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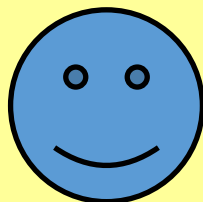
VP Programs—

Gary Lyons

VP Communications -

Jane Lyons

**See current roster for
email addresses and tele-
phone numbers.**



Elections will be coming up soon—think of how you can help our club in the coming year!

SERRA RALLY—JANUARY 14-16, 2016

HOUSTON, TEXAS

Judy Cozzens

The Serra Rally was a super way to start the New Year with great ideas. There are always good programs at the rally but one of the best parts was sharing ideas with our Serra friends from the United States and the world. We felt blessed to be with Jane and Gary Lyons to share ideas we can bring back to our club. We had a chance to worship at beautiful liturgies and take part in wonderful holy hours dedicated to praying for religious and vocations.

Rally speakers helped us look at ways we can promote Serra through media, increase vocation awareness on campuses and start vocation activities in parishes. A highlight was a program on increasing membership. A very simple skit was presented about talking with someone about Serra at the holy water font after daily mass and on the way to the parking lot. The Serran would hand off a seminarian prayer card or business card and ask the individual to pray for religious vocations. Later, the Serran could extend an invite to attend a Serra meeting and find out how we support vocations. Our club is going to be receiving the seminarian prayer cards; I hope you take an extra one to share with someone who might be interested in Serra.

Another highlight was hearing from priests and seminarians and find out how important our ministry is to them. We had a priest from the Newman Center at Texas A & M University that serves over 10,000 students! Father shared how vibrant the community is there with many converts and several students going on to convents and seminaries after college. The campus ministry actually has over 125 professed or ordained religious vocations from their ministry. Father Brian Parks in our archdiocese took part in this campus ministry.

I hope many of you will plan to attend Serra's 74th International Convention in Saint Louis, June 30-July 3, 2016. Come see the city and visit with Archbishop Robert Carlson (formerly an auxiliary bishop in our diocese). A Serra conference is a great shot in the arm to motivate us to carry out our Serran Mission and meet some really neat people.

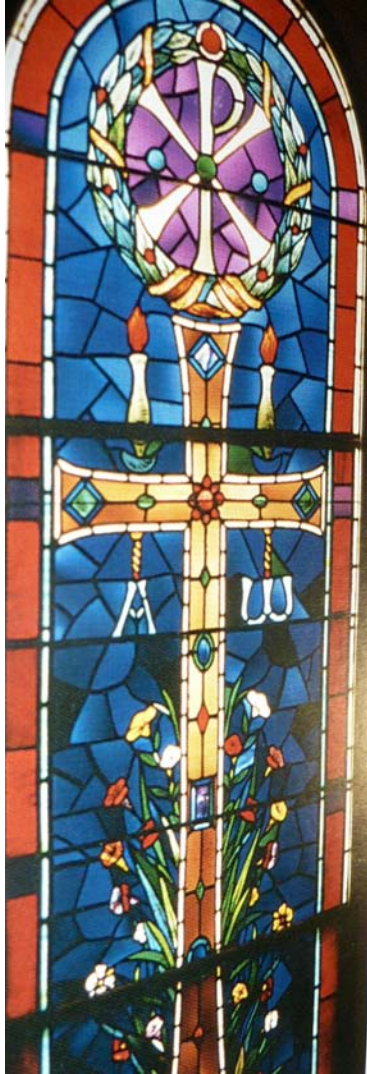


Plan now to go with us to St. Louis!!





ST PAUL SEMINARY TRIP



October 9th found us going as a group to The St Paul Seminary. After Mass at 11:30 in St. Mary's Chapel with the seminarians, we went downstairs for a box lunch and a talk on the Chapel.

Monsignor Aloysius Callaghan gave us the latest statistics on enrollment at the seminary. This year 84 seminarians are enrolled from 17 dioceses; 16 of them are expected to be ordained in 2016, including seven for our Archdiocese.

