

Serra Clubs



in partnership
with

VENTURING BSA

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Local Serra Clubs (as “Chartering Organization”); with the Grant to be administered by the **Vocations Committee of the USA Council of Serra International**; in charter agreement with the **Venturing Division of the Boy Scouts of America, Inc.** (Program source, Grant recipient)

Local Serra Clubs, USA Council of Serra International, are encouraged to form Venture Crews in Catholic High Schools to provide the resources of the Boy Scouts of America and the National Catholic Committee on Scouting for Catholic youth with an emphasis on faith development and discernment of God’s Call in their life.

Coordinated by the Vocations Committee, USA Council of Serra International, c/o Homer Radford, Chairman, 9610 E 82nd TER, Raytown, Missouri 64138, in collaboration with the Venturing Division, Boy Scouts of America, Inc., 1325 West Walnut Hill Lane, Irving, Texas 75015

Purpose of Serra International:

1. To foster and promote vocations to the ministerial priesthood in the Catholic Church as a particular vocation to service, and to support priests in their sacred ministry;
2. To encourage and affirm vocations to consecrated religious life in the Catholic Church; and
3. To assist its members to recognize and respond in their own lives to God’s call to holiness in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

Goals: The mission of Serra is to promote vocations to priesthood and consecrated life, encourage seminarians and to build the personal spirituality of Serrans.

Activity/Programs/Work of Organization:

At the local level, Serra Clubs provide regular meetings as a forum to promote the purpose and goals of Serra International, such as support for seminarians by providing stipends for their text books and supplies; recognition banquets for Priests with emphasis on major anniversaries of ordinations, recognition banquets for Sisters and Brothers with emphasis on major anniversaries of vows, host gatherings for seminarians; attend ordinations and other special events of the Diocese in support of vocations.

c.) Venturing Division of the Boy Scouts of America, Inc.

History:

Venturing is a youth development program of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women who are 14 (and have completed the eighth grade) through 20 years of age. It was started in 1998 as a young adult program for boys and girls, separate from the traditional Boy Scout program, but founded on the same values and ideals of Scouting.

Structure:

The National Venturing Division is a co-ed, young adult division of the Boy Scouts of America, Inc. The national office administers the Venturing program to regional and local council Venturing/Sea Scouting committees, and individual Venturing crews and Sea Scout ships.

Purpose:

Venturing’s purpose is to provide positive experiences to help young people mature and to prepare them to become responsible and caring adults.

Goals:

For religious organizations, the Venturing program has been tailored to help religious youth groups achieve their aims and purposes by providing leadership training, outdoor and high-adventure activity, program ideas, recognition for the youth, audiovisuals, literature, and insurance.

Activity:

Each Venturing program is owned by the religious organization. The religious organization selects and approves adult leadership. The religious organization uses elements of the Venturing program to help achieve its specific aims and purposes related to young adults. The activities within each charter organization are

specifically focuses on the purpose, goals, mission and objectives of the religious organization. Potential activities of Venturing Crews and Sea Scouts Ships (in addition to the various outdoor, sports, and career orientated resources of Venturing), which are of specific service to the Serra International mission, will be provided as discussed in Part II.D. later in this application.

Programs and Work of Organization:

Venturing will work with any existing youth program structure. In Catholic high schools there are existing programs that will benefit from the Venturing Structure and support resources: prayer/ministry clubs, sports related and other extra-curricular clubs. It does not require starting another program. Any youth group can incorporate Venturing into its program. Venturing will help keep youth closer to the organization's beliefs and expectations, and connected to the right people. Venturing provides a "package" that can be use, to hold on to youth and to attract new youth into your religious organization. Venturing in your youth groups will help display your faith's role in the welfare of the community (vocations to service). Youth in the program will be encouraged to participate in the National Catholic Committee on Scouting's religious awards program (Pope Pius XII emblem, Pope Paul VI Unit Award, Religious & Community Life Bronze Award, new TRUST award emblem for Venturers) will create an arena for young adults to interact with religious leaders, both with clergy and Serra members.

