ 945.37
11:30 Sun	\$ 587.00
5:15 Sun	\$ 570.42
Mailed	\$ 130.00

**EXPENSES**

January 18-22, 2016

Cable/Internet	\$70.00
Gas & Electric	\$1122.96
Hall Supplies	\$161.54
Ministry Supplies	\$70.50
Music	\$700.00
Office Supplies	\$ 31.06
Parking lot repairs	\$509.40
Payroll (incl tax)	\$3249.92
Payroll Service	\$46.45
Pension	\$385.87
Pest Control	\$100.00
Priest Retirement	\$5000.00
Water Utilities	\$1013.44

**Total: \$ 12,461.14**

**Building Fund: \$982.00**

**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...*

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 Monday - Friday 9:30 -4:00  
 Saturday 10:00 to 4:00  
 Sunday 9:30 to 3:00

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

In addition to rosaries, religious medals, prayer/novena books, the gift shop also offers a limited number of outdoor items and religious music CDs.

**See our online catalog at:**

<http://www.ic-sandiego.org/gift-shop>

**SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL:  
DIGNITATIS HUMANAE**

**MAN'S DIGNITY AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

9. The declaration of this Vatican Council on the right of man to religious freedom has its foundation in the dignity of the person, whose exigencies have come to be are fully known to human reason through centuries of experience. What is more, this doctrine of freedom has roots in divine revelation, and for this reason Christians are bound to respect it all the more conscientiously. Revelation does not indeed affirm in so many words the right of man to immunity from external coercion in matters religious. It does, however, disclose the dignity of the human person in its full dimensions. It gives evidence of the respect which Christ showed toward the freedom with which man is to fulfill his duty of belief in the word of God and it gives us lessons in the spirit which disciples of such a Master ought to adopt and continually follow. Thus further light is cast upon the general principles upon which the doctrine of this declaration on religious freedom is based. In particular, religious freedom in society is entirely consonant with the freedom of the act of Christian faith.

**PARISH & COMMUNITY**

<u>Parish Calendar</u>		
<b>January</b>		
31	Family Catechesis	9:45 AM
<b>February</b>		
01	IC Seniors Lunch Meeting	11:00 AM
	Vespers	7:40 PM
02	Pastoral Council Meeting (closed)	6:00 PM
	Baptism Class	7:00 PM
04	Choir Practice	6:00 PM
06	Quilting Group	9:30 AM
07	Baptism	2:00 PM
10	Ash Wednesday	
11	Harp Meditation	2:00 PM
	Choir Practice	6:00 PM
13	Quilting Group	9:30 AM
14	Parish Registration Sunday	
	Parish Breakfast	9:30 AM
	Family Catechesis	9:45 AM
15	President's Day Holiday	
	Parish Office closed	
18	Harp Meditation	2:00 PM
	Choir Practice	6:00 PM
20	Quilting Group	9:30 AM
25	Harp Meditation	2:00 PM
	Choir Practice	6:00 PM

*FROM MISERICORDIAE VULTUS - Pope Francis*

**BULL OF INDICATION OF THE  
EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY**

*FRANCIS  
BISHOP OF ROME SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS  
OF GOD TO ALL WHO READ THIS LETTER,  
GRACE MERCY, AND PEACE*

... 15. We cannot escape the Lord's words to us, and they will serve as the criteria upon which we will be judged: whether we have fed the hungry and given drink to the thirsty, welcomed the stranger and clothed the naked, or spent time with the sick and those in prison (cf. Mt 25:31-45). Moreover, we will be asked if we have helped others to escape the doubt that causes them to fall into despair and which is often a source of loneliness; if we have helped to overcome the ignorance in which millions of people live, especially children deprived of the necessary means to free them from the bonds of poverty; if we have been close to the lonely and afflicted; if we have forgiven those who have offended us and have rejected all forms of anger and hate that lead to violence; if we have had the kind of patience God shows, who is so patient with us; and if we have commended our brothers and sisters to the Lord in prayer. In each of these "little ones," Christ himself is present. His flesh becomes visible in the flesh of the tortured, the crushed, the scourged, the malnourished, and the exiled ... to be acknowledged, touched, and cared for by us. Let us not forget the words of Saint John of the Cross: "as we prepare to leave this life, we will be judged on the basis of love."

**Courtyard Renovation**

The renovation of the courtyard has begun. Tile orders may be returned to Glen Rasmussen or dropped off at the Parish Office.

Questions regarding the project should be directed to Glen Rasmussen.

**Pardon the inconvenience:** While construction work continues in the courtyard, please avoid using the courtyard to enter/exit the church. Disabled persons may be assisted across the courtyard to enter the church.

**16 Feb ... SAVE THE DATE ...**

**Father Joe's Villages**, Ladies Guild, Annual Charity Luncheon: "Ooh-La-La Paris"  
10:45 a.m., Sheraton Mission Valley.  
\$55 per person  
All proceeds benefit the children at Father Joe's Villages.  
For information or donations, contact Kristi at 858-453-9640 or kristikeith@mac.com or Jane at 858-453-7016 or janehargrove67@gmail.com

**01 Feb ... Latin Vespers ...**

Will be sung on Tuesday, February 01 in the church.