There are also 136 men from 19 dioceses enrolled at St John Vianney Seminary. In formation for the Permanent diaconate are 32 men including the seven ordained in December. The Catechetical Institute has 416 lay people enrolled this year.

He explained the four pillars of formation – human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral. So many wonderful men are studying for priesthood!

The seminary opened September 4, 1895, built mainly through the efforts of Archbishop John Ireland and James J. Hill. The chapel was completed in May, 1905.

We were given a booklet on Saint Mary's Chapel to follow along as Deacon Joseph Zabinski explained some of the artwork there. He focused on one of the stained glass windows (done by Bancel LaFarge), with the alpha and omega signs (beginning and end, first and last) with a center cross encrusted with jewels signifying royalty, the laurel wreath above it (symbol of victory over sin and death), Greek letters XP

are for the name of Christ in Greek, flowers growing at the base of the cross (new life comes from the cross), 2 candles symbolize the two natures of Christ – human and divine.

Bancel LaFarge also painted the murals after he had worked on the Cathedral of St. Paul. The main mural depicts Jesus in St John's Gospel, Chapter 21, asking Peter if he loved him. The thrice fold question was answered with Feed my lambs, feed my sheep. Above the main mural are Isaiah (left) and Jeremiah (right) fending off God's wrath. The front and back of the chapel were switched in the 1980's so the mural is no longer above the altar but seen as you exit.

We are welcome to join the seminarians any weekday at 11:30 am for Mass with them!!



FATHER ALLAN PAUL EILEN



was with a group of guys many years ago going to California. He was a paramedic/EMT at the time and it was the 200th anniversary of St. Serra's death. Pope John Paul II was there; tickets were hard to get but his EMT uniform became his ticket to this historic event. Eilen was put on the medical team for the event. He had no idea he was about to have his life changed.

Father Eilen went on to see him declared venerable (1985), then beatified (1987.) He figures the LORD wanted him to get to know Padre Serra! Father did not enter the seminary until 2003 in Pre-

Theology and was ordained in 2009!

He explained that much of California is holy ground. Serra was pretty much responsible for the introduction of agriculture and Christianity there.

It was exciting to have Pope Francis announce last year on a flight that he would come to the US to canonize him. Father figured he would have to get to Washington for it in some way. Because of the political climate of today, some are trying to rewrite history to change the way St. Serra is portrayed.

He figured if in the Bible story, a man goes to a friend's house at midnight and is persistent in asking ... he would do the same thing. He called the Rector of the National Shrine repeatedly, telling him why he needed to be there. He finally was told how to register!

Pope Francis challenges people at both ends of the spectrum. He is basically riding on the shoulders of the previous two popes. Saint John Paul II had tremendous personal gifts and was a prolific writer; Pope Benedict was an outstanding theologian who could make complex truths understandable. Pope Francis is a man of action. He respects free will and says holiness is about doing God's will; we should live a Catholic life! Charity plus truth and mercy leads to justice.

Pope Francis recognizes St Junipero Serra to be a holy man in an unjust system of colonization. An interesting fact—Serra was drafting a bill of rights for the Native People at the same time colonists were doing the same thing on the East coast. The Spaniards were after land and gold; the missionaries spread the gospel. They saved California from being taken by the Russians who were coming into California from the north. St Serra had a great love for the native peoples. He told us not to be afraid to talk about St. Junipero Serra! (Christopher Columbus has been downplayed for the same reason.)

Remember his motto: ***Always Forward – Never Back!***



DALE AHLQUIST— AND G.K. CHESTERTON

Dale Ahlquist, the President of the *American Chesterton Society*, host of the EWTN series "*G.K. Chesterton: The Apostle of Common Sense*," publisher of *Gilbert Magazine*, author, co-founder of *Chesterton Academy* and lecturer was our very special guest speaker on November 13th. His presence was a blessing!

There's a good chance you've heard of Dale Ahlquist. Perhaps you've seen him on EWTN, or read one of his books? Wow! What a speaker! He's articulate and oh, so funny; and what a passion he has for the writings of G.K. Chesterton! Although Dale never met Gilbert Chesterton (Chesterton died in 1936, long before Dale was born.) Dale speaks about Chesterton as if the two men had been the best of friends! The extent of Dale's knowledge is very impressive.

