



Adult

# ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

*"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."*

**Our Vision:** *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

## THIS SUNDAY — January 21, 2024

### “The Worst Form of Slavery”



Slavery as a sanctioned institution is, of course, something of the past that we human beings must feel ashamed of.

There has recently been a trend to revisit the parts of the history of this continent and this nation, where it was common for white people to own black slaves from Africa, as a way to increase our awareness of past injustice, in the hopes that this will prevent such unjust relationships among people to occur again.

As a counterpart, there are also those historians who have pointed out the thousands of white people who were taken as slaves, particularly by the Muslims in past centuries.

Whether white or black, the possession of one person by another is not in accordance with contemporary ethical standards, and in essence it contradicts the Christian principle of the love of neighbor as oneself.

Unfortunately, there are still people in the world that suffer modern forms of slavery, such as the sexual slavery of children, teenagers, and young adults of both sexes. These are illegal, of course, but there are still parts of the world where unscrupulous people profit from such horrible practices.

In Jesus' time slavery was a common practice. Slaves were obtained as a result of wars, or simply as a result of people not being able to pay their debts to others. There were ways of being redeemed from slavery, especially in the latter case, but not everyone was able to pay for their liberation or find a generous person who would do so for them.

In his preaching Jesus always emphasized that truth would make us free. When Jesus referred to freedom, He did not necessarily mean the state of freedom from slavery. He preached to the masses, in which there were surely a great number of servants or slaves.

Jesus was not trying to promote a slaves' revolt so that all slaves and servants would be free. He clearly went beyond the mere concept of human bondage, and though we can be sure that Jesus would have preferred that no person would treat another as their possession, He was referring mainly to our freedom from the powers of evil, sin, and death, the one that would make us free to willingly do God's will in our lives.

Trying to read what someone wrote in past centuries with the eyes of our contemporary perspective is a great mistake. This can lead to undue criticism of people who were simply the sons and daughters of their time, and did not have the means to undo the fabric of the socio-political system they lived in.

St. Paul, in his First Letter to the Corinthians talks about slaves and slavery. Some critics have called him a defender of slavery, but we must understand the role of slavery as a fundamental productive force of his time, and also what he really meant by his words, which should not simply be taken at face value.

Here is the paragraph that, if taken in a shallow way, and interpreted according to contemporary viewpoints, can lead us to a grave misunderstanding of Paul's real intentions.

“Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. Even you can gain your freedom, make use of your present condition now more than ever. For whoever was called in the Lord as a slave is a freed person belonging to the Lord, just as whoever was free when called is a slave of Christ. You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of human masters.”

Is Paul favoring the institution of slavery, as some might mistakenly infer from the beginning sentences? Or is he opposing it as could be inferred from the last sentence? Neither. Paul's main concern here is not the institution of slavery. That was taken for granted in his time. He even says, “even if you can gain your freedom”, so it seems that he thought that should always be a good goal to achieve.

But his concern here is the worst form of slavery. He is warning against becoming “slaves of human masters”, but not in a literal sense. His injunction to the new converts is to follow Christ and His liberating way of life, which is none other than the Way of Love. This is what we must all gladly and willingly become slaves for.

Christ has freed us from all false human doctrine that can lead us back to the way of fear and darkness, which is the worst form of slavery ever. Let us not be trapped by it.

Fr. Carlos E. Expósito

Readings for the Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Jeremiah 3:21-4:2 1 Corinthians 7:17-23 Psalm: 130 Mark 1:14-20

## CALENDAR

Note: We worship in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10am. Tuesday Noon Mass and Friday Morning Prayer at 10:00am are held in All Saints' St. Mary Chapel

**SUNDAY January 21 The Third Sunday after the Epiphany**

**10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church**

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

Recording of Mass available before noon at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

**Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children**

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

**Adult Christian Formation Meets** next on Sunday, January 11 at noon in the Rector's Office and the Library

**TUESDAY Noon Mass in St. Mary Chapel**

**THURSDAY Spanish Class on Thursdays, from 1pm-3pm in the Library.**

**FRIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer in St. Mary Chapel**

**SUNDAY January 28, 2024 The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany**

**10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church**

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

Recording of Mass available before noon at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

**Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children**

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

**Adult Christian Formation** Meets next on Sunday, February 11 at noon  
in the Rector's Office and the Library

### **OUR CORE VALUES:**

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally

An Anglo-Catholic Parish in the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego  
[www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)