

The Catholic Church of the
Immaculate Conception

2540 San Diego Avenue, San Diego, CA 92110 619 295-4141 FAX 619 295-4142
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FEBRUARY 12, 2017

Rev. Richard L. Perozich, Pastor

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Deacon Robert H. Fitzmorris

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Marsha Long, Music

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.

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

13	8 AM	<i>Weekday</i> †Jean Miller	RP
14	8AM	<i>Ss. Cyril and Methodius</i> †Jean Miller	RE
15	8 AM	<i>Weekday</i> †Jean Miller	RP
16	8 AM	<i>Weekday</i> †Jean Miller	RP
17	8 AM	<i>The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order</i> †Jean Miller	RP
18	8 AM	<i>Weekday; BVM</i> †Jean Miller	RP
19	5:15 PM	†Senen de la Fuente	RP
	8:30 AM	†Martin Morris	RE
	10:00 AM	†Jean Miller	RP
	11:30 AM	†William Kennedy	RP
	5:15 PM	†Sebastian Madrina	RP

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

FEBRUARY: Intentions of the Holy Father

Comfort for the Afflicted: That all those who are afflicted, especially the poor, refugees, and marginalized, may find welcome and comfort in our communities.

PRAY: SEMINARIANS IN THEOLOGY

2nd	Manuel Del Rio, St. John's Seminary, Camarillo
1st	Josue Jiménez, Mt. Angel Seminary OR
3rd	Oscar Lopez, St. John's Seminary, Camarillo
4th	Nathan McWeeney, Mt. Angel Seminary, OR
2nd	Raymond Napuli, Mt. Angel Seminary, OR
2nd	Michael O'Connor, Mt. Angel Seminary, OR
3rd	Eric Tamayo, North American College, Rome
4th	Dcn. Billy Zondler, Mt. Angel Seminary, OR
PY	Antonio Morales, PY

PRAY FOR OUR PRIESTS


13	Rev. Msgr. Frank Pugliese
14	Rev. Msgr. Lawrence Purcell
15	Rev. Paul Quante, OSA
16	Rev. John Quinn
17	Rev. James Rafferty
18	Rev. Fernando Ramirez, Jr.
19	Rev. Andres Ramos

PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

Monday: Gn 4:1-15, 25; Ps 50:1--21; Mk 8:11-13
 Tuesday: Gn 6:5-8; 7:1-10; Ps 29:1-10; Mk 8:14-21
 Wednesday: Gn 8:6-13, 20-22; Ps 116:12-19; Mk 8:22-26
 Thursday: Gn 9:1-13; Ps 102:16-29; Mk 8:27-33
 Friday: Gn 11:1-9; Ps 33:10-15; Mk 8:34 -- 9:1
 Saturday: Heb 11:1-7; Ps 145:2-11; Mk 9:2-13
 Sunday: Lv 19:1-18; Ps 103:1-13; 1 Cor 3:16-23; Mt 5:38-48

PRAY FOR HEALING

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

Patricia Kennedy Dorothy Kleint Dena Mendoza Patricia O'Grady Mary Jane Tiernan Marguerite Vorst Martha Zamudio Tony Jenkins Peter Nalwalker Socorro Pacheco Amparo Valenzuela Phyllis Altomare Alicia Ambrose Cosmo & Joan Busalacchi Maria Casanova Steve Stone Mark Brandon Jeanne Pontius Esther Salazar		Joane Anderson Yolanda Garcia Olivia Ingram Grace Mulvanity Angelica Ortega Barbara Driscoll Lucille Miller Reginald Custodio Victoria Cardenas John Hobbs Robert Rolli Eleanor Anderson Marie Whitman Deirdre Rigney Marie Wagner Joanne Daleo Dominic Castagnola Arthur Acuna, Jr. Frankie Diaz, Jr.
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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 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. SCPO Desiree S. Hayes, USN Gil Perez, US Navy Scott Walker, US Navy
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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.

