



Serra Club of Louisville

December, 2020
Newsletter

“To always go forward – to never turn back!”
– Saint Junipero Serra

MISSION:

To foster and promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

If you receive this through regular postal delivery, but would be willing to receive it by email, please contact Chuck Lynch, (502) 244-2752.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

Meetings for December through February will be announced directly to members when they are scheduled.

Due to the coronavirus, the annual December Christmas Luncheon for Senior Women Religious is canceled this year.

NOV. 14 GREAT LAKES REGIONAL SERRA CONFERENCE

On Saturday, November 14, we had a Zoom Regional Conference for all Serrans in the Great Lakes Region, which covers Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, and lower Michigan. This region has 27 active clubs and 670 members. It appears that we had about 46 people participating in the Zoom conference. The meeting went on from noon to 4:30, with a lot of speakers and many topics covered. This article only hits the highlights of the day.

Fr. Michael Norton (from Cincinnati) led us in an opening prayer, as well as the Holy Hour for Vocations and a final blessing.

Gino Dimattia (USA Council Great Lakes Regional Director)

handled the greeting and opening remarks. He also thanked the Steering Committee, which included **Pamela Heckel** (President of the Cincinnati Serra Club), **Michael Murray** (President of the Northern Kentucky Serra Club), **Ken Peet** (the Kentucky District Governor), and Gino himself.

We had several keynote speakers from the USA Council (USAC) Board – **Dr. Anne Roat** (USAC VP of Vocations), **Greg Schwietz** (Acting Southeast Regional Director), and **Richard Arians** (USAC President).

We also had the youngest member of the Cincinnati Serra Club, **Maraia Reinhart**, speak about getting youth to join Serra Clubs, along with two other members of that club – **Jane Hoffman** and **Bill Schwanekamp**. Our own **Ken Peet** was very involved in keeping the program on time.

ceses on how to promote Parish Vocation Committees (PVCs). They have prepared these in conjunction with the National Catholic Diocesan Vocation Directors ([NCDVD](#)) and the USCCB.



Anne pointed out that although the number of U.S. Catholics is up 50% since 1965, the number of priests is down 35%. And while a third of U.S. Catholics are Hispanic, only 14% of our priests are. She talked about parishes using the Serra Promotion And Resource Kit ([SPARK](#)) to help vocation offices and Parish Vocation Committees. It contains 28 tools, which have been updated several times; and it now includes videos for each tool.

Anne also said that “Young men can’t be what they haven’t seen,” - we can’t expect many vocations from among minorities unless we first really promote them.

Quoting someone else, she said, “We don’t have a shortage of vocations, but of people answering the call to their vocation.” Anne spoke of how one parish, St. Mary’s Church in Hudson, Ohio,

Parish Vocation Ministry

Dr. Anne Roat spoke on Parish Vocation Ministry. There is now a USAC Parish Vocation Committee that goes around the country (currently using video conferencing during the pandemic), putting on workshops and educating dio-



REGIONAL CONFERENCE (continued from page 1)

by reaching out to youth with a really strong youth ministry, had seven men become priests – one a year for seven consecutive years through 2019. Read the story [here](#).



To schedule this 9 am to 3 pm workshop in a diocese (followed by a Holy Hour for Vocations), the local Serra Clubs must get the bishop to invite the Committee; the diocese should provide a location; and the Committee would like to have at least five parishes sending three to five representatives each to the event. The USAC Parish Vocation Committee will send materials in advance. The local diocese and Serra Clubs would be responsible for lunch, snacks, hospitality, copies, and scheduling an opening 8:15 Mass, preferably with a homily by the Diocesan Vocation Director.

Anne also spoke of Serrans functioning as mentors to parishes that establish Parish Vocation Committees. She also reminded us that videos on the SPARK website can be used in lieu of speakers for regular Serra meetings.

Four Qualities of St. Serra

Greg Schwietz spoke on four qualities of St. Junipero Serra – prayer, study, zeal, and hope. He said his talk is based on a talk given at the 2019 California Serra Rally in California, summarized in the [August, 2019 issue](#) of The Serran Magazine (page 3 of 20).

