

# THE MISSION BELL

A PUBLICATION OF THE SERRA CLUB OF OMAHA

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2015

**REJOICE!** Blessed Junipero Serra to be Canonized September 23, 2015



## Omahan Tim O'Neill, President of Serra International

*By William E. Ramsey and Betty Dineen Shrier*

**Pictured are Omaha Club President Jerry Merwald and Karen Merwald; Denis Walsh; Sally O'Neill and SI President Tim O'Neill; Lynn Jones and SI Vice President Dan Jones.**

From the time he joined the Serra Club of Omaha in 1989, Tim O'Neill took the advice of his father, Maurice O'Neill, who told him that he must contribute and be active in any organization he might choose to join. His father was one of the charter members and President of the Serra Club of Council Bluffs; his dedicated example and wise counsel remains with Tim to this day as he aspires to accomplish his goals for Serra International.

After serving on the Serra Club of Omaha board, Tim was nominated as president for the 1996-97 year. But he did not stop there when his successful term was completed. He went on to become an active member with the USA Council of Serra International.

One of his most remarkable achievements took place in 2009 when he and his wife, Dr. Sally O'Neill, served as chairs for the Serra International convention held at what is now Century Link in Omaha. More than 500 Serrans from around the world joined us for three days and evenings

of unforgettable and delightful sessions uniting all of us working to foster and affirm vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. Tim and Sally also hosted the 2014 Serra International Convention in Sacramento, California.

Tim was inducted as President during the Serra International Convention in Melbourne, Australia, July 30 to August 2, 2015.

On September 23rd, when Pope Francis arrives in Washington, D.C., to canonize our patron, Blessed Junipero Serra, Tim plans to be there for this blessed and historic event—to witness the first canonization in the United States.

Tim said, "I hope to be able to make a presentation to Our Holy Father—a gift from Serrans throughout the world. If that is not possible due to the crowds and restrictions of that ceremony, I shall take the gift to Rome in November where members of the Serra International board will be present for a special Mass for our group that will be followed by a gathering with Pope Francis."

The "gift" is an enameled lapel pin replicating a 44-cent airmail stamp with the picture of Junipero Serra and the map of California where Serra founded nine missions. An illustration of a mission church is also part of the image.

**Turn to page 2 for a description of the gift.**



## Tim O'Neill has gift to be presented to Pope Francis . . . [continued from page 1](#)

This stamp was issued by the U.S. government in 1985 and Bill Ramsey purchased it from the U.S. Postal Service during one of his many trips to California. Though given by Bill Ramsey, Tim O'Neill hopes to present it to Pope Francis on behalf of all of the world's 28,000 Serrans. This stamp will be attached to a 9"x12" parchment.



## LOCAL - NATIONAL - AND INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM FOR BLESSED JUNIPERO SERRA

This colorful lapel pin, issued by the U.S. Postal Service, is an exact duplication of the actual postage stamp . . . *By William E. Ramsey and Betty Dineen Shrier*

By order of the United States Government, the U.S. Postal Service honored Junipero Serra in August 1985, by issuing a commemorative U.S. Airmail postage stamp. It features a portrait of the missionary priest along with an outline of the coast of California and Baja California where Serra had been in charge of several missions. Before his death, Serra had founded nine missions and also created a system in which 12 more missions were later founded.

The San Diego Convention and Performing Arts Center was the site of the opening ceremony where U.S. Postmaster General Paul Carlin unveiled the stamp to kick off the 99th Annual Convention of the American Philatelic Society. This introduction of an airmail stamp honoring the 18th-Century priest, Spanish missionary Junipero Serra, seemed to create a historic event in the minds and hearts of those present.

The next day, another ceremony took place at the San Fernando Mission where hundreds of people gathered to buy the treasured "first-day-issue" canceled stamps. Expectations were high that Pope John Paul II would declare Junipero Serra a saint. And now, 30 years later, their hopes and dreams will come true.