Dale started his talk by giving us a quick "snapshot" of Chesterton, including a sketch of his prolific writings, his influence on such notable people as Mahatma Gandhi and C. S. Lewis, and as well as several humorous anecdotes of Chesterton's character, including his wide girth and his absent-mindedness. Dale had us chuckling.



It was humorous to know how unconcerned Chesterton was about both minor and major details of life, so much so that he relied almost fully on the help of his devoted wife, Frances, who helped him plan and stay organized. Dale shared with us that although Chesterton usually was accompanied by Frances when he travelled, he was on one occasion traveling alone and actually sent a telegram to his wife to ask her where he should be! Hilarious! Hearing about Frances' devotion to her husband made me want to meet her, as well as Chesterton!

He also spoke of Chesterton's conversion to Catholicism late in life, and his own conversion to Catholicism at age 39 in 1997. It's edifying to hear stories of brilliant men such as these, who have truly researched the early church and early church Fathers, who ultimately find the fullness of truth in Catholicism.

Pope Francis says:

- None of us should be dour, discontented and dissatisfied, for a gloomy disciple is a disciple of gloom.
- **Radical evangelical living is not only for religious; it is demanded of everyone.**
- Jesus tells us that he himself is the door to eternal life (cf. Jn 10:9), and he asks us, through genuine conversion, to open the doors of our hearts to a more sincere love of God and neighbor.
- **I ask the whole Christian people to be increasingly aware of the gift which is the presence of our many consecrated men and women, heirs of the great saints who have written the history of Christianity.**



SERRA RETREAT

BISHOP ANDREW COZZENS led the full house of Serrans (only) on a silent retreat on prayer. Everyone agreed it was a wonderful, prayerful experience.

He opened by quoting Pope Benedict XVI "prayer is not something accessory, it is not 'optional,' but rather a question of life or death."

The Catechism (§2697) states "Prayer is the life of the new heart. It ought to animate us at every moment. But we tend to forget Him who is our life and our all." Furthermore (§2697), "How can the Holy Spirit be our life if our heart is far from him?"

It is only in prayer that we come to truly discover the meaning of our life.

The four things required of us for a good prayer life are:

- Believing that God wants an intimate personal relationship with me;
- Having a clean conscience;
- Seeking total surrender and
- Having the desire for it.

We learned how to pray with Scripture having St Ignatius as our guide, a form of Lectio Divina.

"Remember you cannot pray at all times if you do not pray sometimes!"

"We have one life - one ETERNAL life - we are in it!"

Teresa of Avila : "God always wants to give you more than you want to receive."

God know us and has a plan for us - what does that sound like? Yes, our vocation! We need to LISTEN (prayer)! The value of silence!

Why does god allow evil? Look what happened to the worst evil, the mystery of death of Christ's death on the cross - God turned it into the best thing that has happened. As Christ got nearer and nearer to the cross, He became weaker and weaker. He conquered through apparent failure and weakness. When we experience failure, it is a profound opportunity for grace. St Paul - **"When I am weak, then I am strong."**



SEE "CONSECRATED LIFE THROUGH THE AGES" ON THE NEXT PAGES

From ancient desert monasticism to contemporary forms of religious life, a small band of Christian men and women in every generation choose to consecrate their lives to God with unique vows of love and service that give radical witness to the gospel.

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SERRA SW TWIN CITIES NEWS

WINTER 2016



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FILLING GOODY BAGS FOR SEMINARIANS





DEACON MICHAEL MCCLELLAN

joined us for lunch December 11th to tell us of his vocation story and take the "goody bags" back to the seminarians as they studied for finals. We did this "event" last year as well and it is fun to see the variety of healthy snacks members come up with for them.