II. PROJECT INFORMATION

SERRA CLUB CHARTERED VENTURING/SEA SCOUTING UNITS IN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

The National project director(s): (Three Directors will be selected to oversee the program)

Homer A. Radford, Committee Chairman, Vocations Committee of the USA Council of Serra International;

To be Appointed: An active Catholic Scout Leader, of National influence (pending appointment);

To be Appointed: An active Scout Chaplain, of National significance (pending appointment)

TELEPHONE # 816-356-1760 (H. Radford) **3. FAX #** 816-356-1760 (email: hradford2@comcast.net)

This project provides financial support through a Grant from Serra International Foundation to share in the initial cost, along with the local Serra Clubs (50/50), to charter Venturing and Sea Scouting units in local Catholic High Schools, as an extracurricular activity. This would provide an outreach to Catholic youth in Catholic High Schools. The initial funding is needed for the start-up of these units, to assure their success without initial monetary burdens on Catholic families, and inaugurate a sustained program for youth in Catholic High Schools. It will also fulfill the needs for special extracurricular activities at our high schools, which may be cut or are faltering, such as cycling, hiking, climbing, sailing, rowing, scuba, prayer groups, etc. These activities will benefit from existing resources and facilities of the BSA Venturing program, along with its insurance benefits. This project will relate to all objectives of Serra International, as follows:

Foster and Promote Vocations to the Ministerial Priesthood - Exposure to vocation discernment and fostering of pre-discernment is highly limited today, particularly lacking at the high school and young adult age levels. While vocations may be a topic for teen retreats or part of the curriculum for a religion course, there is little exposure beyond that, which could involve activities to provide service to both the Church and the community. This program will provide a Serran "junior league" using a proven, packaged program with tested methods to bring youth to action in their Faith community. By involvement with local Serran and Diocesan activities, this program will foster and promote vocations, provide "on hands" knowledge of Serra International, along with its goals and objectives.

Encourage and Affirm Vocations to Consecrated Religious Life - Each Serra chartered Venturing and Sea Scouting "Crew" would be required to have a Chaplain, either ordained or a religious with personal experience in Scouting as a youth (best option a Diocesan Vocations Director), who will participate in the Crew's activities as an "Advisor". This active mentoring would be supplemented by service with the local Serra Club members. The Crew could be either co-ed or separate genders, depending on the high school and/or choice of the local Serra Club. Either way, the program would instill an appreciation of all aspects of priesthood and all religious vocations. Besides doing programs for earning religious emblems, Scouts could do surveys of their school's alumni who have been ordained, are current seminarians, or vowed religious, and plan appropriate posting of their high school's religious "heroes".

Assist its Members to Recognize and Respond in Their Own Lives to God's Call - This program would provide unparalleled opportunities for Catholic High School youth to walk in the steps of the older Serra members, to emulate them in their service to the Catholic Church in our support for vocations. This Serran "youth corps" will actively participate and supplement the activities of Serra. These might include such events as "Clergy Night" banquets for Priests, picnics for Seminarians, "Sisters & Brothers Night" for our vowed religious, assistance and

attendance at ordinations with the local Serrans, as well as assistance with fundraisers. They could also begin new service projects, as required in their Scouting program and Religious Emblem achievements, such as service to local food banks and charity dining halls, Habitat For Humanity, and other Christian vocations to service.

Through exposure to vocational alternatives at the impressionable high school age, the program would promote vocations through active involvement with the local Serra Club members. Serrans display a positive attitude for religious life, which as mentors would encourage youth to respect and consider becoming seminarians. As role models for the Venturing youth, the Serrans would build upon their own spirituality, instilled by being mentors. Most of the Catholic youth today are unaware of the Serran movement. The average age of a Serra Club is above middle-aged. There is a huge generation gap between those of age for discernment and those that are supporting vocations. This program would bridge that age gap, and render the support that must continue into the future, to sustain Serran objectives as future potential Serra members, if not priests or vowed religious. Manpower involvement of Serra members is not required, but Serra members who have previous Scout Leader experience and training would be the preferred Advisor volunteers for their club's respective High School Venturing crew(s). Likewise, Serrans often are current and/or past members of high school Dad's Clubs, and have standing relationships within the school community.