You are invited to join the Little Brothers of the Oratory in this beautiful tradition at 7:00 p.m.

**Healing Support Group**

Sacred Heart Parish offers a free 13-week healing support group for the separated and divorced on Tuesdays, beginning February 9 through May 3. It is held from 6:30 to 8:00 pm in the Church Ministry Center, 655 C Avenue, Coronado 92118. For information, call Martha, 619.435.6136 or Tom, 619.437.6689, or go online: <http://www.sacredheartcor.org/content/new-paths-separated-and-divorced>.

**NUNS OF A NEW GENERATION FORGE  
THEIR OWN PATH  
TODAY'S SISTERS WEAR THE HABIT AND  
PROTECT LIFE**

*by Mark Oppenheimer:*

Young women joining religious orders have become increasingly rare over the years. The number of “women religious” in the United States is about 50,000, less than a third of that in 1966. According to a Georgetown University study, “there are more Catholic sisters in the United States over age 90 than under age 60.”

The younger nuns can be a surprising bunch. While many in the older generation moved to the left after the 1960s, in theology and politics — a trend that led in part to Pope Benedict XVI’s investigation of American nuns in 2012 — younger nuns tend to be more conservative. They want to wear the habit. While they work outside their communities, they have a strong focus on contemplative life, making time for hours of daily communal prayer. And they tend to have a strong sense of a particular mission.

Take, for example, the Sisters of Life, the religious order of Sister Virginia Joy. Many of the nuns are in their 20s or 30s and have a commitment that can be divisive even in the Roman Catholic Church: “promoting life,” which in practice includes an emphasis on discouraging abortions.

The members may hold to traditional teachings, but as they see it, there is nothing more countercultural in 2015 than a young woman’s becoming a nun — eschewing careerism, material possessions, sex. Two other traditionalist orders — a Dominican order in Nashville, and one in Ann Arbor, Mich., which has expanded to Austin, Tex. — have attracted national attention; in 2010, the Ann Arbor nuns even made it on “Oprah.”

Margaret Guider, a Franciscan nun who teaches at Boston College, said young women were attracted to these orders not by any one political slant but by an old-fashioned sense of focus and identity. Where many religious orders now allow nuns to choose their dress, or their career, these groups dress alike, pray often together and all work in one field, be it as schoolteachers or in anti-abortion activism.

“What characterizes those groups is they tend to have maintained what I would call a conventional life,” Dr. Guider said. “They live in convents or designated communities, they tend to have a traditional habit and they tend to have a very focused ministry. Their life has a real focus and continuity that holds the whole group together all of the time.”

All of the 84 Sisters of Life have joined since 1991, when Cardinal John J. O’Connor, who was the archbishop of New York, founded the order. Ten postulants, or first-year members, are expected in September. On Thursday, at the order’s retreat center in Stamford, Conn., eight sisters professed “final vows,” making a commitment for life. To the

traditional vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, the Sisters of Life add a fourth vow, “to protect and enhance the sacredness of every human life.”

The Sisters of Life work with about 1,000 pregnant women a year, at several sites including a home for expectant and unwed mothers in the Hell’s Kitchen neighborhood in Manhattan, a mission on the East Side of Manhattan and a mission in Toronto. They operate a house for first-year members in the Bronx. Last year, at their Stamford retreat center, more than 4,000 people attended retreats, including weekends for women “healing after abortion.” Next month, four sisters are opening the order’s newest mission in Denver.

The sisters, who take no salary, oppose all taking of life, including war, but they place an emphasis on abortion.

“Our experience is that once a woman is given the love and practical support that she needs and deserves, she almost always desires to carry her baby to term,” said Sister Mary Elizabeth, who was acting as a spokeswoman for the group.

The order relies on private donations, and the sisters come from the United States, Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand and Spain. All of them have surprising stories.

“I was very passionate about the environment,” said Sister Antoniana, 34, a Filipina-Canadian. “I studied environmental science at the University of British Columbia. That dovetailed with a passion for human life.”

At the Hell’s Kitchen home for expectant mothers in the Bronx, a postulant, or first-year member, Jackie Zuppe from Waltham, Massachusetts, said she had always wanted to be a veterinarian. But in college, she said she “fell in love with the whole human person” and realized that she could not devote her life to animals. She met several Sisters of Life through her Catholic campus group.

“I remembered how young they were,” Sister Jackie said. “And the fact that they loved ultimate Frisbee.”

In their private counseling, on retreats and in speeches to students, the nuns explain their grander battle against the “contraceptive mentality,” to use the conservative Catholic term of choice. The use of condoms or birth control pills is, for them, simply not permissible. In this regard, they hold to traditional Catholic teachings that the majority of lay Catholics reject.

Sister Mary Concepta, who joined the order at age 27, will be one of the four missionaries moving to Denver. She said this new mission would focus on outreach to university students.

“Our charism,” Sister Mary Concepta said, using the Catholic word for a special gift to the world, “is meeting a need of this time: Life is not upheld. There are so many offenses against it all around us. So there is a real life we bring.”