Pope Francis said that his September trip to the United States will include Philadelphia, New York and Washington, D.C. In 1931 a bronze statue of Junipero Serra by sculptor Ettore Cadorin was installed in Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol, Washington, D.C., representing the State of California. Serrans were thrilled to learn that the Pope plans to canonize Blessed Junipero Serra at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception while he is in Washington, D.C.

President-elect of Serra International, Tim O'Neill, said, "This is a once-in-a-lifetime occasion for Serrans throughout the entire world but especially for those of us in the United States. We will do our best to obtain admission tickets for our Serrans to attend this canonization ceremony of our patron, Blessed Junipero Serra."

Tim reflected on how Serra was chosen to be our patron: "At one of Serra's earliest meetings in Seattle in March 1935, John Bray, a native of San Francisco, was a guest who said that Serra was recognized as 'the apostle of California' because he brought the Catholic Faith to the American West through a chain of missions he had established throughout what is known today as the state of California. In large measure, Serra was responsible for the foundation and spread of the Church on the West Coast when it was still mission territory. When John Bray proposed the club be named Serra Club after Father Junipero Serra, the group unanimously accepted his idea."

Now, 80 years later, Serrans in the United States will feel especially blessed when Pope Francis canonizes our patron. And Serrans throughout the world will rejoice that our patron will be honored with the title of sainthood. The recognition of Serra by the United States, Spain and other countries in past years has had a limited effect. This ultimate honor of sainthood will affect the entire world and especially those of us who cherish the distinction of being Serrans. We look forward to invoking his intercession with these words: "Saint Junipero Serra, pray for us."

### Dates to Remember from [www.SerraUS.org](http://www.SerraUS.org)

**Sept 18-20, 2015**

Region IX Conference  
Des Moines, Iowa

**Sept 23, 2015**

Canonization of Blessed Junipero Serra  
Washington D.C.

**October 25, 2015**

Priesthood Sunday

**November 1-7, 2015**

National Vocation Awareness Week

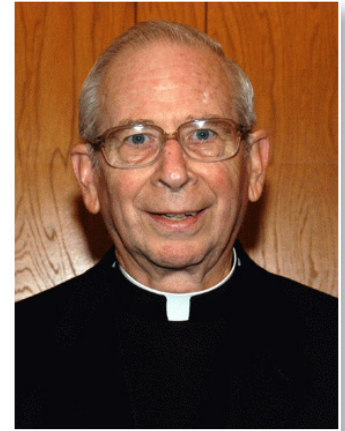


## A Reflection from our Chaplain Msgr. William Whelan

George Weigel is one of the finest Catholic writers in our Church. He is often featured in *The Catholic Voice*. When I read his column a few Fridays ago, in reference to the Supreme Court's ruling regarding marriage, I thought this was one of the most helpful responses to the Supreme Court ruling that gay people have a right to marriage. This civil ruling will not affect the Church's teaching and practice regarding Catholic marriages, but it will put us in the position of living out our faith with new resilience and courage.

Let me quote directly from George Weigel's article: "The new normal (as the courts decision is called) will not leave the Catholic Church alone. As with everyone else who counters the new normal's ideology of anything goes, the Church will be aggressively attacked for daring to oppose that ideology. So it must learn - and learn fast - how to play a good defense, defending the right of our people and our institutions to be ourselves; it will do a service to America in the process." He goes on to say, "the living out of our convictions will bring about the re-conversion of the United States to right reason and moral truth and a Biblical way of seeing the world."

Here is George Weigel's recommendation to us (his fellow Catholics) and it is wise: "From the Catholic point of view, the possible response to the new normal is a robustly evangelical Catholicism: one that displays true happiness in lives of solidarity with our fellow Catholics; one that links that happiness and solidarity to friendship with Jesus Christ, and the truths his Church teaches, inviting others to consider a still more excellent way. This calls for strong preaching, that calls Catholics to friendship with our Lord Jesus and deeper conversion to His truth."