Denise Cooney Joanne Mangiameli Edna Moore Paul Ramirez Maude Laracy Helen Peña Lydia Castillo Herrera Bertha Lockwood Salvador Rivera John Cervantes Daniel Don Florence Messina Arthur Wilbur Martinez Jesse Benitez Margaret Kelly Martha Jane Hotchkiss	Janet Meyers Hector Morales Carol Raiter Albina Farrie Stephanie Anzelone Fred Levine Eleanor Maycan Ronald Monreal Mary Louise Fillet Inez Cerda Bull Bernice Lyons Elias Barajas Robert F. Curry, Jr. Jean Miller Marie Rita Dubler Gerry Lyons
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DOMINUS IEUSUS (continued)

Thus, the Encyclical *Redemptoris missio* calls the Church once

FROM THE PASTOR

again to the task of announcing the Gospel as the fullness of truth: "In this definitive Word of his revelation, God has made himself known in the fullest possible way. He has revealed to mankind who he is. This definitive self-revelation of God is the fundamental reason why the Church is missionary by her very nature. She cannot do other than proclaim the Gospel, that is, the fullness of the truth which God has enabled us to know about himself". Only the revelation of Jesus Christ, therefore, "introduces into our history a universal and ultimate truth which stirs the human mind to ceaseless effort".

6. Therefore, the theory of the limited, incomplete, or imperfect character of the revelation of Jesus Christ, which would be complementary to that found in other religions, is contrary to the Church's faith. Such a position would claim to be based on the notion that the truth about God cannot be grasped and manifested in its globality and completeness by any historical religion, neither by Christianity nor by Jesus Christ.

Such a position is in radical contradiction with the foregoing statements of Catholic faith according to which the full and complete revelation of the salvific mystery of God is given in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the words, deeds, and entire historical event of Jesus, though limited as human realities, have nevertheless the divine Person of the Incarnate Word, "true God and true man"¹³ as their subject. For this reason, they possess in themselves the definitiveness and completeness of the revelation of God's salvific ways, even if the depth of the divine mystery in itself remains transcendent and inexhaustible. The truth about God is not abolished or reduced because it is spoken in human language; rather, it is unique, full, and complete, because he who speaks and acts is the Incarnate Son of God. Thus, faith requires us to profess that the Word made flesh, in his entire mystery, who moves from incarnation to glorification, is the source, participated but real, as well as the fulfilment of every salvific revelation of God to humanity,¹⁴ and that the Holy Spirit, who is Christ's Spirit, will teach this "entire truth" (*Jn* 16:13) to the

Apostles and, through them, to the whole Church.

7. The proper response to God's revelation is "the obedience of faith (*Rom* 16:26; cf. *Rom* 1:5; *2 Cor* 10:5-6) by which man freely entrusts his entire self to God, offering 'the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals' and freely assenting to the revelation given by him".¹⁵ Faith is a gift of grace: "in order to have faith, the grace of God must come first and give assistance; there must also be the interior helps of the Holy Spirit, who moves the heart and converts it to God, who opens the eyes of the mind and gives 'to everyone joy and ease in assenting to and believing in the truth'".

The obedience of faith implies acceptance of the truth of Christ's revelation, guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself: "Faith is first of all a personal adherence of man to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a *free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed*". Faith, therefore, as "a gift of God" and as "a supernatural virtue infused by him", involves a dual adherence: to God who reveals and to the truth which he reveals, out of the trust which one has in him who speaks. Thus, "we must believe in no one but God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit".

For this reason, the distinction between *theological faith* and *belief* in the other religions, must be *firmly held*. If faith is the acceptance in grace of revealed truth, which "makes it possible to penetrate the mystery in a way that allows us to understand it coherently", then belief, in the other religions, is that sum of experience and thought that constitutes the human treasury of wisdom and religious aspiration, which man in his search for truth has conceived and acted upon in his relationship to God and the Absolute.

This distinction is not always borne in mind in current theological reflection. Thus, theological faith (the acceptance of the truth revealed by the One and Triune God) is often identified with belief in other religions, which is religious experience still in search of the absolute truth and still lacking assent to God who reveals himself. This is one of the reasons why the differences between Christianity and the other religions tend to be reduced at times to the point of disappearance.

AROUND THE PARISH



2017 Baptism Schedule

March 7 **Class**
March 12 **Baptism**
 Class is held in Serra Hall.

12 FEB ... Family Catechesis ...

...for parents with their children 6 years and older and for adults who need sacraments continues on February 12 in the parish hall at 9:45 am sharp, after the 8:30 Mass.

28 FEB ... "DENIM AND DIAMONDS A COUNTRY WESTERN LUNCHEON AFFAIR "

Tuesday, February 28, 2017
 Sheraton Hotel Mission Valley
 1433 Camino Del Rio South (San Diego 92108)

\$55 per person; Free Parking
 Proceeds benefit the children at Father Joe's Villages.

Reservations and information: Contact
kristikeith@mac.com or 858-453-9640;
janehargrove67@gmail.com or 858-453-7016.

10 MARCH ... PARISH LENTEN RETREAT

The retreat begins with 8:00 a.m. Mass and ends at 2:00 p.m. Continental breakfast and lunch provided.