Prayer - Greg reminded us that even Christ told us to pray for vocations – “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so, ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.” (Luke 10:2) All Catholics, by virtue of their Baptism, are

called to pray for vocations; but we Serrans are especially called through our chosen role as vocation leaders. St. Serra was a man of prayer. We Serrans *organize* prayers in special ways – e.g., through 31 Clubs, communal prayers, Holy Hours for Vocations, prayers at our meetings, etc.

Study - St. Serra was also a man of study, although he was born to illiterate parents. He even became a university professor before later answering the call to be a missionary priest. For many Catholics, we haven’t had any formal education since we were in school. However, as vocation leaders, we must constantly learn more about our faith. We need educated, intelligent Catholics to defend our faith in the marketplace. This is not just knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but for promoting vocations and the Gospel. Junipero Serra applied his knowledge as a missionary.

For our own studies, Greg spoke of using things such as the [“Word on Fire” program](#) by Bishop Barron, the classic writers of the Catholic Church, and the Scriptures. He said there are so many things we can use to study our faith. He also said to consider books on St. Serra, e.g., the ones by Christian Clifford, [“Who Was Saint Junipero Serra”](#) and [“Saint Junipero Serra, Making Sense of the History and Legacy.”](#)



Zeal – Greg spoke of the zeal of the four men who started the first Serra Club in 1935. They did not know that Fr. Junipero Serra, who lived in the 1700s, would someday be canonized a saint. They just knew that he was a priest who founded many missions on the California coast. They knew that he was so revered by Californians that in 1931 the state put a [statue of Serra](#) in the National Statuary Hall in the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. Serra had a reputation for never giving up. He’s been called an “energizer bunny” for the faith. He faced enormous struggles in his Mexican and Californian missionary efforts. Likewise, this year, we have to face major changes in life as we deal with the pandemic.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE (continued from page 2)

Hope – Greg spoke of how hope is a big deal, not just optimism. It carries us through the pandemic, so we can keep our heads while others are losing theirs. Knowing we are part of God’s big design, we recognize our work is important, despite the pandemic. He said, “Hope is based on faith, which is an act of will.” Our patron is now a canonized saint and we Serrans can be proud of his legacy and that of Serra International. We should ask St. Serra to pray for us and to intercede for us. He is now working with us.

Hope is evidence that there will be a positive outcome, and that we can endure what appears to be unendurable.

Greg said we need to think of these four traits of St. Serra, and integrate them into our lives and our Serran activities.

Arrows of Light – How the Cincinnati Serra Club is Putting on a Youth Leadership Conference

We had three speakers on this topic – from the Serra Club of Cincinnati – **Jane Hoffman, Bill Schwanekamp,** and **Maraia Reinhart.**

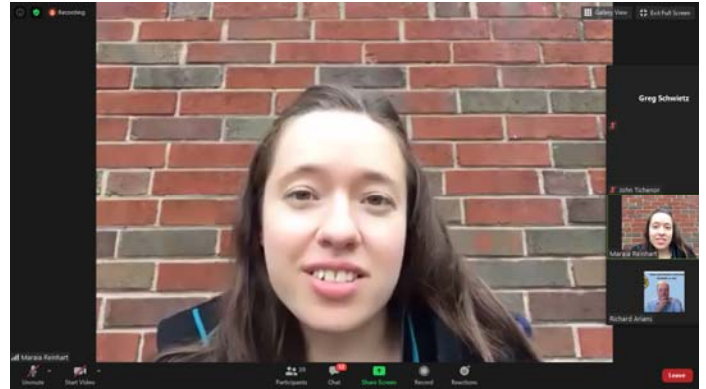
This club was preparing a Youth Leadership Conference that has now been delayed due to the pandemic. However, they wanted to share what went into their planning. They now hope to put on that conference in July of 2021.

The conference has been in the works since early 2019, when they decided they’d approach each of their 130 pastors in the diocese, and ask them to recommend high school youth (from their sophomore through senior years), one boy and one girl from each parish. The youth will be invited to a conference about being leaders of the future Church, understanding Serra Clubs, and learning more about vocation opportunities. It’s not a retreat, but a conference dedicated to leaders.