Msgr. William Whelan,  
Chaplain  
Serra Club of Omaha

<http://omaha.serranebraska.org>

Check under "news" for a summary of presentations by guest speakers.



Tobias Letak, in his 4th year at North American College (Rome), will be ordained a transitional deacon October 1 in Rome and a priest on June 4, 2016 in Omaha. Tobias is from Stephen the Martyr Parish, Omaha. He was joined by his parents, Ben and Seri Letak; siblings Melissa, Benny, Jonah; grandmother, Marie Bequette; and aunt, Leann Keller.



Bill Cremers is entering Theology 1 at Kenrick Seminary, St. Louis. Bill is from St. Anthony's Parish, Columbus. He was joined by his parents, Jim and Marlene Cremers and his sister, Carly.

### Annual Seminarian Picnic and Softball Game . . . By Doug Quinn

A warm day didn't stop the fun and fellowship at the annual Seminarian picnic on Sunday, August 2. The event, sponsored by our Serra Club, was led by Steve Dickas. A team of Serrans worked to set up, prepare and serve a picnic style meal to approximately 240 of our seminarians, their families and guests. We worked closely with a great staff of volunteers from Christ the King, led by Colleen Ost diek. Both Archbishop Lucas and Archbishop Emeritus Curtiss attended the event, as did many priests.

The food, generously donated by the D'Agosto family and Christ the King volunteers, included Arby's sandwiches,

chicken tenders, and homemade desserts. The feast was enjoyed by all, with enough remaining to make a generous gift to the Rainbow House.

After the meal, our new Director of Vocations, Father Andrew Roza, introduced the seminarians, who then each gave us some details on their personal stories, as well as some fun facts. The meal and presentation were followed by the annual softball game. Archbishop Lucas threw out the first pitch for the contest, which was won, in a close game, by the "Collegians" over the "Theologians."

Photos courtesy Rich Cupich



## April 15 to May 28, 2015: A 500 Mile Pilgrimage Along the Camino de Santiago - the Way of St. James . . . By Art Hastings

I surprised my family (and myself) last fall when I announced that I was going to travel to Spain and walk the 500 mile pilgrimage of Camino de Santiago to the tomb of St. James the Apostle. I am not a hiker or a backpacker. I do not speak Spanish. But I saw the movie "The Way" and it was my inspiration to undertake this adventure.

I had 9 months to prepare and immediately began reading everything available about the Camino de Santiago. St. James the Apostle was the first apostle to be martyred in 44. His body was buried in Spain. Pilgrimages to his tomb began in the 11th century but then stopped due to the Black Death and political turmoil in Europe. Very few pilgrims made this journey until 1987 when the Camino de Santiago was declared a European Cultural Route. It has become popular with 240,000 pilgrims completing at least portions of the walk in 2014.

I got practical advice about footwear, backpacks, trekking poles and a other hiking supplies from friends who are hikers. There is also a Facebook page for Americans on the Camino and many videos on YouTube.

The first task was to purchase hiking boots which I began to wear frequently in hopes I would not suffer foot problems in Spain. And I remained hopeful that my hip replacement of 13 years earlier would not be a problem. By March I was unable to put off the actual "hiking" any longer; panic was starting to set in about the fear of not being prepared. I began doing the 8 mile trail around Lake Zorinsky. I remember my first hike: it started to sprinkle, then rain, then a downpour, and then snow. The north wind was whipping across my face as I was going north on the high east rim of the lake. (In hindsight, the weather that day was worse than any I experienced in Spain!) Just being able to complete those 8 miles gave me confidence that I really could do this "walk." But just one thing – walking around Lake Zorinsky does not prepare you for the mountains in Spain.

On April 15, I flew to Madrid, and after 2 nights there to get on the same sleep cycle, I took the train to Pamplona. The Camino Frances, which is the most popular of many routes to Santiago, begins on the French side of the Pyrenees. I decided to skip those mountains and begin in Spain itself. Besides, I do not speak French! I had managed to learn minimal Spanish online and was able to "hablo espanol" enough to understand the basics.