Topics:

Biblical foundations for the Mass
 Jesus Christ as the only Savior of the World
 The Christian in today's world.

RSVP to ssullivan@sandiego.edu

FLOWER POWER

If you have a knack for flower arrangements, the Immaculate Conception Flower Committee invites you to volunteer to help with flowers for Sunday Masses and other liturgical celebrations in the church.

Please contact Georgiana Ottenheimer,
 619-291-8316, if you are interested.

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT, INTERPRETER OF SCRIPTURE

109 In Sacred Scripture, God speaks to man in a human way. To interpret Scripture correctly, the reader must be attentive to what the human authors truly wanted to affirm, and to what God wanted to reveal to us by their words.⁷⁵

110 In order to discover *the sacred authors' intention*, the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture, the literary genres in use at that time, and the modes of feeling, speaking and narrating then current. "For the fact is that truth is differently presented and expressed in the various types of historical writing, in prophetic and poetical texts, and in other forms of literary expression."⁷⁶

111 But since Sacred Scripture is inspired, there is another and no less important principle of correct interpretation, without which Scripture would remain a dead letter. "Sacred Scripture must be read and interpreted in the light of the same Spirit by whom it was written."⁷⁷

The Second Vatican Council indicates three criteria for interpreting Scripture in accordance with the Spirit who inspired it.⁷⁸

112 1. *Be especially attentive "to the content and unity of the whole Scripture"*. Different as the books which compose it may be, Scripture is a unity by reason of the unity of God's plan, of which Christ Jesus is the center and heart, open since his Passover.⁷⁹

The phrase "heart of Christ" can refer to Sacred Scripture, which makes known his heart, closed before the Passion, as the Scripture was obscure. But the Scripture has been opened since the Passion; since those who from then on have understood it, consider and discern in what way the prophecies must be interpreted.⁸⁰

113 2. *Read the Scripture within "the living Tradition of the whole Church"*. According to a saying of the Fathers, Sacred Scripture is written principally in the Church's heart rather than in documents and records, for the Church carries in her Tradition the living memorial of God's Word, and it is the Holy Spirit who gives her the spiritual interpretation of the Scripture ("... according to the spiritual meaning which the Spirit grants to the Church"⁸¹).

114 3. *Be attentive to the analogy of faith*.⁸² By "analogy of faith" we mean the coherence of the truths of faith among themselves and within the whole plan of Revelation.

115 According to an ancient tradition, one can distinguish between two *senses* of Scripture: the literal and the spiritual, the latter being subdivided into the allegorical, moral and anagogical senses. The profound concordance of the four senses guarantees all its richness to the living reading of Scripture in the Church.

116 The *literal sense* is the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis, following the rules of sound interpretation: "All other senses of Sacred Scripture are based on the literal."⁸³

117 The *spiritual sense*. Thanks to the unity of God's plan, not only the text of Scripture but also the realities and events about which it speaks can be signs.

1. The *allegorical sense*. We can acquire a more profound understanding of events by recognizing their significance in Christ; thus the crossing of the Red Sea is a sign or type of Christ's victory and also of Christian Baptism.⁸⁴

2. The *moral sense*. The events reported in Scripture ought to lead us to act justly. As St. Paul says, they were written "for our instruction".⁸⁵

3. The *anagogical sense* (Greek: *anagoge*, "leading"). We can view realities and events in terms of their eternal significance, leading us toward our true homeland; thus the Church on earth is a sign of the heavenly Jerusalem.

4. **118** A medieval couplet summarizes the significance of the four senses:

The Letter speaks of deeds; Allegory to faith;
 The Moral how to act; Anagogy our destiny.

AROUND THE PARISH

Gifts of Treasure

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

February 5, 2017

Total Collection: \$5,769.09
Envelopes: \$4,437.00 Plate: \$1,332.09,
Total contributing households: 98

5:15 Sat	\$1470.98
8:30 Sun	\$1211.31
10:00 Sun	\$1268.25
11:30 Sun	\$ 722.08
5:15 Sun	\$ 318.90
Mailed	\$ 777.50

EXPENSES

Jan. 30 - Feb. 3, 2017

Copier Lease	\$291.14
Diocesan Tax	\$3892.75
Health Insurance	\$1597.58
Maintenance	\$55.00
Music	\$875.00
Office/HallSupplies	\$283.86
Payroll (incl. taxes)	\$3406.68
Payroll Service	\$65.45
Pension	\$381.48
Supply Priests	\$1650.00
Telephone	\$237.61
Waste Disposal	\$301.49
Workers Comp.	\$381.48

