

**SAINT
THOMAS
MORE
CATHOLIC
CHURCH**

You are the salt of the earth
—Mathew 5:13



**A Roman Catholic Parish
in the Diocese of San Diego**

- ✝ Spirituality
- ✝ Tradition
- ✝ Community

Mass Schedule

Saturday at 5:00pm
Sunday at 8:30am and 10:30am
Monday-Friday at 8:15am

Eucharistic Adoration

Every Day, 7:00am-7:00pm

Reconciliation (Confession)

Saturday, 3:30-4:30pm
and by appointment

Rev. Michael Ratajczak, Pastor
Rev. Karl Bauer, Senior Priest
Deacon John Fredette
Deacon Thomas A. Goeltz

1450 South Melrose Drive
Oceanside, CA 92056

760-758-4100

760-758-4165 fax

Office Hours: Monday-Friday,

8:30am-12:00noon

and 12:30-4:00pm

parishoffice@stmoside.org

www.stmoside.org



StThomasMoreRCC



Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 5, 2017

Pastor's Column

Rev. Michael Ratajczak
760-758-4100 x100
michaelr@stmoside.org

My Journey with Roe v. Wade: A Personal Reflection

January 22 marked the 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court Decision which legalized abortion in the United States.

In this week's Pastor's Column, I share with you my own personal journey with Roe v. Wade.

The Column was first written in 2001. I have updated it several times since then.

It is my hope that my reflection will help you in whatever way you may need as you come to terms with what it means to be "pro-life."



Also included in this week's Bulletin is a letter from Bishop McElroy, a statement from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and statements from Cardinal Blase Cupich and Cardinal Joseph Tobin regarding the recent actions by the Trump Administration in regard to the U.S. refugee admissions program and migration to the United States.

Directions are also given if you wish to write our elected officials.



Fr. Mike



Our Church is a House of Prayer for all People!

**Our Church and Blessed Sacrament Chapel are open
7:00am-7:00pm, seven days a week.**

The door on the left side of our main doors remains unlocked.

Please enter and exit through that door.

You are always welcome!



When a Loved One Dies

*Call the Parish Office first, before you call the funeral home.
Call anytime, night or day! 760-758-4100 option 3*

Our Parish has a wonderful Bereavement Team that is available when a loved one dies. They are available to assist the family with many arrangements related to the funeral, which might include meeting with the family to pray, helping to plan the funeral, and providing bereavement support afterwards.

In addition, those who like to plan ahead may meet with a Bereavement Team member to pre-plan preferences and place them on record, which can be a great help for children or other family members when the time comes.

*If you have any questions, contact Sr. Maureen at
760-758-4100 x131 or maureenb@stmoside.org.*

St. Francis and St. Thomas More Offertory Envelopes

Any St. Francis Offertory Envelopes given to the offertory collection at St. Thomas More will be returned to St. Francis.

Any St. Thomas More Offertory Envelopes given to the offertory collection at St. Francis will be returned to St. Thomas More.

Ways to Help Support Your Parish

We offer a variety of options for easier giving: extra mail-back envelopes included in your packet or credit card and automatic checking/savings account deductions by signing up in the office or online. For more information, contact the Parish Office at 760-758-4100 x100 or parishoffice@stmoside.org. To sign up online, scan the code at right with your smartphone or visit www.stmoside.org, then click on Donations, then Online Giving.



Considering Becoming Catholic?

Has Pope Francis ignited a spark in you to know more about the Catholic faith and become a member of the Church he shepherds?

If you are already Catholic, perhaps you have a new enthusiasm for your faith that you would like to share with a friend or family member who is searching.

Our lives sometimes go through seasons of change, of closeness to God and distance from God. Yet the Father's love is steadfast, full of mercy, and ever-present to those who seek with a sincere heart, no matter what sins or situations have caused separation.

If you have thought about becoming Catholic and beginning a new "season" in your life, contact Kathleen Bell, 760-809-6526, 80bell80@gmail.com.

Rosary

A communal Rosary is prayed after every weekday Mass (Monday-Friday) in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Please join us!



**Our Mission is to: worship God,
teach and live the Gospel of Jesus Christ,
and serve God's people in word and deed.**

Flower Donations

The Altar Flowers for this weekend were given by **Tam & Hahn Tran** in honor of **Jonathan Tran**.



In Memoriam



Please pray for the repose of the soul of:

Phyllis Marie Alves, who died on January 27. Her Funeral Mass will be celebrated on Thursday, February 9, at 11:00am at St. Thomas More. Please keep her family in your prayers.

*May her soul and all the souls of the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

Local Hospitals with Catholic Chaplains Available

If you or a loved one is in one of these hospitals and need the ministry of a Catholic priest, please contact the Chaplain's Office to make the arrangements.

Hospital	Chaplain's Office
Tri-City	760-940-7954
Palomar	442-281-1328
Scripps Encinitas	760-633-7784
Scripps Green	858-554-3698
Scripps Mercy	619-260-7020
UCSD Thornton	619-543-2103
Kaiser Zion	619-528-5188

STM Archives Wants Your Material

The STM Historian is looking for material from Parish events and activities since our church was established in 1985. The kinds of material that are needed include: photographs, newspaper clippings, brochures, fliers, reports, videos, drawings—anything that represents our congregational memory! Please check your drawers, file cabinets, and that creepy ol' box in the attic. You can drop off your donations at the Parish office. Thanks!

For more information and questions, please feel free to contact: Brandon at 760- 845-5450 or brandon.oswald@gmail.com.

STM Scrip News

Do you attend the 5:00pm Mass? Can you spare 20 minutes after Mass? If so, the Scrip Ministry would like your help to sell Scrip. Please contact Andrea Sweeney at 626-824-7973 or scrip@stmoside.org. Volunteers for the other Masses are needed as well. Remember this Ministry supports our Church Operation Fund.

Do you shop on Amazon? Use Amazon Smile and raise money for STM while you shop! Click the link at www.stmoside.org/scrip.htm to get started.

We appreciate your continued support for the Scrip program. **For more information, visit www.stmoside.org/scrip.htm or contact the Scrip team at 760-758-4100 x150 or scrip@stmoside.org.**

Readings for the Week Ahead

Sunday Year A; Weekday Year I
Readings online at www.usccb.org.

Sunday, February 5 (73)

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 58:7-10

Psalms 112:4-9

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Matthew 5:13-16

Monday, February 6 (528)

Paul Miki, and companions, martyrs

Galatians 2:19-20

Psalms 126:1b-6

Matthew 28:16-20

Tuesday, February 7 (330)

Genesis 1:20-2:4a

Psalms 8:4-9

Mark 7:1-13

Wednesday, February 8 (529)

Jerome Emiliani, priest

Tobit 12:6-13

Psalms 34:2-11

Mark 10:17-30

Thursday, February 9 (332)

Genesis 2:18-25

Psalms 128:1-5

Mark 7:24-30

Friday, February 10 (530)

Scholastica, virgin

Song of Songs 8:6-7

Psalms 148:1bc-2,11-13a,13c-14

Luke 10:38-42

Saturday, February 11 (334)

Our Lady of Lourdes

Genesis 3:9-24

Psalms 90:2,6,12-13

Mark 8:1-10

Sunday, February 12 (76)

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sirach 15:15-20

Psalms 119:1-2,4-5,17-18,33-34

1 Corinthians 2:6-10

Matthew 5:17-37

Prayer List (Call 760-758-4100 x102 to add a name for four weeks.)