Along the camino are hostels or "albergues" where a pilgrim can stay for one night. Each pilgrim must have proof that they are making the camino and must show their pilgrim book and their passport to be admitted. For the cost of 5 to 10 euros, the pilgrim is entitled to a mattress and access to shower and bathroom facilities. Some albergues also have washing machines. The pilgrim has one set of clothes on his back and one set in the backpack. The pilgrim does not have to bring cooking supplies or camping equipment. Ideally, the backpack should be no heavier than 10% of your body weight.

In my first albergue, there were 114 beds! Along the way, most albergues had 15 to 30 beds. Fellow pilgrims were from all over the world – 140 countries in 2014. Pilgrims are of all ages with some much older than me! Communicating with fellow pilgrims is interesting as we try to overcome the language barriers. Any privacy in the albergues is non-existent! There is no "schedule" or fixed number of kilometers a pilgrim must cover in a day. In the albergue, the rules are that lights go off at 10:00 PM and back on at

6:30 AM and everyone must be out by 8:00 AM. One night per albergue.

I was usually one of the last pilgrims to leave each morning. Some had already gotten up when it was still dark out and annoyed those of us trying to sleep as they made all the noises packing up their backpacks and using their flashlights. After eating some fruit I had purchased the night before or else finding a place open to buy a typical breakfast of coffee and a roll or Spanish omelette, I headed out on the Camino.

The path is clearly marked with yellow arrows or scallop shells painted on the streets, the walls, the houses, the barns, rocks, trees and even in the sidewalks of the larger cities.

As you walk along the way, you realize that each pilgrim has his/her own camino. There is no set pace. Some go slow. Some move quickly. Each pilgrim calls out "buen camino" as they pass other pilgrims, wishing each other well on their journey. There is a freedom in opening up oneself to complete strangers on the journey and you realize that as much as we come from different countries, we are all similar. And there is trust in God as each day brings new sights and challenges.

**Watch for the inspiring conclusion of this pilgrimage in the next issue of *Mission Bell*.**



## SERRA NEWS ... By Betty Dineen Shrier

**Kevin Cooper**, Serra coordinator for the Mass for Shut-ins, said that Father Walter Nolte's mother died on July 14. He wrote that Father is the pastor at St. Bernard parish and is a great friend of Serra and the Mass for Shut-ins. Kevin asked that we remember Father Nolte's mother in our prayers. May she rest in peace.

**Katie Bonebrake** said that her mother died in San Diego where she had suffered from Stage Four colon cancer. We extend our deepest sympathy and prayers to Katie in the loss of her mother. May she rest in peace.

**Doug and Margaret Quinn** had asked for prayers for their daughter, Gillian Quinn-Pineda, who was having surgery the week of July 23rd in Houston, TX. At our July 27th Serra meeting, Jay Dunlap announced that our prayers were answered and that Doug and Margaret's daughter was doing well.

**Deacon Rennie ter Kuile** died on August 3rd. Kevin Cooper said he had a rare disease called dermatomyositis that severely weakened his body; it proved resistant to treatment in spite of the excellent care he received at University Tower Nebraska Medical Center. His funeral Mass at St. Leo the Great Church was held on Friday, August 7th at 11 a.m. with Fr. Craig Loecker, pastor, presiding. During his homily, Father praised Rennie for his lifetime of service to others—in the U.S. Air Force, Serra Club of Omaha, the Mass for Shut-ins, working in RCIA and as a Deacon at St. Leo Church. Father said he never complained as he went about serving God and his neighbor. May he rest in peace.

**Serra International President Tim O'Neill** announced that Archbishop George J. Lucas will preside at a Mass at St. Cecilia Cathedral at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13, 2015, in celebration of the Canonization of Blessed Junipero Serra. Please save the date. Tim will give us additional information about this event in our next newsletter.