Total: \$13,419.52

Annual Catholic Appeal
Goal: \$24,000
Paid Pledges-ytd: \$4001.00

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

New Items Arrive Daily

- Armed Forces Prayer Book*
- Marian Devotions*
- Lenten reading*
- Jewelry*
- Wall plaques*
- Novena Prayer Books*
- Prayer Cards*
- Religious Music CDs*

AMORIS LAETITIA
ON LOVE IN THE FAMILY
OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS

74. Sexual union, lovingly experienced and sanctified by the sacrament, is in turn a path of growth in the life of grace for the couple. It is the “nuptial mystery”.The meaning and value of their physical union is expressed in the words of consent, in which they accepted and offered themselves each to the other, in order to share their lives completely. Those words give meaning to the sexual relationship and free it from ambiguity. More generally, the common life of husband and wife, the entire network of relations that they build with their children and the world around them, will be steeped in and strengthened by the grace of the sacrament. For the sacrament of marriage flows from the incarnation and the paschal mystery, whereby God showed the fullness of his love for humanity by becoming one with us. Neither of the spouses will be alone in facing whatever challenges may come their way. Both are called to respond to God’s gift with commitment, creativity, perseverance and daily effort. They can always invoke the assistance of the Holy Spirit who consecrated their union, so that his grace may be felt in every new situation that they encounter.

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 _____

PARISH & COMMUNITY

Parish Calendar

FEBRUARY

12	Parish Breakfast Family Catechesis	8:30 AM 9:45 AM
15	Choir Practice	6:00 PM
18	Quilting Group	9:30 AM
20	Presidents Day Holiday Parish Office and Gift Shop closed	
22	Choir Practice	6:00 PM
25	Quilting Group	9:30 AM
26	Quarters & Cans Sunday Family Catechesis	9:45 AM
28	Choir Practice (note change of day)	6:30 PM

23 FEB ... ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO ACADEMY ...

... Open house Thursday, February 23rd from 5:30 to & 7:00pm--Come Join Us!. Enjoy warm hospitality from faculty, current families and students and recent alumni. Hot chocolate and classroom tours will be available to all interested families. If your interested in quality, Catholic education for your children, visit us.

Please visit the SaintCharlesAcademy.com to RSVP.

THE TOMORROW PROJECT

When thinking of meat-less options for simple Lenten suppers, remember Catholic Charities/The Tomorrow Project's vegetarian based gourmet food products. Support their job readiness program for homeless women by placing an order. You can order online at www.tomorrowproject.org, stop by the storefront (in the pink building) at 1777 Fifth Avenue, or call us at (619) 230-1151.

Our understanding of the tenets of the Catholic faith should be much more mature at fifty than at fifteen. But the faith itself hasn't changed, only our grasp of it. Blessed John Henry Newman pointed out, in discussing the "development of doctrine," that there is a gradual growth in our understanding of the meaning of what God has revealed, but the substantial truth of a revealed mystery remains unchanged.

— *James Toner*

FROM FAMILIARIS CONSORTIO
- Pope John Paul II 1981

ON THE ROLE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY IN THE MODERN WORLD 1981

THE PLAN OF GOD FOR MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

The Rights and Role of Women

22. In that it is, and ought always to become, a communion and community of persons, the family finds in love the source and the constant impetus for welcoming, respecting and promoting each one of its members in his or her lofty dignity as a person, that is, as a living image of God. As the Synod Fathers rightly stated, the moral criterion for the authenticity of conjugal and family relationships consists in fostering the dignity and vocation of the individual persons, who achieve their fullness by sincere self-giving.

In this perspective the Synod devoted special attention to women, to their rights and role within the family and society. In the same perspective are also to be considered men as husbands and fathers, and likewise children and the elderly.

Above all it is important to underline the equal dignity and responsibility of women with men. This equality is realized in a unique manner in that reciprocal self-giving by each one to the other and by both to the children which is proper to marriage and the family. What human reason intuitively perceives and acknowledges is fully revealed by the word of God: the history of salvation, in fact, is a continuous and luminous testimony of the dignity of women.

MARTYRDOM FOR THE FAITH IN OUR TIMES

His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke

Christians often find themselves in a society and culture which does not know God, is forgetful of Him or even hostile to Him and His law written in creation, inscribed upon every human heart, and taught in its fullness by the Church. In such a situation, the clear and courageous witness of the Christian life, giving glory to God by obedience to His law written upon the human heart, is more critical than ever, not only for the sake of the salvation of the Christian soul but also for the transformation of the culture and society, so that it may truly foster and serve the good of all.

