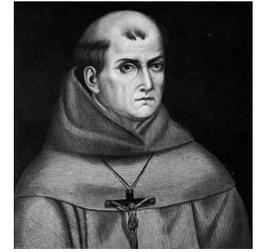




SERRA CLUB OF ORANGE COUNTY



November 2013

REGION 11

DISTRICT 127

Charter 438

NEWSLETTER

OUR MISSION IS TO FOSTER, AFFIRM AND PROMOTE VOCATION TO MINISTRY IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

FUTURE EVENTS

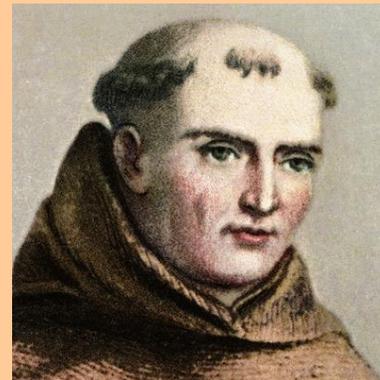
- Nov 7 – Club Meeting, Speaker: Lesa Truxaw, Director of Office of Worship @ Marywood
- Nov 21 – Club Meeting, Speaker: Rev. Michael Matthew
- Nov. 22 -24 – Western Regional Conference, Carmel
- Nov 24 – Blessed Junipero Serra 300th Birthday
- Dec 5 – Christmas Dinner. Tustin Ranch Golf Club

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Fellow Serrans,
The announcement of the reinstatement of the United States Council and of approval of a Resolution of Unity is very welcome. This was done on a historical first conference call by the International board of Serra. It may mark an end to the unfortunate dispute between Serra International (SI) and its USA Council (USAC), a dispute costly in dollars and costly to the morale of many USA Serrans. What remains to be seen is how the apparently deplorable state of finances will be repaired. We have not received any information on the proposed financial restructuring of SI as of this date.

Jerry Stauber asked if he could propose a motion at our last general meeting. Motion: We will not pay SI back dues withheld by Serra Club of Orange County during the time we were not a council. We will begin to pay SI dues again starting on October 14, 2013 when the council was reinstated. The discussion brought up the lack of services by SI during the lawsuit and the fact we would be helping pay for a lawsuit against ourselves, the USA Council. The motion was carried unanimously by the entire club present.



PRAYER TO BLESSED JUNIPERO SERRA

Blessed Junipero Serra, you served God with humble confidence on earth and because "whoever humbles himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:12), you now enjoy His beatific vision. We thank God for raising you to the rank of Blessed so that more people will be drawn near and imitate you, seek your powerful help, and in doing so, humble themselves, that they may one day be exalted with you in eternal glory.

Our Region 11 convention will be held at the Carmel Mission Inn on the weekend of November 22-24. Several members of our club are planning to attend and it is not too late to sign up. For the first time, Region 12 will be joining us (Washington and Oregon) as well as several executive board members from across the country. As a VP of USAC, I will be attending the executive committee meeting in Carmel on November 20-21 just prior to the convention and thus will miss our second club meeting this month.

Now that we are beginning to heal, we must dig in and renew our efforts to support vocations. Thank you for all you have done to support vocations here in the Diocese of Orange as members of Serra. Bishop Vann is very supportive of Serra and wishes

us to grow in the diocese so invite your friends and acquaintances to join us.

Pat Manzo, President

November Vocation Prayer: *Dear God, we ask you to inspire men and women to respond generously to your call and embrace the gift of their vocation. Bless them with the joy that comes through loving service. We pray in union with the communion of saints in the name of Jesus, your son. Amen*

Mary Brockschmidt, Vocations

VOCATIONS REPORT



Our seminarian who received the gift card for November, donated by Cathy Walton, is Joseph Huan Nguyen. Joseph is from St. Callistus Parish. He Has been at Mt. Angel Seminary and is Now on pastoral assignment at St. Timothyø.

News from the Seminarians: Deacon John Duy Nguyen writes from St. Patrickø Seminary. Deacon John is now in Theology 4. He thanks the Serrans especially for our prayers and the gift card he received. He asks that God will continue to bless us in our ministry.