Changa Aguilera

Ernie Aichele

Mary Alexander

The Alves Family

Carrie Autrey

Joshua Avery

Addison Abigail Aviña

Bob Baker

Rosemary Ballard

Jose Luis Barbosa

Patricia Barbour

Francie Barron

Clarice Bednarz

Taylor Bell

John Bennici

Regina Bentz

Lisa Berg

Roseanne Berg

Mary Betz

Betty Jean Bielich

Zane Breier

Janet Brown

The Budzyn & Frost

Families

Anita Buerger

Amelia Buono

Shelby Campbell

Breanne Campos

Aria Cappeluti

Nanette Carey

Peggy Cartajena

Donald Cashmore

Anne Caywood

Ravy Chea

The Vaughn Clevenger

Family

Anne Cline

Carl & Dorothy

Coleman

James Coleman

Maria Colfer

Addie Colgan

Clara Collins

Judy Colson

The Comeaux Family

Karen Connell

Geoff Coolidge

Sandra Cracchiolo

Steven Cresencia

Lené Crowe

Karen Flaharty Daley

Beverly de Gelder

Velia Deal & Family

Paul Del Vecchio

Hugo Delgado, Jr.

Cassandra D'Ercole

Christine DeSantis

Cecilia DeSimone

David deVilleneuve

Carole Dillon

Elizabeth Doherty's

Aunt Jackie

Art & Dave Dossman

Steven Douglas

Marge Egan

Jerome Elbacha

Arthur Eral

Carolyn Erickson Ey

Victoria Lopez Fenton

The Fiore Family

Fr. James Flanagan

Mary Fleming

Ryan Flum

Ernie Follis

Al Fortaleza

Eugene Franciscus

The Greg French

Family

Brian Frink

Jim Gallagher

The Joe Garcia Family

Kathy Gardner

Joan Gay

Alyssa Gerhard

Dan Gilman

Betty Golden Brown &

the Golden Family

Wendy Gonzales' Dad

Rick Gonzalez

Lou Gordon

George Gritt

Luke Guent

Susan Hallahan

Colleen Hanna

The Harker Family

Dorothy Harrison

Michelle Harrison &

Family

Barbara Hatem

LaNay Hazzard

Matthew Henry &

Family

Barry Henwood

Lilian Hills

Lisa Hodges

Georgia Ann Hodina

Samara Hook

Susan Hori

Iolanda Iacobelli

Katherine Jacobs

Jacqueline Johnson

Sue Johnston

Laura Kater

Dottie Kearney

Connor Kerzie

Peggy Kiernan

Debbie Kinney

Mark Kneisel

Dewey Kolbo

Tony Korwin

Faith Kowallek

Helen Kuhn

Lorene Kundert

Lillian Lachance

The Lamelin Family

Ashley LaMothe &

Family

Parker Landis

Pauline Lapre's sister

Justine

Brandon LeBlanc

Susan Lee

Jake Lefferdink

Jeremiah Lemus

Aleah Leon

David Lewis

Ashley Load

Cassandra & Lauren

Loretto

Jack Lucarelli

Joaquin Maldonado

The Maldonado Family

The Maldonado Trejo

Family

Paige Mansell

Gloria Maupin

Colleen McCall

Virginia McConnell

Paige McCoy

Jerry McEniry

Ann McGeary

The McGinley Family

Ann McMahan

Bob McWilliams

Joyce Meehan

Kalei Mendiola

Lorraine Micallef

Rita Mikridge

Steven Sr., Stevie, &

Noah Miller

Tom Miller

Phyllis Minaya

June Mitchell

Maria Molina

June Montgomery

Nancy Moore

Ryan Moquin

Elizabeth Muehlbacher

Conrad Murphy

Eddie Murphy

Clay Murray

Margie Myers

Andrew Philip

Nacional

Angela Nacional

Melanie Nacional

Joe Nastasi

Nida Navarro

Richard Obsitnik

Gillian Ochoa

Kare O'Dell

Laura Paciorek Gloor

Katie Padilla

Ethan Palm

Cynthia Pearson

Salina Pearson

The Pelletier Family

Elisa Petrie

Merri Phelps

Roxanne Pietila

Helen Pingtella

Delilah Plasterer

Perry Postulka

The Joe Prokop Family

Bernie Ptak

Barbara Ramm

The Reznicek Family

Jenni Richard

Evelyn Richards

Pat Richart

Rita Ritchie

Ralda Rizke

Lily Robinson

Mateo Rodriguez

Maria Rogers

The Russo Family

Rachel Sainc

Sam Sam

Cindy Sanelli

Lori Sanna

Rose Mary Saputo

Linda Schmidt

Grace Schweighofer

Joan Shea

Elizabeth Shirzad

Nick Soltan

Gilda Spiegl

Darek, Vanessa, &

Elba Spizewski

Don St. Pierre

Patricia St. Pierre

Joy Stanton

Sybil Staples

Mike Sterling

Laura Bernard Stover,

MD

Pete Sullivan

Pat Swanton

Julie Teare

Bob & Marsha Terhall

Laura Thiele

Tommy & Ginger

Thompson

Maryann Tien

Sarah Tillinghast

William Tompson

Stephen Toth, Jr.

Olivia Trejo

The Trejo/Beltran

Family

The Trejo/Maldonado/

Uribe Family

Frank Urso

Martin Vertson

Lucy Vienna

Lucy Viramontes

Vanessa Vitiello

Wilson Wanner

Kevin Watson-Graff

Jerry Wechsler

Elaine Weiler

Chris West</

Social Ministries & Outreach

Baltimore Fire Takes Lives of Six Children

Many of you may have read recently of the fire that took the lives of six of nine children, all brothers and sisters, in Baltimore.

A great tragedy for one family to bear!

Fr. Rich Lewandowski informed me that this family is his family, the mother is his cousin.

If you would like to financially help the parents and the three remaining children at this tragic time, please go to www.gofundme.com/malone-housefire.

Any assistance will be greatly appreciated!

Thanks. —Fr. Mike Ratajczak

St. Bonaventure Indian Mission

A thank you note from the director... "I want you all to know that your annual clothing drive and your generosity to reimburse our expenses...bring so much joy and true happiness to the Navajo people we serve in the love of Christ. Please keep the clothing drive going each year...May God continue to smile upon you and bless you all, always."

Help Feed the Hungry

Pope Francis reminds us: "You pray for the hungry. Then you feed them. That's how prayer works."

We encourage every STM family to donate one nonperishable food item each weekend when they come to Mass. Note that Gatorade and other sweetened beverages are not recommended.

Together we can help feed the hungry in our local community.



Jail/Detention Ministry

Jesus said, "I was in prison and you visited me. What you did for the least of these you did for me." To volunteer and bring the gifts of presence, compassion, hope, and love to those in prison, call Rita McCarthy at 760-758-4100 x100. For more information, visit www.diocese-sdiego.org/restore, where you will find information on not only visiting those in prison, but ways to provide support for victims or their families and ways to get involved with victim/offender mediation and reconciliation.

STM Mental Health Ministry Network

STM is a member of the San Diego Mental Health Ministry Network and has made a commitment to become a faith community that both understands mental illness and can provide compassionate support. If you or a loved one is experiencing mental health challenges, or if you would like to find out how to become a member, please contact us at 760-758-4100 x104.

Marriage & Family Life

Moms & Kids—Are you a mom with infant through school age children wanting to meet other moms in our Parish? Want to find a great way to meet friends for both you and your children? Join our dynamic and energetic Moms and Kids ministry! We have park play dates twice a month at a local park (the next one is Tuesday, February 7, 9:30-11:30am at Buena Vista Park), and there are many other events throughout the month posted on our private Facebook page. Join us! Contact Natalia Sada at vzlanaty@yahoo.com or Estelle Eral at estelle.eral@gmail.com.



Civil to Church Marriage—Are you civilly married, but haven't yet been married in the church? Contact Fr. Mike at michaelr@stmoside.org to begin your preparation!

Natural Family Planning—Struggling to conceive but nothing is happening? Or doctors tell you IVF is your only hope? Want to space children naturally and effectively? Come listen to a free Introductory Presentation of the Creighton Model FertilityCare system. Next presentation: Thursday, February 23, 7:00pm, St. Thomas More, Parish Center Upper Level. Please RSVP with Beth at 619-630-8086 or beth@veritasfertilitycare.com.

Bishops' Letter on Marriage—Imitating Christ: "Christian spouses are called to this imitation of Christ, an imitation that is possible only because, in the Sacrament of Matrimony, the couple receives a participation in his love. As a sacrament, marriage signifies and makes present in the couple Christ's total self-gift of love. Their mutual gift of self, conferred in their promises of fidelity and love to the end, becomes a participation in the love to the end by which Christ gave himself to the Church as to a Spouse (see Jn 13:1)." To read the document go to <http://www.usccb.org/loveandlife/>.

For more information, visit www.sdcatholic.org Ministries/Marriage and Family Life or call Jen Frost at 858-692-7438.

Women's Guild Third Annual Tea

Starting next weekend (February 4-5), Women's Guild representatives will be on the plaza to accept your reservations for the Tea scheduled on Saturday, February 25, at 11:00am. The flyer was in last week's bulletin and will be available at the table on the plaza. Bring your friends, neighbors, daughters, and/or granddaughters. If you wish to reserve a table for six, decorate your own table, or just join the festivities as a guest, you are welcome. Wear your best going-to-tea ensemble, as prizes will be awarded for the best hat and for the prettiest table. High (noon) tea will be served with a delicious menu in the works. Those of you who attended our previous teas know what a wonderful time it is! In the meantime, more information is available by calling co-chairs Maureen Tutino at 760-598-8211 or Mary Dahlberg at 760-598-1330.

Catholic Widows and Widowers of North County

The second Sunday of each month is our General Meeting and Potluck at 2:00pm. On the fourth Sunday we meet for a Communal Mass at various Catholic churches in North County. Check www.cwwnc.com or the bulletin board in the Parish Center Lower Level for our calendar of events including theatre, bowling, bocce ball, dining out, hiking, and more more! RSVPs are required. For more information call 760-726-0533.

Parish Events

Men's Fellowship Update

Are you hungry for a good message, good fellowship, and a good breakfast? Join us for our Saturday morning men's gathering and breakfast called **iHunger**. To stay informed of what's going on with **iHunger** via SMS text messages, text iHunger to 84576 or email Deacon John to have your email added to the iHunger distribution group. (Note: breakfast is off-site on the first weekend of each month).

Also, if you find yourself thirsty for occasional fellowship over a beer at a local micro-brewery, or taking a day hike, or going to a ball game together with some other great men from the Parish, Text **iThirst** to 84576.

Women's Guild News

Now is the time to contact Patty Remington, Hospitality Chair at 760-805-6935 or cprem@pacbell.net if you will be attending our February 13 meeting "Books/Bingo/BBQ". We sure hope to see you there at 11:00am in the Lower Level of the Parish Center. Please remember to bring publications you no longer need, including CDs and DVDs, for our book exchange. After a delicious BBQ lunch, we'll play a few games of Bingo which always puts us in a competitive spirit!

Our Third Annual Tea is February 25; come to the Women's Guild table on the plaza after all Masses to sign up. Cost is \$25 per person and you are guaranteed a spectacular time of fun, good food, prizes for best hats and best tables, and friendship. See page 4 for more details.

Spirited Seniors and Women's Guild co-sponsor the Day of Recollection for all Parishioners and friends on Monday, March 6 at 8:30am. The bulletin flyer for this event will be coming soon—please watch for it!

The Board of Directors Nominating Committee is in full swing and looking for members who are ready willing and able to tackle a position next year. If you or a member you know would consider a Board position, please contact Nominating Committee Chair, Trish Feeley, at 760-685-6227. Job descriptions for each office are available for review.

Blessings for a faith-filled week! —*Kathy Gerhard, president*

Young Adult Opportunities around the Diocese

For more information, visit www.yamsd.org.

To receive text updates, text **YAM** to **84576**.

For North County Young Adult Meetups text **STYM** to **84567** or www.facebook.com/NorthCountyYoungAdults.

Visit www.sandiegocac.org for activities around the Diocese for adults of all ages.

Spirited Seniors St. Valentine's Day Luncheon

The Spirited Seniors are celebrating St. Valentine's Day with a Luncheon on Tuesday, February 14, 11:30am-2:00pm. The cost is \$16 for members and \$18 for non-members. Please put your reservation request and your check payable to "STM Spirited Seniors" in an envelope marked "Spirited Seniors St. Valentine's Day Luncheon" and return it to the offertory collection or Parish Office, Box 12. The deadline for reservations is February 5. For more information, contact Jim and Marilyn Day at 760-509-4545 or jandmday@cox.net.

Pictorial Directories Ready for Pickup!

Thank you to all who had your photos taken! Our beautiful new Pictorial Directories are here, and are ready for distribution as follows:

1. In the Parish Office between 8:30am and 4:00pm.
2. Directories are labeled and free to all Parishioners who had their pictures taken during the Lifetouch sessions at STM.
3. There is a \$10 charge for those who submitted photos or did not participate in the photo sessions.

If you have questions, please contact:
Kim Wright, 760-518-8465, kimw@stmoside.org



Dedication DVD Celebrates Our 30-Year History and Our Dedication Anniversary!



St. Thomas More Catholic Church held our Mass of Dedication and Blessing on December 16, 2015. This culminated a 30-year effort to realize a dream come true, with a beautiful liturgy, followed by a fabulous reception! **Our Dedication DVD covers our 30-year history, as well as special parts of the Mass and the reception.**

The DVD is about 53 minutes long. It is beautifully done by Thom Hiatt of Faith in Marketing! Thanks to all who helped over all the years and also in preparation for this special day and year!

DVDs are available for \$20 each on the plaza before or after all Masses, as well as in the Parish Office during working hours and online at our website, www.stmoside.org.

You may also contact Chris Smith at 760-758-4100 x120 or chriiss@stmoside.org

Looking for a Way to Be Involved?

Visit our website (www.stmoside.org) and click on Get Involved for an easy way to find the perfect ministry to fit your time and talent!