CONSCIENCE AND DISAGREEMENTS ON SOCIAL TEACHINGS

By *Fr. Mark A. Pilon*

There is much confusion today about the obligations of Catholics towards positions on political matters taken by individual bishops or conference of bishops or even the pope himself.

Such positions are often referred to as part of the Church's social teaching, which can be very misleading. Some confessors, myself included, increasingly encounter devout Catholics who ask if they are guilty of sin because they disagree with bishops or the pope on issues such as U.S. immigration policy, Obamacare, the death penalty, etc. My response is to assure them that they are not guilty of sin for such disagreements. But they have a duty to be informed on such issues and to respect the opinions and persons of those with whom they disagree, including Church leaders.

In Catholic social teaching, fundamental moral and social **principles** are binding. They then have to be applied to complex practical problems. In concrete cases, the principles are more remote than the first principles of the natural law. And when it comes to their application, we are generally **not dealing with the same kind of certitude** that we find when primary moral principles are applied to personal moral acts.

To suggest that political positions taken by a bishops' conference – based upon their reading of practical situations related to economic policies, the environment, immigration policies and such things – are equivalent to doctrinal pronouncements binding on Catholic conscience is quite misleading.

For instance, if a Bishops' Conference says that building a wall is a bad idea, or – as a couple of individual bishops have written – is an irrational or useless policy, these are political positions plain and simple. **They are not doctrinal pronouncements, and they definitely do not bind in conscience. They simply represent the political opinion of this or that bishop or this or that conference on a particular social, political, or economic issue. Catholics are totally free to reject them if, after careful consideration, they find them lacking.**

Judge Gorsuch with President Trump and Mrs. Gorsuch

John L. Allen Jr., a respected journalist who generally writes for a couple of liberal Catholic publications, wrote about Judge Neil Gorsuch, newly nominated by President Trump for the Supreme Court: "Considered a reliable conservative on most issues, Gorsuch seems likely to align with the *Catholic Church's positions* [my italics] on many matters but create possible heartburn on others." Allen is referring here to what he calls social teaching issues, and he lumps together abortion and religious freedom on the positive side, and the death penalty and immigration on the "heartburn" side. The assumption here, unfortunately, is that all these positions are morally

grounded in ways that have the same moral weight and degree of certitude in their application. That's a mistaken assumption.

Allen would probably not say that the bishops' positions on matters like immigration, healthcare, and the death penalty are as equally grounded in magisterial teachings as are the bishops' positions on abortion and religious freedom. The latter positions are clearly based upon magisterial teaching that is irreformable and exceptionless in application. The former are, at most, based on their specific understanding of how certain social principle should be applied in a particular and very complex situation. In short, these are political positions, like being for or against some criminal sentencing policy, or for or against government control over health care.

When Allen says that Judge Gorsuch's previous immigration and death penalty decisions disagree "with both the Vatican's and the U.S. bishops'" views, and identifies these positions as "the Catholic Church's positions," what can he possibly mean? These positions are not magisterial positions as such, and do not claim to be doctrinal or necessary applications of Catholic social teaching – that is, positions of the whole Catholic Church, which is what is implied.

The fact is that Allen can only be speaking about the political positions of the U.S. Bishops' Conference (and not even of each and every bishop), and the political position of Pope Francis and some of his Curia, but hardly the position of the universal Church. To speak of "the Catholic Church's positions," then, is totally misleading since it excludes from "the Catholic Church" all those Catholics who have their own political position on an issue where they are not bound in conscience.

You can, for instance, support the death penalty, if you judge that there is no effectively practical way of safeguarding the common good. Even St. John Paul II's proposed development in the Magisterium – that the death penalty be used as rarely as possible – allows for such prudential judgments.

Moreover, the moral duty of judges, including Catholic judges, assuming they are not dealing with an issue that is governed by an absolute, exceptionless moral principle, is to interpret and apply the law accurately and fairly according to the intention of the legislature that created the law. Their job is not to agree with some political positions, not even their own, but to be faithful to the law itself. If the law cannot be faithfully applied without violating the judge's conscience, then the only moral recourse is resignation.

So the "positions" of the loosely defined "Catholic Church," which really amount to some leaders in the Catholic Church, are not necessarily relevant and are non-binding on the Catholic faithful. Such positions should be considered – as should other positions and a broad range of factors – in forming our consciences. But to suggest that they are in fact binding on Catholics who have come to informed disagreement is not theologically sustainable.