Michael grew up in a Catholic family in Faribault, MN. The youngest of three, his two sisters are married with children. His story began when he was an altar server. This exposure to priests with a chance to talk to them was huge. One day after Mass the priest asked him if he had ever thought about being a priest. He gave the advice to pray about what God wants you to do, specifically ask "God do you want me to be a priest?"

Surprisingly, he felt that God said "yes" leading to a feeling of peace. However, he put it on the back burner. As an altar server at Holy Thursday Mass when he was in 9th grade he felt God calling him to be a priest. Interestingly, other people – teacher, family member, another priest also suggested he should be a priest. He didn't talk about it with many people, especially his parents. When it came time for his college decision, although he felt called he just couldn't decide on the seminary.

At a college visit there, he discovered the priest who originally asked him was on the staff at the college, in fact his office was next to the Vocation Office. That priest is now Bishop Andrew Cozzens! He felt like he was at home; filled out his application and he is now in his eighth year there!

He stressed the importance of prayer and thanked Serrans for their prayers. The seminarians also pray for us! Father Kevin Finnegan was his pastor in Faribault all the way. His favorite times were a semester in Rome – five months in the heart of the Church and a couple of weeks in the Holy Land where scripture comes alive.

Nativity of Our Lord in St. Paul is his teaching parish. A typical weekday is Adoration 6-7am; morning prayer at 7, breakfast, classes, Mass at 11:30am, classes, evening prayer at 5pm.

We wished Deacon Michael a Merry Christmas and helped him load up all the goody bags!



SEVEN WAYS FAMILIES (and Grandparents) CAN FOSTER VOCATIONS

- #1 Read age appropriate stories about the saints.
- #2 Choose from Catholic films that depict heroic priests and religious on family movie night.
- #3 When TV shows send the wrong message, set the record straight about what leads to real happiness. Defend the sacrament of marriage.
- #4 Help children play dress up as priests and religious in addition to playing mommy and daddy.
- #5 During family prayer time, pray for more priests, deacons, brothers and sisters to serve the church.
- #6 Talk about vocations to marriage, priesthood, and religious life. Share how happiness comes from following God's plan.
- #7 Befriend priests and religious. Invite them to dinner often. Let children see their joy.



THE POOR CLARES

Sister Beth and Sister Gabriel from the Monastery on Russell Avenue South in Bloomington gave us a history of the **Poor Clares** and Sister Beth (a dynamic speaker) shared her vocation story.

Sister Beth grew up in the shadow of Padre Serra in the Missions of California. As you can see in the picture, she brought two pictures of Padre Serra, which she said are believed to portray him most realistically. When young, she and her friends would play 'missions' and she would always be Padre Serra!

Growing up, she moved several times but always was near one of the missions. Padre Serra was and is her inspiration. After many coincidences, she eventually entered the Poor Clares' Monastery at Santa Barbara where she was for three years. On to Zambia where she fell in love with the African people and their music and dynamism. Through the direction of Father Urban Wagner, Vicar for Religious, she went to St Bonaventure University in New York and got her Masters in Medieval Studies. "Padre Serra was along with her there." The thrust is to live **in Christ for others**.

She worked in formation and then federation formation. She suggested new sisters in formation go to California and live in the Santa Barbara mission for a week, a popular idea!

Sister raved about Pope Francis and what he is doing bringing people together. It is easier to see the world as a mix a cultures and languages (even the US is a mixture of both) and to see the US as a partner with these other cultures. To see the planet as God's planet. Different cultures bring so much to the world. We are called to be peacemakers, to be concerned about people different from ourselves. (continued...)



After the meeting, a group gathered around the pictures of St. Junipero Serra that Sister Beth brought to show us!

Note the "black shoes" which we display at our meetings to remind us of the need to fill those shoes.



WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT NEWMAN CONNECTION?

DID YOU KNOW...

...THERE IS A PROGRAM CALLED *UNITED IN PRAYER* WHEREBY YOU CAN BE A PART OF THE MINISTRY?

...YOU CAN HELP MORE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS STAY CONNECTED TO THEIR FAITH?

...THERE IS A VALUABLE EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT TO NEWMAN CONNECTION?