Liturgy & Music *Worship God*

Douglas Lynn
Director of Liturgy & Music
douglasl@stmoside.org; 760-758-4100 x140

COWORKERS IN THE GLOBAL VINEYARD

At his presentation this past weekend on the Role of the Pastor (What Does Fr. Mike Do All Week?), Fr. Mike referenced the universality, the catholicity of the Roman Catholic Church as it relates to how the teachings and practices of the Church are disseminated—from the pope, to the national conferences of bishops (in our case, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops), to the California Conference of Catholic Bishops, to our bishop, to our pastor, and from him to our faith community. In this way, Church teachings and practices are spread throughout the entire world, connecting us to our sisters and brothers on every continent and in every land.

It works the other way too, with the Vatican requesting input on a topic at the parish level, which is then passed up the chain to aid in the discernment of the bishops at the triennial Synods of Bishops and consequently in the writing of an apostolic exhortation on the topic issued by the pope.

This connectivity, from pope to the faithful and from the faithful to the pope, binds us and makes us truly connected in our universality, truly catholic in our faith and in our worship, part of a global vineyard rooted in Christ.

Returning to last weekend's talk, Fr. Mike emphasized the recent generational changes in the final link in the chain, that of pastor to the faithful. The role of the laity in the life of the Church has dramatically expanded in the past fifty years, especially in light of the priest shortage, making the expanded use of lay leadership and professional staff essential to bringing the pastor's vision to all corners of the Parish community. Lay leadership—our Parish councils and

committees—and the Parish staff facilitate the work of the people in this corner of the vineyard of the Lord, that is, St. Thomas More Parish.

While the staff occasionally ministers to the Parish in a direct fashion—Chris greets, Debbie teaches, Henny welcomes, Deacon John counsels, Kathy sings, Lorraine rings, Sr. Maureen knocks on doors to get out the vote, Rebecca bakes, and I cantor—most of our time is spent coordinating, facilitating, encouraging, and training others to minister to our community, our region, our country, and our world. In this capacity, we are extensions of Fr. Mike's ministry as pastor.

And since none of the staff can do all of this by ourselves, we have assistance we rely on to lighten the load. In the liturgical ministries, for example, I have people, volunteer lay people, who help me train and coordinate ministers within each liturgical ministry. Debbie for her part has catechists to teach the faith; Sr. Maureen has the Bereavement Team to walk with the bereaved; Chris has welcome ministers to guide people through the membership process. Again, each of these helpers is an extension of Fr. Mike's ministry as pastor.

The point is that each of us is connected to the entire Church, through our ministries and our pastor to the vineyard of the Lord throughout the world. Fr. Mike's talk on Sunday reminded me of this interconnectedness. It also reminded me to take time this week to say thank you for your important part in the work of the Lord for this time and this place.

Thank you.

—Douglas



"You are the salt of the earth.
But if salt loses its taste,
with what can it be seasoned?
It is no longer good for anything
but to be thrown out and
trampled underfoot."

Matthew 5:13

Upcoming Music



FEBRUARY 12
6th Sunday in
Ordinary Time



5:00pm

Praise Team

8:30am

Cappella Choir

10:30am

Tower Bells



WANTED

Female vocalist for Praise Team.

Must read music.

Contact Joleen at
joleens@stmoside.org.



WANTED

Handbell Ringer for Tower Bells.

No experience necessary.

Basic music knowledge a plus!

Contact Douglas at
douglasl@stmoside.org.

Faith Formation

Teach and Live the Gospel

Matt Franklin
Youth Advocate

760-758-4100 x161; mattf@stmoside.org

Debbie Fredette
Director of Faith Formation

760-758-4100 x110; debbief@stmoside.org

Family Faith Formation

Our Next REACH Sunday is February 12!

Make faith an important part of your family's life!

Enroll Your Child in Faith Formation for 2017!

Classes are available for ages 3-Adult

Contact Debbie in the Faith Formation Office for Info

Sacrament Prep News



Our next **Eucharist Parent Meeting** for parents with a child in their second year of Sacrament Preparation is on Sunday, February 26, at 12:30pm. Please meet on the Upper Level of the Parish Center.



Please pray for Our St. Thomas More teens and catechists as they attend their Confirmation retreat this weekend. Confirmation will be celebrated on Sunday, June 4, at 10:30am Mass.

Adult Confirmation Prep Continues

Are you an adult (19 years or older) who would like to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation in 2017? **Classes have begun!** Next class is scheduled for **Sunday, February 12, at 7:00pm** and classes will continue twice a month through May. Please contact Debbie in the Faith Formation office at debbief@stmoside.org to discuss registering for the classes.

Till "Death" Do Us Part! Wait! What?!



What's the Secret to a Perfect Marriage?

Join us **Sunday, February 12**, at 12:30pm on the Parish Center Upper Level, where we will hear stories and anecdotes from several of our very own Parish couples and what makes marriage work for them. Don't miss this fun-filled afternoon! No RSVP required and no cost to attend!

The Ark Nursery



Open during the 10:30am Mass for children up to 5 years of age. Contact Lia Keane at liak@stmoside.org for more information or to buy your ARK card.

Youth Ministry



NO EDGE Sunday Feb 5

High School
IGNITE
ST. THOMAS MORE
oceanside, ca
Wednesday 6:30-8:30pm

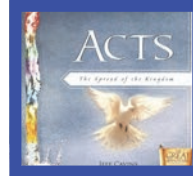
THRIVE
YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Mondays from 7:00-10:00pm

Contact Matt Franklin at mattf@stmoside.org

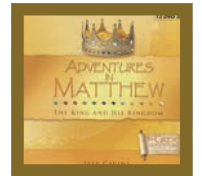
Adult Faith Formation

Bible Study News



Don't Miss Out on These Great Studies!

Register Today by Calling the Faith Formation Office at 760-758-4100 x110



Wednesday Morning Bible Study Continues on February 8 9:00-11:00am

Thursday Evening Bible Study Continues on February 9 | 7:00-8:30pm for Childcare Please RSVP to debbief@stmoside.org prior to the evening of the study.

New Faith Study Begins March 8

PART 2 SYMBOLON
THE CATHOLIC FAITH EXPLAINED

Wednesday Mornings, Beginning March 8 9:00-11:00 am for 10 sessions.

Held on the Parish Center Upper Level.

Please register by March 1

Contact the Faith Formation office or Patt Goeltz at pattg@stmoside.org for dates and more info.

Women's Ministry News



Join Us for an Evening of Fun, Faith, and Fellowship on Friday, February 10, at 6:30pm with Author Dr. Cyndi Peterson.

RSVP to the Faith Formation office or contact Lia at liak@stmoside.org for more info

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Stewardship & Development

Serve God's People

Chris Smith
Director of Stewardship & Development
chriss@stmoside.org; 758-4100 x120

Collection for Week of January 24-30, 2017

Number of Registered Households	1,237
Offertory	\$8,218.57
Offertory (Loose Collection)	\$1,049.00
Total	\$9,267.57

Mortgage/Building Completion Fund Income

January 2017

Mortgage Offering Collected	\$41,951.00
Mortgage Payment Due	\$44,806.21
Payment toward Parish Reserves*	\$0.00
Mortgage Payment Overage/(Shortfall)	(\$2,855.21)

Memorial Items toward Building Completion Fund	\$600.00
------------------------------------------------	----------

Please continue to support the
Mortgage/Building Completion Fund!

* Mortgage Payment overage will be applied to Parish Reserves

"Did You Know" Collection January 2017
\$2,431.00

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This program is one way of helping the Parish raise the resources necessary to continue our campus build out and also help plan for our future needs (i.e., Tower of Faith participants). Gifts of this nature are beneficial and much appreciated by St. Thomas More.

For more information please contact:

Chris Smith at 758-4100 x120 or chriss@stmoside.org.

**Do two or more members of your family know where to
locate your Will, Living Trust and/or Health Directive?**

A Christian Stewardship Prayer for February



Gracious God,

You sent us your Son to show us the way to you.

Grant us the wisdom to live out his Beatitudes
according to the gifts we have been given.

Give us the courage to be good stewards
of the Gospel and fervent disciples.

And show us how to recognize that through
his gift of the Eucharist there is one bread,
and we are one body;

that we live no longer for ourselves,
but in Jesus Christ who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God forever and ever.

Amen.

—ICSC February 2017 e-bulletin (with permission)

**I've never known any human being,
high or humble, who ever regretted,
when nearing life's end, having done kindly
deeds. But I have known more than one
millionaire who became haunted by
the realization that they had led selfish lives.**

— B. C. Forbes

Memorial Item Donations Available

Jesus on the Road to Emmaus
Bronze Sculpture for \$30,000
Daily Mass Chapel

Parish Offices

Metal Framing Exterior Walls \$60,000
HVAC Components \$55,000
Roofing \$45,000
Exterior Windows and Doors \$45,000
Exterior Brick \$30,000
Plumbing \$30,000
Plumbing Finish and Fixtures \$10,000

Memorial Item Donations Partial

Jesus, Divine Redeemer and
Master of the Universe Mosaic Panels \$5,000/each
for Memorial Garden
(54) 12 available

Priests' Concelebration Vestments \$400/each
(4) 4 available

Pew Seating for the Church \$300/each
(1,000) 705 available

Daily Mass Chapel and Choir Chairs \$300/each
(200) 93 available

Altar Server Albs \$125/each
(15) 8 available

Pipe Organ—Our pipe organ is our
 "pipe dream"...but dream we must...
 donations of any amount toward the
 pipe organ will be accepted **\$850,000**

12/29/16

Memorials are a way of honoring those whom we love, whether they are living or deceased. Often, memorials are made for a special intention or in thanksgiving for a variety of blessings received from God.

Listed above are items still available for adoption.

All contributions will be recognized in a special memorial to be displayed in our Parish Memorial Garden.

For more information or to adopt an item, contact Chris Smith
 760-758-4100 x120 or chriss@stmoside.org



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**For more information, contact the Parish Office:
 760-758-4100 x100 or parishoffice@stmoside.org**

The Larger Church News

St. Joseph Academy (Catholic K-8 & High School)—Drama Department presents *The Smallest of All*, a three-act play on February 10-12 that chronicles the life of St. Bernadette and her encounters with the Blessed Virgin Mary at Lourdes, France in 1858. Come be moved by the inspiring story of a poor, young girl who shines through many trials and helps bring the transforming light of Christ to the world. Adults \$10, Seniors \$8, Students \$3. Purchase tickets online at vistix.com.

Birth Choice By Design Workshop for Young Women—*What Was God Thinking when He Created Girls to Be So Different from Guys?* Saturday, February 11, 10:00am-2:15pm, Birth Choice, 277 S. Rancho Santa Fe Rd., Ste. S, San Marcos. For young women grade 7 and above; light lunch and snacks provided. To register, visit <http://birthchoice.net/donate/events/>.

Learning about the Priesthood—Saturday, February 11, 8:30am-3:00pm, St. Francis Center at USD. An Explorer Day for those men who are interested in exploring a possible vocation to the priesthood. For more information, check with Fr. Mike Ratajczak at the Parish Office or Fr. Lauro Minimo at 619-291-7446.

St. Francis Annual Women's Retreat: Let My Soul Glory in the Lord—May 5-7, Vina De Lestonnac, Temecula. Presenter is Fr. Ruben Arceo, SJ, pastor of St. Francis Church. For more information, contact Rae Arnold at 760-500-3201 or sonraetoo@gmail.com.

✠ ✠ ✠

Sunday TV Mass for the Homebound—Every Sunday at 9:30am. XDTV Channel 49 (MyTV13) or www.heartofthenation.org.

John Paul the Great Catholic University Master of Arts in Biblical Theology—For more information, go to www.jpcatholic.com or contact 858-653-6740 x1117.

Franciscan School of Theology in Affiliation with the University of San Diego—For more information, go to www.fst.edu or contact 760-547-1800 x204

Catholic Radio—AM 1000/Sirius 130—San Diego

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St. Francis Church News

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Updated 01/01/2017

Pastoral Council

Chairperson Lisa Attardo 760-940-1505

Secretary Marti Harper 760-724-1181

Religious Education/Faith Formation/Evangelization

..... Rory Griffin 760-414-3939

Religious Education for Adolescents & Children (RE.A.CH)

..... Debbie Fredette 760-758-4100 x110

Liturgy of the Word for Children Heidi Madden 760-529-2400

Sacramental Preparation Debbie Fredette 760-758-4100 x110

RCIA Kathleen Bell 760-809-6526

Moms & Kids Lia Haubert 760-758-4100 x100

..... Natalia Sada 760-758-4100 x100

..... Estelle Eral 760-758-4100 x100

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Young Adults Matt Franklin 760-758-4100 x161

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Centering Prayer Mary Williams 760-758-4100 x100

Men's Fellowship Dcn. John Fredette 760-758-4100 x104

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Bereavement Ministry Sr. Maureen Brown 760-758-4100 x131

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Music Ministry Douglas Lynn 760-758-4100 x140

Sacristans—Altar Guild Diana Diaz 760-758-7870

Sacristans—Altar Linens Anna Meyers 760-727-4998

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Bringing the Celebration Home Jen Frost 858-692-7438

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Marriage Preparation Rev. Michael Ratajczak 760-758-4100 x100

Widows & Widowers of North County Carol Kope 760-726-0533

Parish Organizations & Events Patrick Attardo 760-940-1505

Annual Gala Chris Smith 760-758-4100 x120

Historian/Archives Brandon Oswald 760-845-5450

Knights of Columbus John Murphy 760-497-6117

Social Activities Henny Jocelyn 760-758-4100 x100

Spirited Seniors Jim & Marilyn Day 760-509-4545

Treasures Rummage Sale Available 760-758-4100 x120

Walking Ministry Diane Pal 760-815-2519

Women's Guild Kathy Gerhard 760-732-5951

Social Ministries Stacey & Morgan Espe 760-224-2699

Blood Drive Stacey & Morgan Espe 760-224-2699

Brother Benno's Collection Dcn. Tom Goeltz 760-727-8442

Brother Benno's Kitchen Server George Jones 760-940-9288

Christmas Angel Ministry Kevin & Lisa Seufert 760-732-5965

CPR/AED Classes Phil Goscienski 760-732-1414

Culture of Life Jane Kelleher 760-822-7041

Disability Facilitation Ann Eriksson 760-305-9985

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Mental Health Ministry Chair: Tim Keane 760-758-2717

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Project Linus Mary Coxon 760-599-8760

Social Justice Committee Henri Black 760-758-8137

Interfaith Center for Worker Justice

..... Joyce Meehan 760-304-0373

San Diego Organizing Project (SDOP)

..... Sr. Maureen Brown 760-758-4100 x131

Solutions for Change Kevin & Lyn Leahy 760-643-0872

Family Shoe Ministry Rick & Heidi Madden 760-470-4998

St. Bonaventure Mission Dcn. Tom Goeltz 760-727-8442

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General Support Henny Jocelyn 760-758-4100 x100

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Annual Catholic Appeal Lorraine Doering 760-758-4100 x102

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Parish Membership Valerie Thompson 760-630-1703

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Scrip Sales Andrea Sweeney 760-216-6389

..... Lisa Seufert 760-732-5965

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Welcome Ministry Chris Smith 760-758-4100 x120

Finance Council

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Budget Review Don Eppich 760-744-8705

Financial Liaison Doug D'Agrosa 760-941-6800

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Building & Maintenance Paul Ibbetson 760-734-1051

Parish Emergency Preparedness Mario Cugini 760-726-2932

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Brian Leahy, Director of Construction 760-758-4100 x152 brianl@stmoside.org

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San Diego Bishop Calls Trump Executive Orders “A Shameful Moment of Abandonment that Repudiates Our National Heritage”

January 29, 2017

SAN DIEGO – Bishop Robert McElroy, head of the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego, issued a statement this afternoon critical of a controversial executive order signed by President Trump restricting the flow of travelers and refugees into the United States, as well as creating a new religious test for entry.



For the Catholic community, the Gospel mandate to “welcome the stranger” is a searing responsibility, not only in our personal lives, but also in guiding our efforts to create a just society in a world filled with suffering and turmoil.

“For this reason, the historic identity of the United States as a safe haven for refugees fleeing war and persecution is for American Catholics both a source of justifiable pride and an unswerving religious commitment, even as we recognize that at shameful moments in our national history prejudice, fear and ignorance have led our country to abandon that identity.

“This week is just such a shameful moment of abandonment for the United States.

“The executive order signed by President Trump on Friday professes to be a necessary step in securing the safety of Americans. But the design of the order—and its chaotic implementation—unmask the reality that this Presidential order arose not from a careful effort to balance the needs of security with our commitment to welcome refugees amidst the greatest refugee crisis since World War II. Rather, this executive order is the introduction into law of campaign sloganeering rooted in xenophobia and religious prejudice. Its devastating consequences are already apparent for those suffering most in our world, for our standing among nations, and for the imperative of rebuilding unity within our country rather than tearing us further apart.

“This week the Statue of Liberty lowered its torch in a presidential action which repudiates our national heritage and ignores the reality that Our Lord and the Holy Family were themselves Middle Eastern refugees fleeing government oppression. We cannot and will not stand silent.”

The Diocese of San Diego runs the length of California’s border with Mexico and serves more than 1.3 million Catholics in San Diego and Imperial Counties. It includes 98 parishes, 48 elementary and secondary schools, and various social service and family support organizations throughout the region. It also includes five historic sites, the most well known of which is the Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá, the first mission established in California by St. Junipero Serra in 1769.

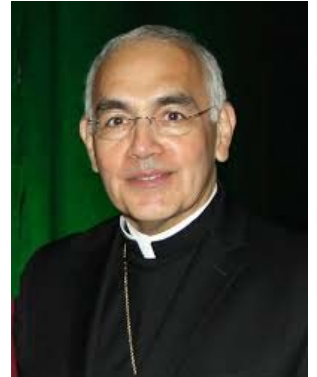


UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

USCCB Committee on Migration Chair Strongly Opposes Executive Order Because It Harms Vulnerable Refugee and Immigrant Families

January 27, 2017

WASHINGTON—President Donald J. Trump issued today an Executive Order addressing the U.S. refugee admissions program and migration to the United States, generally. The executive order virtually shuts down the refugee admissions program for 120 days, reduces the number of refugees to be admitted to the United States this year from 110,000 to 50,000 individuals, and indefinitely suspends the resettlement of Syrian refugees. In addition, it prioritizes religious minorities suffering from religious persecution, thereby deprioritizing all other persons fleeing persecution; calls for a temporary bar on admission to the United States from a number of countries of particular concern (all Muslim majority); and imposes a yet-to-be determined new vetting process for all persons seeking entry to the United States.



Regarding the Executive Order's halt and reduction of admissions, Bishop Joe S. Vásquez of Austin, Texas, chairman of the Committee on Migration, stated:

"We strongly disagree with the Executive Order's halting refugee admissions. We believe that now more than ever, welcoming newcomers and refugees is an act of love and hope. We will continue to engage the new administration, as we have all administrations for the duration of the current refugee program, now almost forty years. We will work vigorously to ensure that refugees are humanely welcomed in collaboration with Catholic Charities without sacrificing our security or our core values as Americans, and to ensure that families may be reunified with their loved ones."

Regarding the Executive Order's ban on Syrian refugees, the prioritization of religious minorities suffering from religious persecution, Bishop Vásquez added:

"The United States has long provided leadership in resettling refugees. We believe in assisting all those who are vulnerable and fleeing persecution, regardless of their religion. This includes Christians, as well as Yazidis and Shia Muslims from Syria, Rohingyas from Burma, and other religious minorities. However, we need to protect all our brothers and sisters of all faiths, including Muslims, who have lost family, home, and country. They are children of God and are entitled to be treated with human dignity. We believe that by helping to resettle the most vulnerable, we are living out our Christian faith as Jesus has challenged us to do."

Moving forward after the announcement, Bishop Vásquez concluded:

"Today, more than 65 million people around the world are forcibly displaced from their homes. Given this extraordinary level of suffering, the U.S. Catholic Bishops will redouble their support for, and efforts to protect, all who flee persecution and violence, as just one part of the perennial and global work of the Church in this area of concern."



If you wish to take action, visit the USCCB Justice for Immigrants site below, where you will find links to send a message to President Trump and your representatives to express your concern:

<http://tinyurl.com/jcja5mx>

Statement of Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, on the Executive Order on Refugees and Migrants

January 29, 2017

This weekend proved to be a dark moment in U.S. history. The executive order to turn away refugees and to close our nation to those, particularly Muslims, fleeing violence, oppression, and persecution is contrary to both Catholic and American values. Have we not repeated the disastrous decisions of those in the past who turned away other people fleeing violence, leaving certain ethnicities and religions marginalized and excluded? We Catholics know that history well, for, like others, we have been on the other side of such decisions.

These actions impose a sweeping and immediate halt on migrants and refugees from several countries, people who are suffering, fleeing for their lives. Their design and implementation have been rushed, chaotic, cruel, and oblivious to the realities that will produce enduring security for the United States. They have left people holding valid visas and other proper documents detained in our airports, sent back to the places some were fleeing or not allowed to board planes headed here. Only at the eleventh hour did a federal judge intervene to suspend this unjust action.

We are told this is not the “Muslim ban” that had been proposed during the presidential campaign, but these actions focus on Muslim-majority countries. They make an exception for Christians and non-Muslim minorities, but not for Muslims refugees fleeing for their lives. Ironically, this ban does not include the home country of 15 of the 19 September 11 hijackers. Yet, people from Iraq, even those who assisted our military in a destructive war, are excluded.

The United States has a long history of welcoming refugees who are fleeing for their lives and Catholic organizations have helped to resettle many families, men, women, and children, from around the globe. Many of our priests, religious, and laypeople have accompanied newcomers precisely to assist them in this process. Because of our history of aiding in refugee and migrant settlement for decades, we know the very lengthy and thorough vetting process they must face before they are admitted to our country. We have seen initial fear turn into a generous willingness of local communities to accept and integrate refugees. Here in Chicago generations of migrants have found a new home. We are better for it...

The world is watching as we abandon our commitments to American values. These actions give aid and comfort to those who would destroy our way of life. They lower our estimation in the eyes of the many peoples who want to know America as a defender of human rights and religious liberty, not a nation that targets religious populations and then shuts its doors on them.

It is time to put aside fear and join together to recover who we are and what we represent to a world badly in need of hope and solidarity. “If we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities.” Pope Francis issued these challenging words to Congress in 2015, and followed with a warning that should haunt us as we come to terms with the events of the weekend: “The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us.”



Statement of Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., On Wednesday's Executive Actions on Immigration

January 27, 2017

I understand the desire for every American to be assured of safe borders and freedom from terrorism. The federal government should continue a prudent policy aimed at protecting citizens.

I also understand and heed the call of God, who through Moses told the people of Israel: “You shall not oppress an alien; you well know how it feels to be an alien, since you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt” (Ex 23:9). Jesus asks His disciples to go further, calling on us to recognize Him in the stranger: “Whatsoever you did to the least of my brothers, you did to me” (Mt. 25:40).

Wednesday's Executive Actions do not show the United States to be an open and welcoming nation. They are the opposite of what it means to be an American.

Closing borders and building walls are not rational acts. Mass detentions and wholesale deportation benefit no one; such inhuman policies destroy families and communities.

In fact, threatening the so-called “sanctuary cities” with the withdrawal of federal funding for vital services such as healthcare, education, and transportation will not reduce immigration. It only will harm all good people in those communities.

I am the grandson of immigrants and was raised in a multicultural neighborhood in southwest Detroit. Throughout my life as a priest and bishop in the United States, I have lived and worked in communities that were enriched by people of many nationalities, languages, and faiths. Those communities were strong, hard-working, law-abiding, and filled with affection for this nation and its people.

Here in Newark, we are in the final steps of preparing to welcome 51 refugees from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is only the latest group of people whom Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese has helped to resettle during the past 40 years. This current group of refugees has waited years for this moment and already has been cleared by the federal government...

They have complied with all of the stringent requirements of a vetting process that is coordinated by the Department of Homeland Security. Catholic Charities, assisted by parishes and parishioners of the Archdiocese, will help them establish homes, jobs and new lives so that they can contribute positively to life in northern New Jersey. When this group is settled, we hope to welcome others.

This nation has a long and rich history of welcoming those who have sought refuge because of oppression or fear of death. The Acadians, French, Irish, Germans, Italians, Poles, Hungarians, Jews and Vietnamese are just a few of the many groups over the past 260 years whom we have welcomed and helped to find a better, safer life for themselves and their children in America.

Even when such groups were met by irrational fear, prejudice and persecution, the signature benevolence of the United States of America eventually triumphed.

That confident kindness is what has made, and will continue to make, America great.



My Journey with Roe v. Wade— Personal Reflections

—Rev. Michael Ratajczak

This reflection was first given on Sunday, January 21, 2001, at Santa Sophia Parish in Spring Valley, California, to mark the 28th anniversary of “Roe v. Wade”—the Supreme Court Decision which legalized abortion in the United States.

It was updated and included in the St. Thomas More Parish Bulletin on January 22, 2006, to mark the 33rd anniversary of “Roe v. Wade and on January 23, 2011, marking the 38th anniversary.

It has once again been updated this year to mark “Roe v. Wade’s” 44th anniversary.



Today, I want to take time to share with you my own journey in regard to the Supreme Court Decision, “Roe v. Wade,” which legalized abortion in this country on January 22, 1973.

This Supreme Court Decision has been and continues to be one of the most divisive and political issues we have faced as a nation.

When I just say the word “abortion,” you can feel the room split. There are those who sit on the edge of their seats to listen, and those who immediately tune out once the word “abortion” is mentioned.

All of us have been in conversations with others when the word “abortion” surfaces. You can immediately feel the participants’ temperatures rise, their voices become louder and more passionate, and the air is soon filled with acrimony.

I invite you today to walk with me through this very personal sharing of my journey with “Roe v. Wade.” I do this today as one way of inviting you to revisit the abortion question and to ask yourself—“Where am I on this issue? After 44 years, have I taken a position on one side or the other? Have I ever challenged myself to deal with this issue; not only on a personal level, but in terms of what this issue means to us as a society and as a Church? How does the abortion issue fit in with my thinking in terms of other life

issues?” and “Are my views consistent with Church Teaching? If not, why not?”

“Roe v. Wade” became the law of the land 44 years ago in January of 1973. I began my ministry on behalf of the Church in November 1973, when I was ordained a deacon. I was a transitional deacon until my ordination as a priest in January 1975.

“Roe v. Wade” and my ministry both had its beginning in the same year. My entire ministry has been in the context of abortion being legal by government standards and immoral and sinful by Church standards.

How did I view abortion when it was first legalized? How did I begin to deal with it in the context of my ministry?

I have always considered abortion as sin, as immoral, as the wrong choice for people to make. But I was not very passionate in terms of reversing the law. In the early years, my response was, “If you don’t believe in abortion, don’t have one; don’t participate in the decision making that leads to one; if it is a part of your work environment, say ‘no’ to it.”

My thinking and response was on a personal “one-to-one” level, without seeing the necessity to reverse the law of the land. Abortion would be personal, occasional, and would not have any great effect on the mores of our society.



As I reflect on my thinking, I believe that I thought this way for two main reasons:

1. concern for the individual woman, and
2. an uncertainty about when life actually began, along with the question of when does the fetus become a separate entity from the woman, the mother.

In those days, in regard to the law, I would try to imagine myself being a woman and, for whatever reasons, finding myself with an unwanted pregnancy. Would I want anyone else but myself, ultimately, to make a decision about what to do with my body?

If I found myself pregnant, would I want others making decisions for me about my pregnancy, deciding for me how my future would be?

And who are those “others” that are making those decisions that are affecting my life? In the 1970s, what was the gender of the majority of people who created legislation, who strongly influenced the mores, the customs, and the traditions of society? That gender majority was, and still is to a lesser degree today, male. It was so easy then, and still is, again hopefully to a lesser degree today, for men to tell women what to do, how to do it, and to know their place. Men are in charge. Men will make the decisions.

So, I found myself being concerned more about the individual woman than about the life in her womb. And I believe that I did so because of the lack of gender equality that I experienced in society and in the Church. “Roe v. Wade” was one way of giving greater leverage to women in their struggle for equality in our society and in our Church.

The second influential factor in making me less passionate about reversing the law was an uncertainty about when life began in the womb. At what point did the embryo, the fetus, become an unborn child and become a separate entity from the mother?

At what point, did the argument, “It is my body and I have the right of control over my body,” lose its validity?

In the 1970s, those issues were not firmly decided. There was vagueness. Arguments about whether the

embryo, the fetus, was considered a fully human person were presented from a variety of perspectives, and there was not a clear understanding about when life began.

Over the years though, I saw myself becoming more concerned about the legality and the morality of “Roe v. Wade.”



Week 6

What brought this about? First and foremost was the scientific and medical technology and knowledge that we have acquired about life in the womb. Today there is no question that what is in the womb of the mother is life, a separate and entirely different human being from the mother. And it can not be pinpointed as to when that “differentness” begins to happen. It is now easy and logical to conclude that a new and entirely different human being is created and God’s breath, the soul, is infused at the moment of conception.

In recent years, as medical advances continue, as we experience more sophisticated sonogram equipment and see pictures of children in the womb at very early stages of development; as we do fetal surgery, surgery in the womb; as courts convict people for intent to kill an unborn child; have you noticed how our language has changed?

We talk less and less of embryos and fetuses. We use the language of pre-born and unborn children.

It has become fact, not belief, that life in the womb is an entirely different human being from the mother and that the only logical point for the beginning of life is at the moment of conception, the moment when man and woman, with God’s help, create new life.

In regard to the right of a woman to choose, the abortion argument over the years has shifted from “I have a right to control my body” to “Are my rights, as the woman and mother, greater than the rights of this unborn child? Do I as the mother have the right over the life of this child, or does this child have certain inalienable rights equal to my rights that are determined by society’s legal standards? Who ultimately makes the decision as to whether this unborn child comes to life outside the womb or not?”

Today it has become a very different argument. As the discussion swirls about, this debate has the voice of many more women who are anti-abortion. There are many more women in various positions of power who

influence society and the Church, who help to create legislation, who are a part of the on-going dialogue of what is necessary to create and maintain a healthy society. (As a side note, I admit that there is still not complete gender equality in society or in the Church. We have come a long way, but we still have a long way to go.)

Because of this greater participation in the ongoing dialogue of society and Church, and because there is a greater degree of gender equality, women, I believe, feel somewhat safer and freer to examine the question of life in the womb and to share decision making about the unborn child's future with society through legislative decisions.

I hope you see the first link that I am trying to make regarding what it means to be pro-life. Pro-life is not just anti-abortion. Pro-life is also about gender equality at all levels, in all places in society, and in the Church. When there is a commitment to gender equality, and when there is gender equality, I believe there will be fewer abortions as women feel a greater ability to participate in creating a healthier society and a healthier Church.

Once I came to the realization and conclusion that life in the womb is a unique and completely separate human being from the mother, and that life begins at the moment of conception, I began to struggle with the question of, "Does the unborn child have rights; if so, what kind of rights, and do these rights need to be protected, and how do these rights weigh in when compared to the rights of the mother?"

My initial response to those questions was, again, not to reverse the law, but to be more passionate and vocal about the abortion issue and to work for change on a "one-to-one" level.

One of the most thought-provoking comments that came out of the presidential campaign of 2000 came from the then-Governor George W. Bush who said, "It is not so much about making abortion illegal as it is about making it unthinkable."

I resonated with that phrase because it summed up my personal belief that was operative for a number of years: "Leave the 'Roe v. Wade' decision alone and work to create a climate of life in regard to all social

issues and to make sure that the abortion issue is viewed in the context of other life issues."

I have worked very hard and continue to do what I can in my ministry to create a "Culture of Life" in which abortion becomes unthinkable. I have faithfully attempted to do this in my "one-to-one" ministry and in my efforts on a Parish-wide basis in all the Parishes in which I have served.

This attitude worked for a while, but I continued to be nagged by the question of the unborn child and his/her rights. What happens to all these human beings who cannot speak for themselves while we, as a society, are busy getting our "Culture of Life" act together?

Are they society's sacrifice? Or do we, if we believe that they are pre-born human beings, protect them with the rights that we grant born children and adults.

And, indeed, we grant even greater rights to infants and children than to adults because infants and children are more vulnerable. Do we not logically conclude that pre-born children should have those same rights?

It is one thing to try to persuade people to live within a "Culture of Life" and it is another to ensure that "Culture of Life" rights are guaranteed for everyone, especially the weak, the vulnerable, the defenseless.

What finally moved me to decide that we not only must create a "Culture of Life" through persuasion, but

at the same time, we must create, enact and enforce laws that protect all human beings whether born or pre-born was my remembrance of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and especially the witness of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Could you imagine if that movement was only about persuasion? Could you imagine Rev. King saying, "Let us try to convince white people that they shouldn't be prejudiced toward black people; let us try to convince them that separate is not equal; let us point out all the

institutionalized inequalities and simply pray for change?"

Where would we be today? Not very far from the late 1950s and 1960s, I believe!

It was the legislation that was created, enacted, and enforced that made people change behavior and hopefully, in time, change attitudes and feelings.



Week 20

We see a great change today in 2017, and it is because of legislation and moral persuasion!

Moral persuasion alone, unfortunately, would not have begun to bring discrimination to an end. If we believe in a “Culture of Life,” we must be willing to not only change attitudes, but we must be willing to create legislation that reflects our beliefs.

We still see many forms of subtle and not so subtle discrimination that continue some 50 years later even though legislation is in place. The reason for that, in my opinion, is because we, as society and as a Church, need to do more in the way of moral persuasion! Discrimination based on religion, skin color, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, mental and physical disabilities, economic and academic abilities must be loudly denounced. Where legislation is still needed, it must be enacted and enforced. These issues are, indeed, pro-life issues. If we want to protect life in the womb, we must be sincere and tireless in our efforts to protect life out of the womb.

We must make those connections. Otherwise our efforts to be anti-abortion are meaningless!

In 2016, we concluded a long and very difficult presidential campaign. As Catholics, we must keep in mind that neither Hillary Clinton nor Donald Trump and neither party, the Democrats nor the Republicans, are fully pro-life in the Catholic understanding.

In creating a “Culture of Life,” and in being Catholic, when we are pro-abortion and anti-death penalty; when we are anti-abortion and pro-death penalty; when we turn a deaf ear to a variety of discriminations; when we care not about the poor and the recently arrived in our society; when we see ourselves in isolation from other peoples and countries; when we are spending scarce resources on building walls instead of bridges, we are not consistent in our Catholic beliefs. We must be willing to make the connections!

This consistency is called the “Seamless Garment Ethic.” The phrase was coined by the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago. The phrase alludes to the event during Jesus’ crucifixion, his act of solidarity with the sufferings of Creation:

“When the soldiers had crucified Jesus they took his garment and made four parts, one for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was without seam, woven from top to bottom; so they said to one another, ‘Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be’” (John 19: 23-24).

The seamless garment ethic makes the same point as the Gospel story: the fabric of God’s Creation is desecrated when we tear it, gamble over it, or in any sense lay claims of ownership upon any part of it. This ethic involves an opposition to abortion, sexism, discrimination, warfare, the use of nuclear arms, the death penalty, economic deprivation, and the active killing of the sick and disabled. Just as much, the ethic calls us to create positive alternatives to these violent practices.

If I am to be pro-life, I must be consistent. I must be willing to wear the seamless garment. I must be pro-life in all places and at all times—from womb to tomb. I must work to create the “Culture of Life” not only through moral persuasion, but I must also work to create legislation that institutionalizes the “Culture of Life” beliefs. It is not “either/or.” It is “both/and”!

Thank you for allowing me to share my personal story with you. I pray that my sharing will help you in your struggles with the variety of life issues.

It is time that we stop pointing fingers at one another, and arguing with each other about whom is more pro-life. The challenge for each of us is to look into our hearts and ask ourselves: “How well am I wearing the seamless garment of Christ”?

Fr. Mike



XLT

OCEANSIDE

F E B R U A R Y 6

6:30 - DINNER
7:15 - XLT

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Worship Leader
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