Last month, our Chaplain Fr. Al invited seminarian Brandon Dang to speak at St. Ceciliaø and share his vocation story. Brandon was born in a Catholic hospital in Cerritos. At that time his mother was not practicing her faith. A few years later, the family moved to Orange County and his mother returned to the Church and joined St. Nicholas parish. Brandon and his younger brother were baptized and attended religion classes. Brandonø formative years were typical as most boys, he enjoyed playing sports and being with his friends. When he was in college, a friend invited him to go on a retreat. Then Brandon began discerning if he has a vocation to the priesthood. He prayed to the Blessed Mother to help him with his decision to enter the seminary. Brandon has completed Theology 2 at St. Patrickø Seminary and is now in his pastoral year at St. Joachimø in Costa Mesa.



Joseph Huan Nguyen

The next Priest Discernment Evening will be November 6, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. It is held at the Diocese of Orange Pastoral Center, first floor, Room 10, Christ Cathedral Campus. The purpose is to familiarize interested men in the possible call to the priesthood in the Diocese of Orange. Any questions regarding discernment, please contact Rev. John Money penny, Director of Vocations, E-mail Fr.JMoney penny@rcbo.org. Remember your day in the 31 Club and try a and attend your parish monthly day of adoration.

SUPPORT THE MSGR. JOHN SAMMON FUND

Contact Sue Silvestri 714-544-0469
The Serra Club of Orange County has contributed \$7480 to the fund.



SPEAKERS



Our speaker on October 3 was Sr. Mary Elizabeth Nelson, Vocation Director for the Sisters of St. Joseph. The St. Joseph sisterhood is all about ministry. In other words, wait to even think about retirement until you are close to 80 years young.

As a small child, she was raised in Bellflower, attending St. Bernardø church and school. There was something special about this place. At the statue of the Holy Family, Mary looked so very real to her. She was very happy there as the sisters would play with them. Life seemed very attractive. In second grade she decided òI want to be a nun.ö In eighth grade, Sr. Mary Peters approached her about discerning to become a nun. Then high school came and she met the boys. No way, I will not be a nun. But she still read about the saints and the nuns. In her senior year she taught First grade catechism. She questioned herself, ò Why



Sr. Mary Elizabeth Nelson

did I put faith in front of a boy she loved?ö Excellent question toward discernment. At age twenty, she started attending daily Mass, took some scripture classes, and helped with the youth group. The feeling of religious life returned, but she told no one.

Sr. Mary Elizabeth met, liked, and was invited to see the Holy Family Sisters convent in Signal Hill. She found it very interesting but not a place for her.

During Holy Week, Sister Mary Goretti of St. Bernard's parish invited her to the motherhouse to participate in a celebration on Holy Thursday. It was gorgeous, and a guest rabbi was present. That day Sr. Mary Goretti asked her "Would you like to be one of us?" Mary Elizabeth's response was thinking, "What? Is she psychic?"

Her friends disagreed, so they all made a bet. On her first visit, Sr. Mariana, vocation Director gave her the paperwork, of which one asked for a biography. The hardest part was having Sr. Mariana over to meet her parents. Her father disagreed. He thought that her personality would change and mom thought that she would never see her daughter again. At dinner they were polite but cold. Mary did enter religious life, but although she called her mom, her mom took twenty years to call her daughter. Her complete discernment came when she entered the novitiate.

Upon reflection, She examined her life patterns. She had a life of prayer since high school. She compared religious communities; St Joseph sisters gave her a choice of ministry, i.e. teach vs. nursing, as well as many others. She knew she chose the right Sisterhood for she needed to be true to herself.

Sharon Birchler, VP Communications

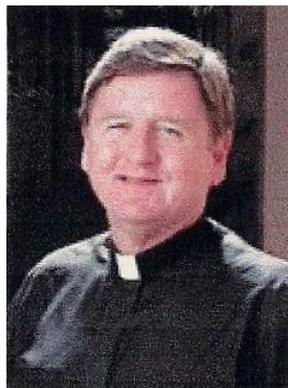
The speaker on October 17th was Msgr. John Urell. Msgr. John told some Vatican gossip via Msgr. Art Holquin. It seems that Pope Francis has put a temporary hold on naming new Monsignors. Msgr. Art said "John, we just made the cut off." Msgr. John replied, "No, you did, I was named a Monsignor in 1990."

He told us that he'd been thinking about things at his parish of St. Timothy. Everything is on solid financial footing - it's all paid for. But, is that all there is? He wants to revitalize his parish and maybe other churches in the Diocese.

Msgr. John asks these questions: How are we? Who are we? Who aren't we? What are we doing, what aren't we doing? What drives us? What is our mission and vision?

We must not be satisfied with the status quo.