The end goal was to get these young leaders to recognize their gifts of leadership and learn how to use them. The conference will also use the SPARK materials.

Maraia Reinhart, the youngest member of the Cincinnati club, spoke on how to attract youth to the Serra Clubs: the need to inspire them with the mission of Serra; making them aware of the importance of vocations; and making them realize that they can make a difference. She said youth want to join us in leadership, proclaiming the Gospel, and discussing God’s will in their lives. She also said that youth “like to get their hands dirty,” being active, feeling productive,

and getting involved in high school programs. She knows of youth who are willing to speak at high schools regarding Serra Clubs and vocations.



Maraia spoke of telling youth, “no priests, no Eucharist,” and that “we need holy priests and holy marriages.” She spoke of youth always being on social media, especially during the pandemic. She personally feels it is important to a Serra Club to use social media.

Once the Cincinnati July, 2021 Youth Leadership Conference is over, there will be information available on the website of the [Serra Club of Cincinnati](#).

Serra in Action

Gino Dimattia introduced our next speaker – **Richard Ariens**, President of the USA Council of Serra.

To put things in perspective, Richard spoke of there being 1.3 billion Catholics in the world and 77 million in the U.S. In addition to the USA Council of Serra, there are nine others councils worldwide. Of course, it is USAC that understands the U.S. culture.

He spoke of how the pandemic makes the priest’s job a lonelier job – with Masses online, and talking to their parishioners through computer screens but not seeing most of them in person.

To be a true friend to priests means knowing how to “accompany and sustain them in faith, in fidelity to prayer and apostolic commitment,” the Serrans were told in an audience with the Pope in 2017.

On technology, Richard says he often hears club representatives say “We’re an older club” – implying it’s hard to keep up with all the changes in technology. He reminded us there will be even more of these changes in the future. However, we need to embrace the technology and use it to our advantage, just as we were doing with this Zoom conference.

One time he was introducing “texting” to some

**All of us Serrans are
recruiters for the Serra Club.
"Each one, bring one!"**

REGIONAL CONFERENCE (continued from page 3)

people, when he received grumbles. Then he asked his audience, “How do you communicate with your grandchildren?” He said we don’t want to die while still living. We need to take steps to embrace the



technology changes – for interacting with our grandchildren as well as promoting vocations.

Richard said one of the most frequent questions asked of him is: What do USAC and Serra International offices (both in Chicago) do for the Serra Clubs in the U.S.?

Richard went into a list of ways that USAC and SI help the individual clubs and its members. His list included: quarterly issues of “The Serran” magazine; the email newsletter “Always Forward,” twice a month; USAC website and resources; SPARK materials online; a website area currently being developed on the Legacy of St. Serra; the relationships that USAC has developed with other organizations, such as the NCDVD; the creation of Seven Serrans Prayer Teams praying for diocesan vocation directors; the Newman Connection keeping Catholic college freshmen in touch with their faith; the “Call to Holiness” manual (recently redesigned); hosting club meetings for clubs needing help (now being done by Zoom); hosting the annual Serra Rally; hosting the “Serra Meets” (the morning of the second Saturday each month) - speaker series to temporarily replace the Rally during the pandemic; new member kits; officer training workshops; quarterly webinars for district governors; training for *new* club officers; training for use of the Serra portal where we keep information on all clubs and members; online meetings for each of the different types of officers to share ideas and best practices; a marketing project (currently being developed with the help of a hired marketing firm); updates to our by-laws (soon clubs can rebrand themselves, and also put “Saint Serra” in the name of the club, now that Serra has been canonized);

“Serra is the action that follows prayer.”

and helping some clubs which had lost their non-profit status with the IRS.

Richard recommends that all clubs have a Facebook page. He also said that “Serra is the *action* that follows *prayer*.”

The conference was closed with a Holy Hour for Vocations and a Rosary.

Thanks to everyone at the national, regional, and district level who made this possible, including our own District Governor, Ken Peet.

