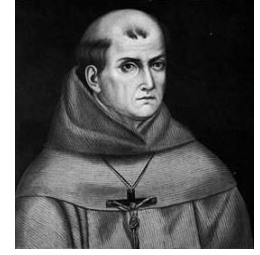




SERRA CLUB OF ORANGE COUNTY



December 2020

Region 11

District 79

Charter 438

Newsletter

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

FUTURE EVENTS

- Dec 3 - Club Meeting - via Zoom - 1pm.**
Speaker: Erin Lyons - Labouré Society - Aspirant to the Sisters of the Holy Cross
Christmas Mass and Luncheon - Cancelled
- Dec 12 - "Serra Meets" - 9am - Online speaker Program**
- Jan 7 - Club Meeting - via Zoom - 1pm.**
Speaker: Father Michael Rizzo

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

At this time of year we would normally be gathering with family and friends celebrating the holidays. However, this year, for many of us, it has to be a smaller gathering or maybe no gathering at all. Our own Serra Christmas Party Mass and Luncheon had to be cancelled. We hope that next year we will sit around tables as a Serra family praying, laughing, singing and dining once again. We are still going to get together virtually on December 3. Please join us for our speaker, Erin Lyons, as she tells us of her effort to pursue a vocation with the Sisters of the Holy Cross.



Another casualty of COVID is the Serra Rally that was to take place in January 2021 in Dallas, Texas. In place of that, however, the Serra US Council has decided to have an online speaker series every second Saturday of the month beginning December 12. It will be a meeting format with two speakers and last about 45 minutes. You can access it on your computer or by phone. I will email all of you the link and speaker details when they become available. The information can also be found in your "Always Forward" email sent to you by the US Serra Council.

While we won't have a newsletter in January, we will have a Zoom Meeting with our dear Father Mike Rizzo as our speaker. So join us by Zoom or phone on January 7 and let's pray that 2021 brings good health and peace our way.

In God's Love,
Catherine Walton
President

SPEAKER



On November 5, our Serra Club welcomed Father Nicolaus Thai as our guest speaker. He divided his presentation into two distinct parts. Beginning with a brief summary of his personal background, he then transitioned to his approach on his faith, society and culture.

Father Nicolaus aspired to have a career in Medical Physics and was working towards applying for the Ph.D. program at Purdue University when the Lord called him into the priesthood. He studied for the priesthood at St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park, CA. Father Nicolaus was selected for further study in Rome at the North American College.

Grounded deeply in a scientific background, Father Nicolaus had a strong desire to make sense of his own reasoning process. He always looks at things from an outside perspective asking himself how would "this" resonate with Common Joe.

As the pandemic affected every individual, Father Nicolaus was no exception. As a person and as a priest, he faced tough questions. How do I approach my faith without any parishioners attending Mass or holding large gatherings? How do I bring Easter to our parishioners in a meaningful way online? What is the physical impact on the spiritually deprived parishioners?

Father Nicolaus developed a strict pandemic game plan for himself. He starts his day with his prayer book and a cup of coffee. We worry because we are faithful to the Lord day by day. Things may not go as planned, but we stay grounded in the Lord. We pray with our mind and our mouth. God is everywhere, in our mind, heart, and in our mouths. The virtual Mass is not perfect, but this is what we have now. The way we celebrate Mass is to help parishioners to open their heart and spiritually receive Holy Communion. However, our intellectual formation is our personal responsibility. Father suggests that we read some good books to nourish and expand our minds. Reading something academically or spiritually is good for our intellectual spirituality. He reads a book a month. For his physical exercise, he walks around the house often, and he likes to play basketball. Father Nicolaus keeps his life simple so that his game plan works perfectly with the one that supports God's plan.

After dinner at 5 pm, Father processes his emails, reaches out to his friends, and reads good books. This month he is reading a book on Purgatory. By bedtime, he puts all the components of his day together by reciting the Rosary and praising God in Adoration.

Father Nicolaus discussed the big wind we had recently that literally blew away the overhead tents we had been using for our outdoor Masses. For a short while we were permitted to have 100 people enjoy Mass indoors; however, we are now back to no indoor Masses.

Father suggested that we offer everything up for the repose of the poor souls in Purgatory. Each of us has our own cross to bear. He reminded us of the vine and the branches. Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. Father Nicolaus closed his presentation summarizing what he does in any given day. We have real events happening all around us, but we have Jesus as our anchor. Very often, Father takes note of how he lives his life day by day knowing that one day he will be called home to give an accounting of how he lived his life. The world will pass away, but God's kingdom will not pass away. We need to grow in faith, love and hope. We have a predestined life. When we face our Maker, Father Nicolaus wants to hear us say, "God, I tried my best."

Virginia Mort

VOCATIONS REPORT



VOCATION PRAYER: Loving God, you gift us with your Son, Jesus. At his baptism, you affirmed him as your beloved Son. Jesus responded by proclaiming the Good News about your reign. Gift us all with generous hearts to further your reign here on earth. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mary Brockschmidt
Vocations

David Hoang received the gift card for November, donated by Sue Silvestri. David is in College 3 at Bishop White Seminary. He is from Holy Spirit Parish. Matthew Leung received the gift card for December, donated by Pat Manzo. Matthew is in Theology 1 at Mt. Angel Seminary. He is from San Francisco Solano Parish.

New seminarian, Zack Fier, thanked our club for the gift card and our prayers. He didn't know the Serra Club members were praying for him. He used the gift card to purchase a few things he needed. He is at St. John's Seminary. Another new seminarian, Seth London, also thanked our club for his gift card and our prayers. He hopes one day he will have the opportunity to meet our club members. Seth is at Mt. Angel Seminary. Both said they have the Serra members in their prayers.

Presently, our Diocese of Orange has twenty-three seminarians. If you go to the web-site, <http://www.ocvocations.org/seminarians>, there is a composite picture of the seminarians. When you click on a seminarian, they share their vocation story.

I want to thank our Club members for the many cards and prayers sent to me during my recovery from surgery. Receiving so many kind thoughts and prayers really helped.

Any questions regarding discernment, contact Father Brandon at 714-282-3036 or bdang@rcbo.org.



**SERRAN BIRTHDAYS IN DECEMBER
THERESE MCANDREW
AND IN JANUARY
JERRY STAUBER, CATHY WALTON,
SILVIA URIARTE AND PAT MANZO**

Editor's Note: Traditionally, there will be no newsletter in January so the contributors can enjoy the Holydays with friends and family. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.