**Geri Stratman** said the last time she was present for a Serra meeting was for our December 2014 Christmas Party. Consequently, she was thrilled to be at the Serra Seminarian Mass and Picnic held at Christ the King on Sunday, August 2nd. She is grateful to the Serrans who prayed for her during these past seven months of her illness caused by a compound fracture of the seventh vertebrae.

**Tex Oswald** said he has been in and out of the hospital due to heart rate problems. Tex believes he is on the proper medication now and hopes to get back to a regular routine soon. He also had reverse replacement surgery on his shoulder to correct the damage done over the years due to a sledding accident in his younger years. Tex appreciates our prayers for his good health and hopes he can join us soon at our regular meetings and various events.

**Tim O'Neill** and **Bill Ramsey** made headlines in the Council Bluffs *Daily Nonpareil* [8-11-15] and the *Omaha World-Herald* [8-18-15]. The articles told of Serra International President Tim O'Neill planning to present a gift to the Holy Father after Serra's canonization ceremony in Washington, D.C. The gift is a commemorative stamp lapel pin created by the U.S. Government Postal Service to honor Junipero Serra for bringing civilization to the Western United States through his missionary work in California. Although the gift is from Bill Ramsey, Tim will present it to the Holy Father on behalf of all Serrans throughout the world. [More on this gift on page 2.](#)

Pictured left is a smaller version of an ad sponsored by the Serra Club of Omaha and the Serra Club of West Omaha. The ad was written and prepared by Bill Ramsey and Betty Dineen Shrier for this fall's edition of the 2015-2016 Archdiocesan Directory. *The Catholic Voice* edited and created the final layout.

### CELEBRATING

#### ... A YEAR, A PATRON, A NATIVE SON

More than 20,000 Serrans throughout the world have reason to celebrate their membership in this voluntary association of Catholic laity. Serra's mission is to foster and affirm vocations to the ministerial priesthood and consecrated religious life.

The founding Serra members accepted the suggestion of John Bray on March 6, 1935, to name the association after Padre Junipero Serra, recognized as "the apostle of California" because he brought the faith to the American West with a chain of missions he established in California. Since its founding in Seattle, WA, in 1935, Serra International has chartered 1,109 Serra Clubs in 46 countries on six continents.

Padre Serra is now St. Junipero Serra, canonized Sept. 23, 2015, by Pope Francis at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. President of Serra International, Tim O'Neill, a Serra Club of Omaha member for 26 years, presented a gift to Our Holy Father on behalf of Serrans throughout the world.



We have every reason to celebrate and rejoice: our 80th anniversary, the canonization of our patron, and for the first time, having a Serran from Omaha serving as our Serra International President. We thank Archbishop George J. Lucas, our clergy and consecrated religious throughout the archdiocese for their affirming support of our mission.



**SERRA CLUB  
OF  
OMAHA**

**SERRA CLUB  
OF  
WEST OMAHA**

Archdiocesan Vocations Office 402-558-3100

## Serra/IPF Father Flanagan Pilgrimage at Boys Town

By Doug Quinn - Photos courtesy Jim Hughes



Father Steven Boes, Executive Director, Boys Town, celebrated Mass in the Dowd Chapel.

(Above) 175 seminarians and faculty stand in front of the Dowd Chapel on the Boys Town campus for the 2015 Serra/IPF Father Flanagan Pilgrimage on July 11, 2015. These seminarians represent 65 different dioceses.

My wife, Margaret, and I served as Chair Couple for this event. We express our gratitude to **Kevin Cooper**, lector, and **Art Hastings**, cantor at the Mass. Organist Rosemary Lubbers, inspired all with her talent at the pipe organ. Tom Lynch, Manager of the Hall of History, was present to welcome everyone and conduct tours for the seminarians and staff.

We extend our sincere appreciation to **Jim Hughes** for the many historic photographs he took as he joined us for this annual event at Boys Town.