E. List your goals for this project (focus on goals that are specific, measurable and attainable).

Currently, Serra Clubs in the USA charter 5 Scout units. In the USA there are 331 Serra Clubs with over 12,000 Serrans. The National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) Annual Report 2004-2005 states that there are 1,225 Catholic High Schools in the USA, with 640,950 students. There are 1,037 non-rural Catholic High Schools in proximity to the 331 Serra Clubs. The goal of this project is to charter about 140 new High School Venturing Crews to initially serve 700 to 1,000 students. If there were from 1 to 2 high school crews per club, only 70 to 140 clubs would participate, or 21% to 42% of all Serra Clubs. Membership in each started crew is expected to grow after initiation, with membership costs (\$120 per crew of 10) thereafter paid annually by the local Serra Clubs.

F. List the actions/tasks necessary to accomplish these goals. (Use additional sheets if necessary).

1.) When the Grant was awarded in 2006 the Vocations Committee of the USA Council sent out solicitations information to the local Serra Clubs and the National Catholic Committee on Scouting. Serra Clubs in four diocese have shown interest and are in the initial communications to propose forming Catholic High School Venturers by the Clubs that are willing to engage the project and fund one-half of the initial start-up cost for each Catholic High School willing to participate. Disbursement of the Grant funds would only occur as the Charter is submitted naming the local Serra Club as the Chartering Organization. A report on the progress of Venturing units will be provided semi-annually to the Vocations Committee of the USA Council. A summary of the reports will then be provided to the Serra International Foundation. The Directors will establish a network of Catholic Scout Leaders with Venturing experience, and a parallel sub-committee of the Serra Vocations Committee to help support and monitor the progress.

BSA has detailed, proven methods for volunteer recruitment, leadership training, youth protection program training, and placement of Venturing Advisors to assist the youth officers of the Venturing/Sea Scouting crews. Certainly, experienced Scout leaders from the ranks of local Serra Clubs, as well as any faculty member of the Catholic High School with past Scouting experience, would be preferred Advisors. As an extracurricular activity, at least one of the Advisors may have to be a faculty member. If any Advisor was not BSA trained, the local BSA Council and/or District will provide training at no cost. As a Catholic youth program, all adults would have background checks and take the required local Diocesan youth safe environment.

**SERRA CLUB CHARTERED VENTURING/SEA SCOUT UNITS
IN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS**

Initial Unit Budget

Budget for Each New Unit:

Initial Funds to charter each High School unit (\$20/year)	\$ 20
Membership Fees for Adult Advisors (3 minimum paid @ \$10/year)	30
Membership Fees for Youth Members (7 minimum paid @ \$10/year)	70
Collared shirts with Venturing and Serra logos, other items (\$38 per person)	<u>380</u>
Initial Allocated cost shown above for a basic, 10-member crew	\$500
Portion Paid by the Local Serra Club	<u>(250)</u>
Portion Paid by Grant for each New Unit (maximum)	\$250

Responsibilities: Expenditures of all funds will be controlled by the three Directors, by a consensus in approval of each funded expenditure item, to each chartered unit only at the initial start of each unit, up to a total of ten members. Unused annual funds would roll over to the next years, or local Serra Clubs may be reimbursed in a following year. Additional membership and other costs not included in the budget will be the responsibility of the local Serra Club, in coordination with their Venturing Crew.

Fundraising by the Venturing Crew to further support their activities and additional costs will be conducted, according to the particular choices for activities, with advice from their Unit Chaplain and guidance from their Advisors. Each High School may need to be a co-charter partner, with the Serra Club the principal partner depending on the requirements of each diocesan high school policy.