NOV. 16 MEETING – FR. PAT DOLAN SPOKE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Fr. Pat Dolan, Assistant Chaplain to our club, spoke on Artificial Intelligence at this month’s hybrid meeting, with some attending virtually and some in person. This topic was chosen because of the Pope’s intention for this month – “We pray that the progress of robotics and artificial intelligence may always serve humankind.” We had about a dozen people attending this meeting, with about one-third attending virtually.

Thanks to Fr. Bernard Timothy, O.P., Pastor of St. Louis Bertrand, for allowing us to use the Heritage Room for these meetings.

Fr. Pat recently published a 13-page paper on this subject. The abstract can be found [here](#). And the paper itself can be found [here](#). Some of the quotes below were also taken from this paper.

Fr. Pat reminded us that we are made in the image and likeness of God. And all intelligence, even that of animals, is part of God’s creation. However, we humans were given a special role according to Genesis 1:26 – “Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth.” In other words, we’re sort of “at the top of the food chain.” So, much of his talk was on “dominion” – which is all about “respect and mutuality.”

Fr. Pat spoke of the history of tools and machines,



FR. PAT DOLAN
(continued from page 4)

and even the 1930s science of studying thought. The high-tech world began in the 1950s with transistors, crystals circuits, and tubes, all of which have been getting smaller or have been replaced with much smaller technology with the passage of time.

Society rightfully has concerns about our computers and artificial intelligence (AI) maybe taking on a bigger role than we realize. Will AI someday compete with us and “possibly become independent enough to become a threat to humans?” The Alexa devices, the control of machines that harvest our data, questions about who has access to our data and control over this data, especially at a distance, are all concerns we have about technology.

“In comparison, understanding what human life is, as something more than just part of the food chain, has been pursued by philosophers and psychologists (as well as theologians) over the years.” When we begin to worry about computers



becoming “self-aware,” then we get into the realm of “spiritual existence.”

Fr. Pat suggests we look at what evidence we can find of the hidden life of Christ in the New Testament, what Fr. Pat called “evidence-based reality.” How did human nature work in Jesus? Christ exercised respect and mutuality and gave us the example of a perfect human being. Even as a 12-year old, he respected his parents – “He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them ...” (Luke 2:51) There’s no indication of his performing miracles prior to his public life around age 30.

“Examining this way of living out divine love, as it operated in Christ’s hidden life, helps us clarify the difference between human intelligence and artificial intelligence - and why artificial intelligence needs human control.”

From Fr. Pat’s paper, “Yet, this connection to Christ as the one through whom all things were made

is still very deep ... Just as a fertilized sperm and egg cell multiply and differentiate, so that each kind of cell generated from that single cell has identical chromosomes yet acts differently by doing what is its proper function; so also the living cells (human and all other creatures) produced through and by Christ are intimately a part of him – from the very beginning of creation – yet are distinct. Respecting this distinction, yet enabling mutuality, is an essential part of dominion.”

He said that dominion is not about domination, or the dog-eat-dog world you often find in large corporations. Instead, we must care for one another, something we have trouble imagining AI doing. We humans should not only “make the best out of a situation” but think of others as part of our family.

Having spent many years as a military chaplain, he gave examples of men and women in the military, of all ranks, and including spouses and children - as a team, or family, that worked to help one another. The traits used included cooperation, respect, mutuality and, in some cases, even dying for one another. AI can handle large amounts of data; but it’s hard to imagine it having these traits.

As stated in Fr. Pat’s paper, “Although one computer can organize the tasks of another, there is no sense of dominion. Moreover, the concept of mutual care is completely missing in AI, including any sense of emotional attachment despite the programmed attempts to exhibit emotions ...” Machines are also fragile in the sense that external electrical frequencies or a nuclear explosion could “completely disable a nation’s worth of AI devices that are not extensively shielded.”

“Humans have a responsibility to mitigate such risks. Just as with any complex (or dangerous) tool, there is the possibility of not only misuse, but the ability to monopolize and control.” As a result, we need human control of our machines to be sure they don’t get out of hand.

We want to thank Fr. Pat for his presentation. It gives us a lot of food for thought. We also want to thank Ken Peet, Paul Willett, and Jerry Gonsoski for helping with the technology to make the meeting possible.

Thanks, also, to Paul Willett for the pictures with this article.

“Thanks to Fr. Bernard Timothy, O.P., Pastor of St. Louis Bertrand, for allowing us to use the Heritage Room for these meetings.”

**PRIESTS IN OUR ARCHDIOCESE
WHO ARE CELEBRATING
ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES
IN DECEMBER**

Asterisk indicates "retired."

- BELL, REV. GERALD L.*, 12-15-73, 47 YRS
- CARRICO, REV. ADAM B., 12-19-15, 5 YRS
- MERKT, REV. JOSEPH T.*, 12-17-66, 54 YRS
- MUNJANATTU, O.F.M. CONV., REV. GEORGE, 12-26-0, 20 YRS
- MURPHY, L.C., REV. J. SCOTT, 12-12-9, 11 YRS
- POZHATHUPARAMBIL, O.F.M. CONV., REV. JOHN, 12-30-1, 19 YRS
- SHOONER, REV. JEFFREY P., 12-11-4, 16 YRS
- STILES, REV. J. ROY*, 12-18-63, 57 YRS
- THANDIACKAL C. M. I., REV. SEEJO, 12-28-04, 16 YRS
- THOMAS, C.M.I., REV. JOSEPH, 12-30-98, 22 YRS
- VADAKUMPADAN, C.M.I., REV. SAJU M., 12-29-92, 28 YRS

**GREAT LOCAL HOMILY
ON VOCATIONS**

Fr. Shayne Duvall is Pastor at St. Raphael’s parish. His homily, for the weekend that closed out the National Vocation Awareness Week, was on vocations. It was Saturday night’s Mass (Nov. 7), now saved on YouTube [here](#).

If you just want to hear the homily, go to the bottom of the screen and move the red dot. The homily begins at 18:20 and ends at 34:40, the minutes and seconds into the recording of the whole Mass. Fr. Shayne did a great job. If you have time, check it out.

**POPE FRANCIS’ NEW OCTOBER 3,
2020 ENCYCLICAL**

“FRATELLI TUTTI” – (translated as Brothers and Sisters All), with the subtitle “On Fraternity and Social Friendship”) To read the entire encyclical, click [here](#). (8 chapters, 67 pages not counting footnotes, 285 numbered paragraphs.) For an excellent summary, click [here](#). For a shorter summary, click [here](#).

One quote: "Yet it must never be forgotten that loving the most insignificant of human beings as a brother, as if there were no one else in the world but him, cannot be considered a waste of time."

Some quotes on vocation include:

- "... the first victim of every war is “the human family’s innate vocation to fraternity.” (Paragraph 26)
- "Let us look to the example of the Good Samaritan. Jesus’ parable summons us to rediscover our vocation as citizens of our respective nations and of the entire world, builders of a new social bond." (Paragraph 66)
- "In the dynamics of history, and in the diversity of ethnic groups, societies and cultures, we see the seeds of a vocation to form a community composed of brothers and sisters who accept and care for one another." (Paragraph 96)
- "Business activity is essentially 'a noble vocation, directed to producing wealth and improving our world.' God encourages us to develop the talents he gave us, and he has made our universe one of immense potential. In God’s plan, each individual is called to promote his or her own development, and this includes finding the best economic and technological means of multiplying goods and increasing wealth." (Paragraph 123)
- "Once more, I appeal for a renewed appreciation of politics as "a lofty vocation and one of the highest forms of charity, inasmuch as it seeks the common good." (Paragraph 180)
- "For us the wellspring of human dignity and fraternity is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. From it, there arises, “for Christian thought and for the action of the Church, the primacy given to relationship, to the encounter with the sacred mystery of the other, to universal communion with the entire human family, as a vocation of all.” " (Paragraph 277)

**POTPOURRI –
VARIOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST**

Birthdays this Month:

Sam DuPlessis, Dec 6 Neil Manias, Dec 25

Pope’s Prayer Intentions for December – Prayer intention for evangelization - For a life of prayer - We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

McGivney beatification reminds us to thank our clergy – read the article [here](#).

Thanks to **Mary Means** and **Lynn Haner** for proofing this newsletter.

Newsletter questions, comments, or submissions?
Contact Chuck Lynch at (502) 244-2752.