Two IPF Seminarians imitate the "He ain't heavy, Father, he's my brother," statue in the Hall of History during their campus tour at Boys Town.



Kevin and Lora Cooper serve as Serra sponsors at the table (right); Mark Bonkiewicz is at the table to the left. We thank Bob Tapio and the Catering Staff at the Great Hall on the Boys Town campus for the excellent meal they prepared for us.



Tom Lynch, Manager of the Hall of History, speaks to the IPF seminarians about the early days of the founding of Boys Town and the struggles of Father Flanagan to establish this home for boys.



Spiritual Moms and Dads in St. John's Church for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with the 175 IPF seminarians attending the 2015 Summer Program from 65 different dioceses.



Barbara Pflaum's spiritual son felt right at home as he and Barbara shared stories about IPF.



Valerie Konzett was delighted to meet her spiritual son that evening.



Chris Berens, member of IPF Mission Advancement Council, and Fr. Jim Rafferty, Director of Programs and Mission, welcomed all as they entered the Skutt Ballroom for the evening reception.

## IPF Friends Night ... By William E. Ramsey and Betty Dineen Shrier

On Wednesday, July 8th, The Institute for Priestly Formation (IPF) held its annual Friends Night at its Creighton University campus. The Spiritual Moms and Dads who had been praying for an assigned seminarian would have the opportunity to meet their seminarian sons at this event.

All gathered at St. John's Church at 6:30 p.m. for an evening of prayer, adoration and benediction with the IPF Community. The IPF Choir's singing was truly angelic and created an atmosphere of God's presence with all who were worshipping that evening.

When the entire congregation sang, all present participated wholeheartedly and the church resounded with unmistakable enthusiasm as the talented organist and congregation gave heartfelt praise to God.

Following the hour-long service, all were invited to the Skutt Student Center Ballroom where a light reception was held. Now the spiritual moms and dads who had been praying for a special seminarian could actually meet their spiritual sons one-on-one. Anne Pogge, IPF Coordinator for Spiritual Moms, arranged for seminarians to sit at appropriate tables where they could visit with their "moms" and "dads" throughout the evening.

*Photos courtesy Anna Drvol  
IPF Communications Coordinator*

Fr. Richard Gabuzda, IPF Executive Director, graciously greeted everyone present and thanked them for their prayers and many contributions to assure the mission of IPF will continue in the years to come. He invited a staff member and several seminarians to the podium to share their experiences at IPF and how that had influenced their pursuit of a priestly vocation. Serrans and others present listened intently as they shared many inspiring accounts of their impressions and encounters with God during their time here.

Father also invited the IPF seminarian choir to perform; once again we were totally impressed that among these seminarians were singers whose talented voices blended together as if they had performed for years. Their voices conveyed angelic hymns of praise to God.

While enjoying delicious cookies and various bakery items, Serrans and others had the opportunity to share many informal conversations and deeply appreciated being part of this endorsement of IPF's mission. Fr. Gabuzda said, "...our deepest desire is that Jesus may be more and more at the center of the lives of the priests and seminarians who participate in our programs. Our confident hope is that the renewed lives of priests and seminarians will then bring a deeper love for the Lord into the parishes and institutions they serve so that all People of God may rejoice in knowing Jesus at the center of their lives as well."



## A Serran Life: Reflections of 25 Years

### PART 3 - FINAL THOUGHTS . . . By Del Sempek

*Continued from the June-July issue of Mission Bell.*

**First Friday Mass** - Another committee I was asked to help with was the First Friday Mass. The idea was to have a group of Serrans and spouses attend a First Friday Mass at a different parish in the metro area each month. **Ed Sobetski** was the chair and liked to see the gathering handled a certain way. First we had to "recruit" a parish. This involved taking the pastor to lunch and scheduling a First Friday Mass at his parish. Next we had a poster on the easel that was to be placed in the vestibule of the church announcing the upcoming First Friday Mass at which Serrans would be praying for vocations at the parish. After the Mass we would gather at a nearby restaurant for dinner. The Archbishop would be a frequent celebrant and attended the dinner as well. We would often schedule a year in advance. We all looked forward to not only the spiritually but social part of the evening. The beauty of this was we were able to visit churches we probably would never have had the pleasure of seeing.

