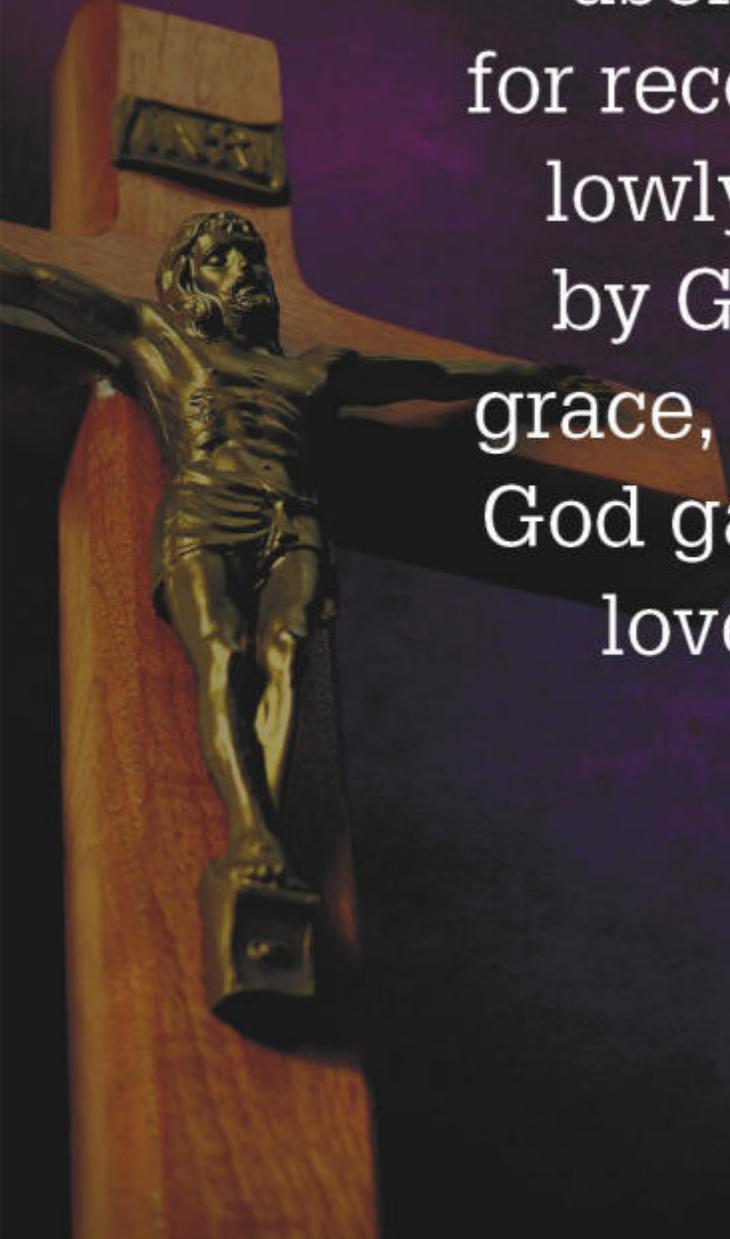




THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT  
FEBRUARY 21, 2021



Lent is not a time for  
useless sermons, but  
for recognizing that our  
lowly ashes are loved  
by God. It is a time of  
grace, a time for letting  
God gaze upon us with  
love and in this way  
*change our lives.*

— Pope Francis, February 26, 2020



Getty Images

2540 San Diego Avenue, San Diego, CA 92110  
(619) 295-4141

[www.immaculate-conception-sandiego.org](http://www.immaculate-conception-sandiego.org) — [parish@immaculate-conception-sandiego.org](mailto:parish@immaculate-conception-sandiego.org)

**Mass Intentions**

**Sat., Feb. 20 - First Sunday of Lent - Vigil**  
5:15 †Ron Rowan

**Sun., Feb. 21 - First Sunday of Lent**  
8:30 - †Diane G. Anderson  
10:00 - The Spera Family, SI  
11:30 - People of Immaculate Conception

**Mon., Feb. 22 - The Chair of St. Peter the Apostle**  
George Cruz, SI

**Tues., Feb.23 - Lenten Weekday**  
Priest's Intentions

**Wed., Feb. 24 - Lenten Weekday**  
Ditas Ibarra, SI

**Thurs., Feb. 25- Lenten Weekday**  
Ian Briones, SI

**Fri., Feb. 26 - Lenten Weekday**  
Paz Hyner, SI

**Sat., Feb. 27 - Lenten Weekday**  
8:00 Shirley Pearson, SI

If you wish to request a Mass intention for family member or friend, contact the parish office.

**Daily Readings**

Monday: 1 PT 5:1-4, MT 16:13-19

Tuesday: IS 55:10-11, MT 6:7-15

Wednesday: JON 3:1-10, LK 11:29-32

Thursday: EST C:12, 14-16, 23-25; MT 7:7-12

Friday: EZ 18:21-28; MT 5:20-26

Saturday: DT 26:16-19, MT 5:43-48

Sunday: GN 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-19; ROM 8:31b-34, MK 9:2-10

**Pray for Our Sick**

Joane Anderson, Rev. James Boyd, Cosmo & Joan Busalacchi, Dominic Castagnola, Reginald Custodio, Joanne Daleo, Michael Denny, Dawn Desimone, Adela Diaz, Adele Dunne, Arline Fisch, Julie Fish, Ardell Haskins, Ditas Ibarra, Shirley Ilog, Donna Cruz Jones, Ricardo Hernandez, Olivia Ingram, Ardith Moore, Grace Mulvanity, Stephanie Ng, Ann Orwig, Peter Salmon, Anyssa Sanchez, Tom Sapien, Crystal Spera, Nancy Stodgell, Rita Tarango, Linda Thompson, Marie Whitman, Barbara Wingler.

Mass Schedule

Weekdays: Monday thru Saturday, 8:00 AM

Sunday Masses

Saturday Vigil: 5:15 PM

Sunday: 8:30 AM\*, 10:00 AM (outdoors), 11:30 AM

\*live-streamed & open to attendees

Holy Day Masses: To be announced.

Reconciliation: After weekday morning Mass and by appointment.

Baptisms: By appointment only. Please contact Deacon Robert Fitzmorris to make arrangements.

Weddings: By appointment only. Arrangements must be made at least one year in advance. Please contact the parish office.

Funerals: For arrangements, please call the parish.  
Parish Office: 619-295-4141

**RECONCILIATION**

Confessions may be heard on Sundays between 9:15 a.m. and 9:45 a.m. See one of the ushers who will escort you to the priest. One can also ask the priest for confession after the weekday morning Mass.

Deacon Robert Fitzmorris, Parish Administrator  
rfitzmorris@sandiegodeacon.com  
619-997-9063

Fr. Garrett Galvin, OFM, Liaison to the Parish  
Fr. Joseph Chinnici, OFM, in residence  
Fr. Vincent Mesi, OFM  
Parish email:  
parish@immaculate-conception-sandiego.org

**WELCOME TO IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH**

**GUIDELINES FOR ALL – MAXIMUM OF 60 PERSONS IN THE CHURCH**

1. Face mask covering your nose and your mouth is required for all, age two and above, along with temperature check.
2. Use hand sanitizer before entering the church and before receiving communion.
3. Maintain social distance at all times.
4. Family members living in the same household may sit together in one pew.
5. Persons who do not feel well and those who may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 should not attend Mass.
6. Enter/Exit the church through the side door facing the courtyard.

**DURING MASS:**

1. Do not hold hands for the Lord's Prayer.
2. The exchange of the Sign of Peace is suspended at all Masses. A simple nod or appropriate wave of the hand is acceptable.
3. Holy Communion will be distributed under the form of consecrated bread alone and only in the hand.
4. Holy Communion will be distributed at the end of Mass, after the blessing.
5. For communion, proceed to the left side of the church, use hand sanitizer, and proceed to the front.
6. No congregational singing, no Gloria, and no choir is permitted.

**AFTER MASS:**

1. Donations may be dropped in the designated box near the side entrance of the church.
2. Bulletins may be picked up from the small table by the exit.
3. Please do not socialize in the courtyard or the church hall as this may hinder the entrance of those attending the next Mass.
4. No coffee or donuts will be served in the hall.



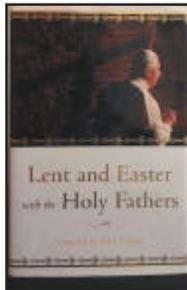
Serra Gifts...

**STORE HOURS**  
 Thursday & Friday 1:30-4:30 pm  
 Saturday 11 am - 5:00 pm  
 Sunday 11 am - 5:00 pm

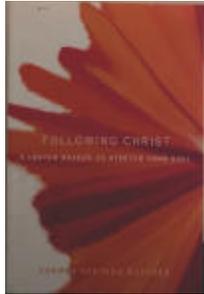
**Lenten Reading**



The Magnificat Lenten Companion



Lent and Easter with the Holy Father



Following Christ

These books are available in the gift shop now.

Interested in volunteering? Contact Linda at the gift shop.



**2021 ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL  
 PARISH GOAL: \$10,000.00**

Letters with donation form have been mailed to parishioners. Please consider participating in the appeal. Your contribution, no matter how small, helps our diocese support Catholic schools, faith formation programs, Catholic Charities, and priestly formation.

Please make your check payable to **Diocese of San Diego**. If you plan on using a credit card for your donation, please visit [giving.sdatholic.org](http://giving.sdatholic.org).

You may drop off your donation form and check/cash in the collection box after Mass or visit the parish office (Monday thru Friday).

**LIVE STREAM MASS**

The Church of the Immaculate Conception is providing live stream and recordings of the live streams in two ways.

1) On the [Franciscan School of Theology on the You Tube Channel called FST EDU1](#). During this Covid-19 Shelter in Place period please visit the You Tube Channel to see all opportunities for viewing.

2) On the parish website [www.immaculate-conception-sandiego.org](http://www.immaculate-conception-sandiego.org). Simply click on the photo (shown above).

Updated equipment has been installed and the live stream has high quality picture and sound.

Other Franciscan lectures are available on the You Tube Channel called FST EDU1.



**Vaccinate to Protect Health of Yourself and Your Community**

In partnership with the Catholic health systems and Catholic Charities throughout the Golden State, the Catholic Bishops of California urge all Californians to receive a vaccination to prevent the continued spread of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic that has claimed the lives of more than two million people worldwide.

As the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has said, the vaccines now available and offered (Pfizer and Moderna) and those currently in the testing approval/process (AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson) are morally permissible and can be used in good conscience.

Beyond simply protecting their own health and safety, Catholics also have an obligation to protect their family, friends, and community by vaccinating as soon as feasible in accordance with public health guidelines and protocols in their area. One should always consult with their doctor regarding any personal medical concerns.

**Genuflecting & Kneeling**

Question:

**Does it matter what leg you kneel on when genuflecting?**

Answer:

Genuflection is an act of devotion that literally means “to bend the knee.” For many Catholics, it’s an almost automatic gesture that we perform before entering our pew or row of seats at Mass. But, like many of the symbols and gestures of our faith tradition, genuflecting can also be an invitation for deeper reflection.

The practice of “bending the knee” is an ancient way of recognizing the presence of someone greater than we are. It has been said that the practice dates back to the time of Alexander the Great, but it became a common part of etiquette in the royal courts of the Middle Ages. From throne rooms and palaces, it was a small step to genuflecting, becoming part of the devotional lives of Christians who used this secular gesture as a way of recognizing the presence of the One who is King of Kings, especially in the Eucharist. In our tradition, although many have been taught or prefer to genuflect by placing their right knee on the ground, there is no prescribed way to genuflect. This is especially important to keep in mind if physical limitations or age make certain movements difficult for us.

Today, Catholics are asked to genuflect in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament (whether in the tabernacle or exposed on the altar during eucharistic adoration). So, while it has become second nature to genuflect before entering your seat in church, we should pay attention to where the Blessed Sacrament is kept in each church or chapel we visit, and genuflect in the direction of the tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is kept. In churches or chapels in which the tabernacle is in a separate space, we are invited to simply bow toward the altar.

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**HELP US CONNECT WITH YOU**

Please send an email to the parish to ensure you are able to receive emails with notices such as cancelled Masses, special events, etc. Your info is not shared.

Also be sure we have your phone number in our database. Recently, we have been unable to reach some of you regarding changes to the Mass schedule because we have no email or phone number for you.

**Annual Catholic Appeal:  
Assistance for Catholic Education**

Our diocese includes a collaborative network of 47 outstanding Catholic schools, educating nearly 13,000 students each year. Most of our schools are in great shape, while other schools truly need our support. The Annual Catholic Appeal currently provides both a diocesan-wide tuition assistance program and an institutional support program to assist schools in need, impacting the lives of thousands of students.

Since its inception many years ago, the Diocese of San Diego & Imperial Counties Tuition Assistance Program has partnered to assist hundreds of families desirous of a Catholic education for their children who otherwise could not afford it. The Annual Catholic Appeal make this possible. Over the past ten years with the support of the Annual Catholic Appeal, Catholic schools in San Diego have received institutional support grants totaling more than five million dollars! These grants help to keep the vital mission of Catholic education both accessible and affordable for children of families living in neighborhoods that have been the most impacted by economic challenges. “Our entire community will always be grateful for the support we receive from the Annual Catholic Appeal,” said Gina Olsen, principal of St. Rita School. “As an urban school with financial pressures, it helps us support our teachers and, without it, our doors would be closed.”

Bishop McElroy understands the value and mission of our local Catholic schools. He said, “Our Catholic schools provide the witness to God’s presence in the world which is the foundation for developing a strong personal relationship with God, an appreciation for the wonders of creation which lie all around us, the joy of community and the pursuit of academic and personal excellence.”

Our Response as Stewards

**REFLECT** — On the many gifts you have received from God, including your financial blessings.

**PRAY** — About how God wants you to use the gifts He has given you.

**RESPOND** — By supporting the mission. You can give at your parish or online at [giving.sdatholic.org](http://giving.sdatholic.org).

**COURTYARD BRICKS**

Customized Brick and Bench tops are available by order at the Parish Office or on the parish website. Proceeds from this fundraiser benefit the Immaculate Conception Building Maintenance Fund.



**GOSPEL MEDITATION - ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE**

**February 21, 2021**  
**1st Sunday of Lent**

St. Oscar Romero said, "Aspire not to have more, but to be more." These powerful words provide the perfect framework for a conversion oriented Lenten experience. God is giving us this Lenten sign to stop being concerned about what you have and focus on who you are. This requires that we create a desert space and listen more attentively for God to reveal His presence. It is all so wonderfully simple on the one hand and so incredibly challenging on the other. The message is simple: love God, neighbor, and self. Those simple words make great sense, but we struggle translating them into reality. Our attachments, compulsions, obsessions, addictions, routines, and busyness all anchor us to the "idol of the self," keeping us mired in our compulsive need for self-aggrandizement. It's not about us!

God vowed, long ago, to nurture, sustain and protect the relationship He has with His people. He called us into being, nurtures us in being, and sustains us in being. Without the Loving Divine Presence, all life would cease. Once we slow down a bit and clear away some of the clutter, we can see how the journey of our life is unfolding. We can see what brings us in and out of tune with God's love and how we can better imitate God's loving fidelity in our relationship with Him. In short, we will see our myopic short sightedness and figure out how we can better share the Divine Fire within with others. Lent isn't just about giving stuff up for forty days and indulging again at Easter. We need to push things much farther and wrestle with the question of how we can be more. "Being more" means becoming more fully alive and in touch with the holiness of life and the divinity that lives in and

empowers all beings and things. It is realizing that the "quality" of our presence is crucial to being an effective witness and herald of God's unconditional love.

The illusion we have bought into causes us to believe that the wrong things and systems matter. We tirelessly fight to keep things the way they are, to return to the former ways of doing things or restore some nostalgic fantasy memory of "life in the good old days." Lent isn't about maintaining what we have or returning to something that is gone. It's about becoming something new. It's about being more focused, centered, convicted, and grounded so that we can be a person who truly loves and treasures being made in the image of God. The secret to Gospel living is not found in accumulating anything for ourselves, even merit points for heaven. Gospel living means learning how to live with less so that others can live with more. The thought of permanently giving something up makes us feel uncomfortable. Truth often does.

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Join over 1 million prayer warriors from Feb 17 - Mar 28 who have saved over 17,000 lives from abortion through their participation in 40 Days for Life, a 40-Day campaign devoted to prayer and fasting with the hopes to end abortion. We welcome you to join our 24-hour vigil at the San Diego College Avenue location, Sarah Weddington Planned Parenthood, 4575 College Ave. Sign-up at <https://www.40daysforlife.com/sandiegocollegeavenue> or contact Jacqueline Osborne (619) 892-4131, email [collegeavenue40daysforlife@gmail.com](mailto:collegeavenue40daysforlife@gmail.com) or Susan Redlinger (619) 631-8360, [susanr4life@gmail.com](mailto:susanr4life@gmail.com) to learn more!



# Living the Faith

## *PRESERVING DIGNITY IN THE HUMAN PERSON: THE STORY OF ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA*

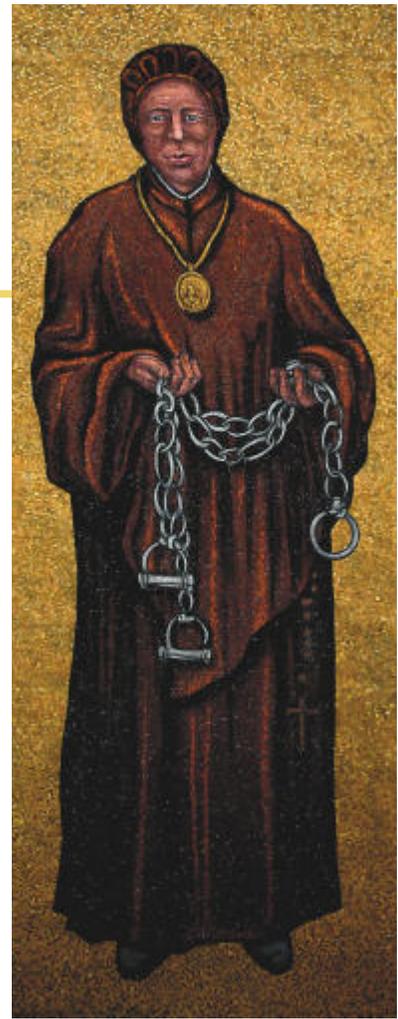
**S**t. Josephine Bakhita was born in Sudan in 1869 and enslaved as a child. Eventually she was sold to an Italian diplomat and taken to Italy, where she was later brought to freedom through the help of the Canossian Daughters of Charity. Through their guidance, she learned about God and served him faithfully until her death in 1947. In October 2000, Josephine Bakhita was canonized by St. John Paul II, at which point he noted that “in St. Josephine Bakhita we find a shining advocate of genuine emancipation. The history of her life inspires not passive acceptance but the firm resolve to work effectively to free girls and women from oppression and violence, and to return them to their dignity in the full exercise of their rights” (St. Bakhita’s Canonization Mass, October 1, 2000).



In the movie *St. Bakhita*, St. Josephine Bakhita is bought by an Italian white merchant named Federico Marin after years of being beaten and abused as an enslaved child. The cinematic depiction of the saint’s life shows that once in the Marin household, the daughter of the master, Aurora, takes a strong liking to Bakhita and chooses her as her nanny. Bakhita is treated like an outsider and accused of being wicked by other servants because of her black skin. Despite this, Bakhita proves to be generous to everyone she encounters even if they have wronged her.

Today, the feast day for St. Josephine Bakhita—February 8—is recognized as the annual day of prayer and awareness against human trafficking. Through prayer, we not only reflect on the experiences of

those that have suffered through this affront to human dignity but also comfort, strengthen, and help empower survivors. As Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, former Chairman of the Committee on Migration, has stated: “On that day, we will lift our voices loudly in prayer, hope, and love for trafficking victims and survivors. If just one person realizes from this day that they or someone they know is being trafficked, we will have made a difference.”



### *Discussion Questions:*

1. It is not always easy to help others who seem different than us. What can the Bible teach us about overcoming these prejudices based on fear?
2. How can we be more like Bakhita and work to forgive those who have victimized others and help them see a life of dignity and respect for others?
3. Sometimes we have to make sacrifices and do things we don’t like in order to help others. What are some realistic sacrifices we can make in our daily lives to help the fight against human trafficking?



The St. Josephine Bakhita introductory biography is a service of CNS-USCCB.

The second portion has been adapted from the “National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month & Day of Prayer Toolkit,” (p12, p3), digitally published by USCCB’s Migration and Refugee Services and available at [www.usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program/upload/Anti-Trafficking-Toolkit-Final-2018-2.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program/upload/Anti-Trafficking-Toolkit-Final-2018-2.pdf).

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Image: CNS photo of St. Josephine Bakhita, Trinity Dome, National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC.



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