To this end he held a meeting first with ten people then another later with eighteen people. All were open minded and willing to pray about it. On September 29th, Msgr. held an all-parish meeting. At this time they



Msgr. John Urell

divided influences from within the parish and outside the parish. From within, listen to each other, cite opportunities and weaknesses. Threats from without are the mega-churches. One parishioner said he goes sometimes to a mega-church to be nourished. That was a shocker. He then formed a steering committee in faith formation. How are we doing? How do we look at reality? (Do we ask our sons and daughters and grandchildren, have you ever thought about becoming a religious?) How can we improve? Msgr. Urell said that he remembered while at St. Cecilia, when Msgr. Sammon was pastor he stated that a parish must always be outgoing and ever outreaching.

The Diocese of Orange currently has 41 seminarians, one of which is from St. Timothy.

Maureen Kosinski for Sharon Birchler

DISTRICT DOINGS



A great thank you to reliable Joe DeRitis for heading up the reception for the Permanent Deacon Ordination. One of our own, Joe Sullivan, long time member of the West Orange Club, was ordained. Let's not forget his wife, Barbara, who had the same lengthy training

regimen. Congratulations to both of you.

I recently read an article that quoted the center for Applied Research in the Apostate (CARA) that pointed out that after decades of glum trends, fewer priests and fewer parishes, more men are enrolled in graduate level seminaries. (See the following article).

We as Serrans have two main jobs, first we must keep praying for young people to listen to and answer the promptings of the Spirit when they are called. Secondly, we should personally ask young people if we think they are the type of persons who will make good priests or religious. Another way of doing the asking is to point them out to your pastor or another priest so they will ask them. Over 80% of young priests say they were asked by a priest, and it is us who are in the pews where we see the young people. Let's not let our Lord down. We said we'd help him, so let's do it.

Wally Drazba, District Governor

RISE IN NUMBER OF FUTURE PRIESTS

After decades of glum trends-fewer priests, fewer parishes-the Catholic Church in the United States has

a new statistic to cheer: More men are now enrolled in graduate level seminaries, the main pipeline to the priesthood, than in nearly two decades.

This year's tally of 3,694 graduate theology students represents a 16 percent increase since 1995 and a 10 percent jump since 2005, according to Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA).

Seminary directors cite more encouragement from bishops and parishes, the draw of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and the social-Justice-minded Pope Francis.

Monsignor Craig Cox, rector of St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, Calif., said the upward trend leading to their current record class of 92 graduate seminarians began six years ago.

He also cited "a renewal of idealism," a stronger push for vocations by priests and bishops, and receding damage from the abuse crises.

Cox, who sat in on admission discussions, says his students are drawn from Southern California to Las Vegas and range in age from 22 to 45. While they are younger than previous classes, they bring a "great level of maturity" to get through a rigorous admissions process.

"Ultimately, I believe that the Spirit is at work," Cox said.

CARA's new statistical look at the church shows the seminary-to-priesthood patterns and other shifts in American Catholic life:

Annual ordinations have inched back up to the 1995 level of 551 new priests, still far below the peak of 994 in 1965.

New ordinations won't catch up to the thousands of retirements and deaths of 60's-era priests: the total number continues to slide from 58,632 priests in 1965 to 39,600 in 2013.

The number of parishes without a resident priest is still growing "up" from 3,251 in 2005 to 3,554 now.

A two-decade-long trend of parish consolidations and closings has led to fewer parishes where pastoral care is led by a deacon, religious sister or brother, or a lay person. Their number peaked in 2005 at 553 and now down to 428.

Blame demographics, says CARA's senior research Associate Mary Gautier.

"Catholics don't live where they lived 15 years ago. They've moved South and West, from urban to suburban areas and they didn't take their parishes with them," Gautier said. "The smaller, older lay-led places without a resident priest are often the first to be closed."

HALF OF WORLD'S DEACONS SERVE IN THE UNITED STATES

The number of deacons in the United States continues to grow, according to a survey conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.

Extrapolating from missing data (the Archdiocese of Chicago—the diocese with the largest number of deacons—did not respond), the survey's authors estimated that there are 14,779 active permanent deacons and 18,497 total deacons in the US.

43% of deacons are in their sixties, and 25% are 70 or older.

The statistics are encouraging," said Archbishop Robert Carlson of St. Louis. "But they also alert us to the fact many of the deacons will soon reach retirement age. This suggests a need for bishops to recruit a greater number of men to join the ranks of the permanent diaconate."

There are approximately 41,000 deacons worldwide, according to the Vatican.

SERRAN BIRTHDAYS IN NOVEMBER

Laura Alfieri

PRAY FOR OUR AILING SERRANS