**Mass for Shut-Ins** - It may have been in April or May of 1990 when Ed Hotz had to cut back on activities because of illness. He was one of the original committee members for the Mass for Shut-Ins. As far as we know our particular television Mass is the longest continuous running Mass dating back to February 1964. It was indeed an honor to take his place. The Mass is taped on Tuesday for the following Sunday at Channel 6 studios. Again this was particularly meaningful to me because my wife and I were in a high school together and it was normal to have local talent perform at the studios. Our high school presented a variety show of which we participated.

A few highlights of this activity for me start with my first Mass. **Fr. Dave Reason** was the Chaplin for our club and happened to be the celebrant that night. In those days, Fr. Dave was always light hearted and included funny stories in his homilies. We are taping and he is at the homily. He started to tell this story and got into the end and forgot the punch line. We were waiting and waiting and finally he said something like, "I think I forgot the punch line." I thought they would cut and re-tape, but production kept on taping so that Mass went out Sunday with Fr. Reason trying to remember the ending to his story. It was amazing, but it seemed like no one noticed.

Another taping was exciting for me. The staff and committee are very organized and run a tight production. We receive letters or emails well in advance as to what to expect or if there are any changes. We were never sure what happened but our team of **Herm Weist, Bill Ramsey** had fun together for twenty years.

On this particular night, Bill and Herm and the priest did not show. The actual taping started at 7:30 p.m. and we were asked to be there at 6:45.

At 7:00 p.m. calls were going out for a priest and **Fr. Vitalis** was able to come to the station. So, I got to do both old and new testament readings as well as commentate. Because the cameras are close, my role was easy, but we had some conversation as to why I was the only one to be at the station that night.

I have a cousin who, when seeing me in person, would go on about my appearance on T.V. and how he watched me every Sunday. I told him I am on only in May, but that never seemed to change his enthusiasm or the fact that he saw me every week. (Go figure?)

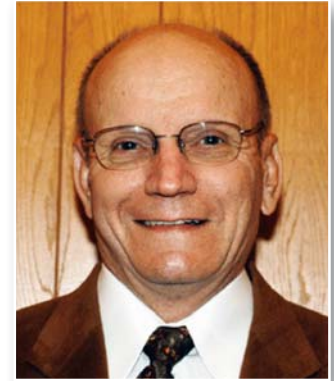
**A Personal Note** - Our youngest son, Ben, teaches at Khalifa University in Abu Dhabi, The United Arab Emirates, so his visits are usually short and infrequent. He happened to be in town while we were scheduled for the Mass taping so he joined me for one of the sessions. Afterwards, I asked **Archbishop Elden Curtiss** if he would give us his blessing. I remember the feeling I had kneeling surrounded by the lights and cameras as the crew was taking down the set. The Archbishop blessed us. This was a time that was, as they say, "priceless!"

**Final Thoughts** - I wanted to mention many of the people who worked with me on Serra committees and how I hoped to be more like them. The Serra program allows us to use prayer and prayerful practices to supplement our physical activities. It also gives us a chance to meet or become acquainted with the likes of **Ed Laughlin**, past president, who took a personal interest in my membership in Serra and guided me when I really needed help; **Don Keough** (charter member); **Walt Jahn** who was always poster material for dedication and service; **Dr. Robert Fitzgibbons** (charter member) whose child performed surgery on my child to save his life. I do not believe these are coincidences.

Want to read Del Sempek's entire "Reflections" again? It's online at . . .

<http://omaha.serranebraska.org>

**Check this website often for update on meetings, speakers, and important dates.**







## SERRA CLUB OF OMAHA • IMPORTANT DATES

Aug 25	Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha
Aug 30	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Sept 1	Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha
Sept 5	First Saturday Mass 8:00 AM New Cassel Retirement Center
Sept 6	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Sept 8	Serra Board Meeting - Noon WSCCC
Sept 8	Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha
Sept 13	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Sept 14	Serra Luncheon Meeting - Noon WSCCC - Guest Speaker Fr. Tom Nietzsche, President Creighton University
Sept 15	Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha
Sept 20	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Sept 22	Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha
Sept 23	Canonization of Blessed Junipero Serra in Washington D.C.
Sept 27	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Sept 28	Serra Luncheon Meeting - Noon WSCCC - Guest Speaker John McMahon, President Skutt Catholic High School
Sept 29	Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha
Oct 3	First Saturday Mass 8:00 AM New Cassel Retirement Center
Oct 4	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Oct 5	Serra Board Meeting - Noon WSCCC
Oct 6	Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha
Oct 11	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Oct 12	Serra Luncheon Meeting - Noon WSCCC - Guest Speaker Art Hastings on his Pilgrimage - <a href="#">see page 4</a>
Oct 13	<b>Special Event</b> - Mass with Archbishop Lucas at St. Cecilia's Cathedral in Honor of Blessed Serra's Canonization
Oct 14	<b>Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha - changed from Tuesday</b>
Oct 18	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Oct 20	Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha
Oct 25	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Oct 25	<b>Special Event</b> - Sundaes Sunday for retired priests at St. John Vianney Retirement Home - more to come
Oct 26	Serra Luncheon Meeting - Noon WSCCC - Guest Speaker Fr. Jeremy Hans, Newly Ordained Priest
Oct 27	Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha
Nov 1	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Nov 2	Serra Board Meeting - Noon WSCCC
Nov 3	Mass for Shut-Ins Taping WOWT 7:30 PM WOWT Omaha
Nov 7	First Saturday Mass 8:00 AM New Cassel Retirement Center
Nov 8	Mass for Shut-Ins 10:30 AM WOWT Omaha Channel 6
Nov 9	Serra Luncheon Meeting - Noon WSCCC - Guest Speaker Fr. Andrew Roza, Vocations Director Omaha Arch

### ALSO SAVE THESE DATES!

**Monday, Nov 23** Memorial Mass for deceased Serrans, family members, and priests

**Monday, Dec 14** Annual Serra Christmas Social



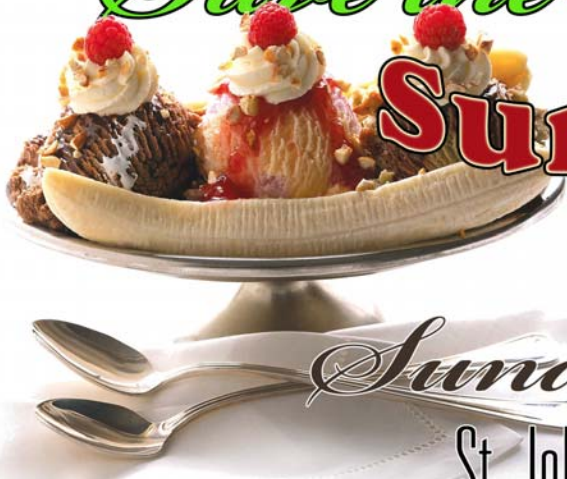
## The Mission Bell

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The Mission of the  
Serra Club of Omaha  
is to foster and promote  
vocations to the priesthood  
in the Catholic Church;  
to support priests  
in their sacred ministry;  
and to encourage  
and affirm vocations to  
consecrated religious life.

*Save the Date!*



**Sundae Sunday**  
in honor of  
our Retired Priests

*Sunday, October 25*

St. John Vianney Retirement Home



**WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION IN THE NEAR FUTURE!**