...YOU CAN LOG ON TO www.newmanconnection.org TO LEARN MORE ABOUT IT?

- *UNITED IN PRAYER* IS A NATIONAL NETWORK OF OVER 35,000 CATHOLICS PRAYING TOGETHER IN UNITY FOR THE BENEFIT OF CAMPUS MINISTRIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY. THERE IS A SPECIAL PRAYER SAID IN UNITY WEDNESDAYS AT 7pm, SUNDAYS AT 3pm.
- ALL WE NEED IS THE STUDENT'S NAME, COLLEGE AND CITY IT IS IN. CAMPUS MINISTERS CAN THEN CONTACT THEM.
- NEWMAN CONNECTION HAS CREATED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING AVAILABLE ONLINE, IN THE CLASSROOM OR FOR RETREATS. ONLINE VIDEO COURSES ANSWER BIG QUESTIONS LIKE WHO AM I? WHY AM I HERE? FORUMS ALLOW STUDENTS TO POST QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR FAITH; A LARGE SEARCHABLE DATABASE OF SAINTS GIVES STUDENTS ACCESS TO THE WISDOM OF THE SAINTS.

POOR CLARES, CONTINUED

The **Poor Clares** started in the 13th Century. St Francis of Assisi fell in love with Jesus Christ and he felt called to live as a poor itinerant missionary. Clare had a similar calling. Francis was inspired by Clare; they began their new poverty movements under the auspices of the Church. When Francis was dying, he wrote his *Canticle of the Sun*; he died at San Damiano with the Poor Clares. The little band of sisters then moved inside "the walls," their first Monastery.



They do not have a Mother Superior, the Pope is their superior. They are interdependent with people in the neighborhood. Although in the beginning convents had grilles and curtains which separated the sisters from the public, since the 70's, they are open to serve. They have a wonderful place to worship and we are welcome to join them! Besides praying the Divine Office daily as a group, they do spiritual direction, talks, writing, blogging and have a website www.poorclaresminneapolis.org! Check it out – very interesting!

Note – in the website, the sister she mentioned was 102, Sister Anne, died January 11th! The website has a wonderful commentary on her life. One quote from her: "If people only knew how wonderful it is to be a Poor Clare, the world would be filled with Poor Clare monasteries."



IDEAS FROM SERRA RALLY VOCATION COMMITTEE:

U-Tube has several vocation stories of various lengths.

The USCCB wants our help to develop a syllabus regarding vocation education.

Some clubs have Adoration once a month.

Having a program with a seminarian and invite youth (likely in the summer.)

Serrans should be seeds for vocation committees in parishes.

Youth ministers are looking for program ideas!

Since the most important thing is to PRAY, Holy ½ hours are worthwhile once a month, too!

Spiritual bouquets (especially from youth) for our priests are great!

Programs for youth such as "11:11" for 11 year olds and 11th graders.

Called by Name program can be productive.

Altar Server awards are often rewarding.

Enculturate our youth by promoting World and Archdiocesan Youth Days.



Happy St Patricks Day

BOOKS IN OUR LIBRARY FOR YOU!

HUNDREDFOLD by Rhonda Grunewald

A PRIEST IN THE FAMILY by Father Brett Brannen

PRAYING FOR PRIESTS by Kathleen Beckman, L.H.S.

TO SAVE 1000 SOULS by Father Brett Brannen

THE SERRAN HANDBOOK

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS:

MEETINGS: Mass at 11:30 AM followed by
Lunch/SPEAKER:

FEBRUARY 12 *FATHER JEROME FEHN*
Military/hospital chaplain

FEBRUARY 26 *SISTER KATARINA SCHUTH*
*Endowed Chair of Social
Scientific Study of Religion*

MARCH 11 *FATHER ALLEN KUSS*
*Pastoral Formation and
Teaching Parish Program*

APRIL 8 *IMPORTANT BUSINESS MEETING*

EVENTS:

APRIL 2 DISCERNMENT RETREAT FOR WOMEN

APRIL 17 WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS