

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

March 13, 2016

Rev. Richard L. Perozich, Pastor

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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@sdccatholic.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

14	8 AM	Lenten Weekday In thanksgiving to St. Martin	RP
15	8AM	Lenten Weekday †Martin Morris	RE
16	8 AM	Lenten Weekday Judy Robinson, SI	RP
17	8 AM	St. Patrick In thanksgiving to the Sacred Heart	RP
18	8 AM	St. Cyril of Jerusalem †Martin Morris	RP
19	8 AM	St. Joseph, Spouse of the BVM †Francisco Cruz	RP
20	5:15PM	Georgiana Ottenheimer, SI	RP
	8:30 AM	†Kristen & Richard Wagner	RE
	10:00 AM	Ebbitt Family, SI	RP
	11:30 AM	†William Kennedy	RP
	5:15 PM	All Souls	RP

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

March: Intentions of the Holy Father

Universal: That families in need may receive the necessary support and that children may grow up in healthy and peaceful environments.

Evangelization: That those Christians who, on account of their faith, are discriminated against or are being persecuted may remain strong and faithful to the Gospel, thanks to the incessant prayer of the Church.

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

14	Rev. Urbano Salada
15	Rev. Louis Salca
16	Rev. Gary Sanders, OSA
17	Rev. Anthony Saroki
18	Rev. James Schorr
19	Rev. David Sereno
20	Rev. Vincent Serpa, OP

PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

Monday: Dn 13:1-62; Ps 23:1-6; Jn 8:12-20
 Tuesday: Nm 21:4-9; Ps 102:2-21; Jn 8:21-30
 Wednesday: Dn 3:14-20, 91-95; Dn 3:52-56; Jn 8:31-42
 Thursday: Gn 17:3-9; Ps 105:4-9; Jn 8:51-59
 Friday: Jer 20:10-13; Ps 18:2-7; Jn 10:31-42
 Saturday: 2 Sm 7:4-16; Ps 89:2-29; Rom 4:13-22; Mt 1:16-24
 Sunday: Is50:4-7; Ps22:8-24; Phil2:6-11; Lk22:14 -23:56

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	Inez Cerda Bull
Margaret Kelly	Cosmo Busalacchi
Patricia Kennedy	Maria Casanova
Dorothy Kleint	Steve Stone
Dena Mendoza	Maria Esperanza Kramer
Jean Miller	Joan Busalacchi
Patricia O'Grady	Mark Brandon.
Mary Jane Tiernan	Jeanne Pontius
Marguerite Vorst	Esther Salazar
Martha Zamudio	Joane Anderson
Carlos Amaya	Janet Meyers
Mike Rodriguez	Yolanda Garcia
Maguire Fitzpatrick	Susan Rykowskj
Tony Jenkins	Elias Barajas
Peter Nalwalker	Shirley Ilog
Bob Witt	Olivia Ingram
Frank Garay	Grace Mulvanity
Frances Garcia	Angelica Ortega
Socorro Pacheco	Barbara Driscoll
Linda Lee	Lucille Miller
Amparo Valenzuela	Reginald Custodio
Robby Witt	Frankie Diaz, Jr.
Phyllis Altomare	Victoria Cardenas
Alicia Ambrose	Adela Diaz

PRAY FOR OUR DEPLOYED MILITARY

Jesus protect all who serve our country.

Sgt. Ahmed John Alexander	Robert Clinton Long, MC2
Natalie Augustine	Sgt. Adriana Matizel
Major Jerry Bloomquist	Wendell Miculob
Col. Mike Bodkin	LTJG Joe F. Moralez, USN
Danny Carpenter, USMC	LCPL Matthew A. Pena
LTJG Joseph Colangelo, USN	Sgt. Richard Pierce
Cpl. Samuel James Comer	Sgt. William Paul Powers and Cinco
Daniel Dinglebeck, USN	CPL Wilson Santiago
PFC 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

† PRAY FOR OUR DECEASED †

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

Joan Schmitt	Alexander Toczko
Robert McMahon	Jeannette Toczko
Richard Solis Moreno	José Teofilo Solorio
Alvin Weaver	Ray & Betty Jackson
William Bethel	Denise Cooney
Lillian Sinclair	Joanne Mangiameli
Olga Hritz	Edna Moore
Alice Perry	Paul Ramirez
Joseph Moreno	Isabella Asaro
Louie Serrano	Maude Laracy
Gustavo Sosa	Helen Peña
Floyd Watson	Lydia Castillo Herrera
Iola Torre	Bertha Lockwood
Emilie Graham	Salvador Rivera
Angela Cordova	Deborah Bute
Ramiro Moreno	John Cervantes

CHRIST AND MOSES

St. John Chrysostom, bishop

FROM THE PASTOR

The Israelites witnessed marvels; you also will witness marvels, greater and more splendid than those which accompanied them on their departure from Egypt. You did not see Pharaoh drowned with his armies, but you have seen the devil with his weapons overcome by the waters of baptism. The Israelites passed through the sea; you have passed from death to life. They were delivered from the Egyptians; you have been delivered from the powers of darkness. The Israelites were freed from slavery to a pagan people; you have been freed from the much greater slavery to sin.

Do you need another argument to show that the gifts you have received are greater than theirs? The Israelites could not look on the face of Moses in glory, though he was their fellow servant and kinsman. But you have seen the face of Christ in his glory. Paul cried out: *We see the glory of the Lord with faces unveiled.*

In those days Christ was present to the Israelites as he followed them, but he is present to us in a much deeper sense. The Lord was with them because of the favor he showed to Moses; now he is with us not simply because of your obedience. After Egypt they dwelt in desert places; after your departure you will dwell in heaven. Their great leader and commander was Moses; we have a new Moses, God himself, as our leader and commander.

What distinguished the first Moses? Moses, Scripture tells us, *was more gentle than all who dwelt upon the earth.* We can rightly say the same of the new Moses, for there was with him the very Spirit of gentleness, united to him in his inmost being. In those days Moses raised his hands to heaven and brought down manna, the bread of angels; the new Moses raises his hands to heaven and gives us the food of eternal life. Moses struck the rock and brought forth streams of water; Christ touches his table, strikes the spiritual rock of the new covenant and draws forth the living water of the Spirit. This rock is like a fountain in the midst of Christ's table, so that on all sides the flocks may draw near to this living spring and refresh themselves in the waters of salvation.

Since this fountain, this source of life, this table surrounds us with untold blessings and fills us with the gifts of the Spirit, let us approach it with sincerity of heart and purity of conscience to receive grace and mercy in our time of need. Grace and mercy be yours from the only-begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; through him and with him be glory, honor and power to the Father and the life-giving Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

THE MEANING OF "THE FEAR OF THE LORD"

Saint Hilary, bishop

Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways. Notice that when Scripture speaks of the fear of the Lord it does not leave the phrase in isolation, as if it were a complete summary of faith. No, many things are added to it, or are presupposed by it. From these we may learn its meaning and excellence. In the book of Proverbs Solomon tells us: *If you cry out for wisdom and raise your voice for understanding, if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord.* We see here the difficult journey we must undertake before we can arrive at the fear of the Lord.

We must begin by crying out for wisdom. We must hand over to our intellect the duty of making every decision. We must look for wisdom and search for it. Then we must understand the fear of the Lord.

"Fear" is not to be taken in the sense that common usage gives it. Fear in this ordinary sense is the trepidation our weak humanity feels when it is afraid of suffering something it does not want to happen. We are afraid, or are made afraid, because of a guilty conscience, the rights of someone more powerful, an attack from one who is stronger, sickness, encountering a wild beast, suffering evil in any form. This kind of fear is not taught: it happens because we are weak. We do not have to learn what we should fear: objects of fear bring their own terror with them.

But of the fear of the Lord this is what is written: *Come, my children, listen to me, I shall teach you the fear of the Lord.* The fear of the Lord has then to be learned because it can be taught. It does not lie in terror, but in something that can be taught. It does not arise from the fearfulness of our nature; it has to be acquired by obedience to the commandments, by holiness of life and by knowledge of the truth.


For us the fear of God consists wholly in love, and perfect love of God brings our fear of him to its perfection. Our love for God is entrusted with its own responsibility: to observe his counsels, to obey his laws, to trust his promises. Let us hear what Scripture says: *And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you except to fear the Lord your God and walk in all his ways and love him and keep his commandments, with your whole heart and your whole soul, so that it may be well for you?*

The ways of the Lord are many, though he is himself the way. When he speaks of himself he calls himself the way and shows us the reason why he called himself the way: *No one can come to the Father except through me.*

We must ask for these many ways, to find the one that is good. That is, we shall find the one way of eternal life through the guidance of many teachers. These ways are found in the law, in the prophets, in the gospels, in the writings of the apostles, in the different good works by which we fulfill the commandments. Blessed are those who walk these ways in the fear of the Lord.

AROUND THE PARISH

TIME CHANGED SATURDAY NIGHT MARCH 12
 If you have not already done so, advance your clocks 1 hour ahead on March 12/13 before you go to bed so that you arrive on time for Holy Mass.



Stations of the Cross continue on each Friday at 7:00 p.m. during Lent through March 25.
Exception: Stations of the Cross will be held at 3:00 p.m. on Good Friday, March 25.
Note: Free Soup Supper served from 6:00-6:45 p.m. in Serra Hall.



Palm Sunday - The Passion of the Lord
 March 20
 8:30, 10:00, 11:30 a.m., 5:15 p.m.
 (Vigil Mass on Saturday, March 19 at 5:15 p.m.)

Holy Thursday
 March 24
 No 8:00 a.m. Mass
 Mass of the Lord's Supper
 7:00 p.m.

Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday)
 March 25
 No 8:00 a.m. Mass
 Stations: 2:30 pm and 6:15 PM
 The Passion
 7:00 p.m.

Holy Saturday
 March 26
 No 8:00 a.m. Mass
 Easter Vigil Mass
 8:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord
 March 27
 8:30, 10:00, 11:30 a.m., 5:15 p.m.

13 MAR ... FAMILY CATECHESIS
 Parents and children and all adults are welcome at Family Catechesis in the bride's room of the parish hall every other week. The program continues on Sunday, March 13 at 9:45. Children must be accompanied by their parents at each session.

Annual Lenten Collection
 Special envelopes for donations to the Annual Lenten Collection may be dropped in the collection basket on March 13. Donations support the works of Catholic Relief Services, the Church in Africa, and the Church in Latin America.

HOLY WEEK

The liturgies of Holy Week bring insight into the human heart to those who celebrate it today, just as it happened 2,000 years ago. "More tortuous than anything is the human heart, beyond remedy; who can understand it?" (Jer. 17:9).

On Palm Sunday, the people recognize the glory of Jesus. They wave palms to express their love Him for all He has done for them: feeding their hungry, standing up to the hypocrisy of the pharisees, healing the sick, lifting them out of their sins with forgiveness, offering them a chance for eternal life.

Five days later they clamor for His crucifixion because their desires for an anointed one have changed. They're convinced a political revolutionary like Barabbas is the better choice between the one who loved them and the one who would lead them to war with the powerful Roman army.

Is it any different for us Christians? We like Jesus when the gospel words praise us; not so much when our sins are condemned even though forgiveness is offered if we would only repent.

On Holy Thursday, Jesus begins the sealing of the new covenant that He announced all His life: children of God through baptism, indwelling of God if we do God's will, and feeding with His Body and Blood in this bloodless sacrifice. He institutes the Eucharist and the priesthood.

On Good Friday he enters more deeply into the Paschal Mystery, sealing the covenant with His blood, His life, taking with Him our sins on the cross.

On Holy Saturday He rests in the tomb as a silent stillness rests over the world.

On Easter Sunday Jesus gloriously rises as promised, raising us up also with Him with a promise of eternal life in heaven if we continue to live with Him here on earth in prayer, word, sacrament and mercy.

Enter into Jesus' Paschal Mystery of Holy Week. Live the Passion, Death and Resurrection of our Lord. Let His grace settle your tortured heart with peace.

AROUND THE PARISH

Gifts of Treasure

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

March 6, 2016

Total Collection: \$5,023.77
Envelopes: \$3,746.00 Plate: \$1,277.77
Total contributing households: 79

5:15 Sat	\$ 772.00
8:30 Sun	\$1161.28
10:00 Sun	\$ 602.68
11:30 Sun	\$ 898.30
5:15 Sun	\$1059.51
Mailed	\$ 530.00

EXPENSES

February 29-March 4, 2016

Copier Lease	\$265.28
Diocesan tax	\$2395.25
Health Insurance	\$1530.58
Ministry Supplies	\$162.58
Music	\$700.00
Office Supplies	\$ 56.68
Payroll (incl. tax)	\$3229.76
Payroll Service	\$46.45
Pension	\$379.11
Waste Disposal	\$284.15
Workers Comp	\$222.14

Total: \$ 8,643.98

Annual Catholic Appeal
Goal: \$24,000

Pledged: \$21,203.50 -- Paid: \$16,463.50

Quarters & Cans: \$628.30

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you are able to volunteer once a month, once a week or more, please contact Liz Fielder at the gift shop, 619-295-4141, x14.

Lenten Resources

The Stations of the Cross with Pope John Paul II
The Way of the Cross with text from the Scriptures
The Way of the Cross, according to the method of St.

Alphonse Liguori

My Lenten Prayer Book

Spanish language versions also available.

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

**SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL:
DIGNITATIS HUMANAE**

MAN'S DIGNITY AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

14. The practice of pilgrimage has a special place in the Holy Year, because it represents the journey each of us makes in this life. Life itself is a pilgrimage, and the human being is a viator, a pilgrim traveling along the road, making his way to the desired destination. Similarly, to reach the Holy Door in Rome or in any other place in the world, everyone, each according to his or her ability, will have to make a pilgrimage. This will be a sign that mercy is also a goal to reach and requires dedication and sacrifice. May pilgrimage be an impetus to conversion: by crossing the threshold of the Holy Door, we will find the strength to embrace God's mercy and dedicate ourselves to being merciful with others as the Father has been with us.

The Lord Jesus shows us the steps of the pilgrimage to attain our goal: "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back" (Lk 6:37-38). The Lord asks us above all not to judge and not to condemn. If anyone wishes to avoid God's judgement, he should not make himself the judge of his brother or sister. Human beings, whenever they judge, look no farther than the surface, whereas the Father looks into the very depths of the soul.

PARISH & COMMUNITY

Parish Calendar

MARCH

13	Parish Breakfast	9:30 AM
16	Choir Practice	6:00 PM
17	Harp Meditation	2:00 PM
18	Soup Supper Stations of the Cross	6:00 PM 7:00 PM
19	Quilting Group	9:30 AM
20	Building Fund Collection	
23	Choir Practice	6:00 PM
24	Harp Meditation	2:00 PM
	Triduum (See Holy Week Schedule, page 4)	
25	Good Friday Collection for the Church for the Holy Land Parish Office & Serra Gifts Closed	
27	Easter Sunday -- Serra Gifts Closed	
28	Easter Monday Holiday Parish Office Closed -- Serra Gifts Open.	
30	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

... 19 The same invitation is extended to those who either perpetrate or participate in corruption. This festering wound is a grave sin that cries out to heaven for vengeance, because it threatens the very foundations of personal and social life. Corruption prevents us from looking to the future with hope, because its tyrannical greed shatters the plans of the weak and tramples upon the poorest of the poor. It is an evil that embeds itself into the actions of everyday life and spreads, causing great public scandal. Corruption is a sinful hardening of the heart that replaces God with the illusion that money is a form of power. It is a work of darkness, fed by suspicion and intrigue. *Corruptio optimi pessima*, Saint Gregory the Great said with good reason, affirming that no one can think himself immune from this temptation. If we want to drive it out from personal and social life, we need prudence, vigilance, loyalty, transparency, together with the courage to denounce any wrongdoing. If it is not combated openly, sooner or later everyone will become an accomplice to it, and it will end up destroying our very existence.

**SAVE THE DATE
APRIL 24, 2016**

4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Parishioners and friends are invited to attend the **Dedication of the Courtyard** followed by a reception (cake and coffee) in the parish hall.

WHY ARE THE STATUES COVERED?

Jesus is the glory of God the Father. All the saints exist only because of him, and they are a reflection of His glory in their own particular gifts.

The last two weeks of Lent are called Passiontide with the first Passion Sunday being the fifth Sunday of Lent and the second Passion Sunday being Palm Sunday.

During this time Catholics focus on the passion of the Lord which leads to His glory: his agony in the garden, disrespect by the high priest, condemnation by Pilate, way to the cross, crucifixion and burial.

To focus this thinking on Jesus suffering, the glory of Jesus is covered as are all those saints who reflect His glory.

After we celebrate Palm Sunday, Holy Week, the Sacred Triduum, and the Easter Vigil, we see Jesus in His glory once again, surrounded by all His saints who reflect His glory in their own unique ways given to them by God.

JOINT DECLARATION OF POPE FRANCIS AND PATRIARCH KIRILL OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA 2/12/16

5. Notwithstanding this shared Tradition of the first ten centuries, for nearly one thousand years Catholics and Orthodox have been deprived of communion in the Eucharist. We have been divided by wounds caused by old and recent conflicts, by differences inherited from our ancestors, in the understanding and expression of our faith in God, one in three Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are pained by the loss of unity, the outcome of human weakness and of sin, which has occurred despite the priestly prayer of Christ the Savior: “So that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you ... so that they may be one, as we are one” (Jn 17:21).

FALSE GRACE, LOVING GOD AND HATING EVIL

— Matt Barber

What a mess our world is in. What a mess America is in. What a mess the church is in.

Depressed yet?

Isaiah 5:20 encapsulates, I believe, the cultural condition of much of the world, most of America and an alarmingly high percentage of those who belong, or at least claim to belong, to the body of Christ. “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.”

Calling evil good. That sums us up.

But, hey, “grace,” right? I mean, you’ve seen the bumper sticker. “Christ’s grace is sufficient,” isn’t it?

Well, yes and no. Christ’s grace is sufficient to give us His strength in our own pathetic weakness and to impute his perfect righteousness to us, despite our own filthy and fallen nature (see 2 Corinthians 12:9).

But strength to do what, exactly? Strength to continue sinning?

Hell no.

Understand that by “hell no,” I don’t mean “hell” in a crass, swear word, Donald Trumpy kind of way. I mean that to continue sinning in an unrepentant, guilt-free, “evil is good” manner, leads to death. It leads to physical, emotional and spiritual death, whether you call yourself a “Christian” or not.

It leads to hell.

“Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness” (Romans 6:16-19).

So, in order to be “set free from sin” we must “obey.” To stop sinning is to obey. To continue sinning is to disobey. To disobey leads to death – it makes us “slaves to sin.” To obey, to stop sinning, leads to life. It makes us “slaves to righteousness.”

What does it mean to be “set free from sin”? Well, it means, as Christ admonished, that we are, among other things, to “go and sin no more” (see John 8:11). Sin, with its associated chains of bondage, is over there. We are over here. Sin is behind us. We’ve “put off [our] old self, which belongs to [our] former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,” and, thusly, are “set free from sin” (see Ephesians 4:22).

Jesus said, “If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

“Hmm,” you might say. “I don’t recall my pastor ever saying anything about ‘turning from my wicked ways’ in order for Jesus to ‘forgive [my] sin and heal [our] wicked land.’ What did Christ mean by ‘turn from their wicked ways?’”

Well, after centuries of robust debate, a debate, mind you, that rages on even today within the body of Christ, an ever-so-slight majority consensus has emerged that maintains the following, rather nuanced and theologically highbrow thesis:

Jesus meant to turn from your wicked ways.

Best-selling Christian author Randy Alcorn once wrote, “Any concept of grace that makes us feel more comfortable sinning is not biblical grace. God’s grace never encourages us to live in sin; on the contrary, it empowers us to say no to sin and yes to truth.”

We can all agree that, when we repent and ask His forgiveness, Jesus forgives us our past sins. Still, there is a deceptive tendency in much of the church – and by “deceptive,” I mean demonic – that suggests Christ came to set us, captives to sin without Him each and every one, free, not from sin, but, rather, from guilt for that sin.

This, of course, is yak manure. Jesus did not come, nor was He tortured to death on a tree, so that, by His grace, He could kill our guilty feelings for ongoing, habitual and unrepented-for sins.

Jesus came to kill sin.

“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?” (Romans 6:1-2).

It is hellacious error to say that, as Christians, we are not supposed to “feel guilty” when we sin. When you sin, you feel guilty because you are guilty. Feeling guilty, otherwise known as “being convicted” in our sin, is a painful symptom of a dying soul. Christ’s grace is not spiritual Percocet intended to numb the pain of guilt. Guilt is the warning sign, sin is the cancer and Christ’s grace, the cure.

There is a deceptive, deadly, and evil brand of false “grace” out there, prevalent within the Christian church. It’s a grace that says yes to sin and no to truth, that calls evil good and good evil. A guilt-free, prideful, “gay”-affirming, gossiping, slothful, “pro-choice,” kids will be kids, always use protection, God will forgive my abortion, nicer than Jesus kind of grace that is leading millions of people who honestly believe they’re saved, born-again Christians, straight to the flaming pits of eternal damnation.

Too much “hellfire and brimstone” for you, my friend? Well, sorry. I care about your soul. I care about your eternity – even if your false-teacher, likely-bound-for-hell-himself pastor, priest or bishop doesn’t.

Don’t get me wrong. I’m not self-righteous. To the contrary, under my own power, and in my flesh, I lack a righteous bone in my entire body. I’m the worst sinner of all.

Even so, through the amazing and perfect power of the Holy Spirit, I am able to call sin sin, evil evil and good good. I am able to recognize sin in my own life, sin in the life of our once-great nation, and sin in the life of the church. I can then repent and, with and through the Holy Spirit, “go and sin no more.”

That’s it. That’s what God requires. That’s true grace.

And *that* kind of grace is sufficient.

You’ve heard the old adage, “Love the sinner hate the sin.” Some complain that it’s found nowhere in the Bible.

True, not word-for-word, anyway. Still, this transcendent truth, this overall concept, is found throughout the Holy Scriptures. We are literally commanded to hate evil.

“Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the LORD God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is. Hate evil, love good...” (Amos 5:14-15).

So, there you have it. That’s grace. Love Jesus. Love others. Hate evil. Repent and “go and sin no more.”

Now get moving.

And Christ be with you.