



Saint Serra Club of Louisville VOCATION DIGEST

**JULY, 2023
Newsletter**

MISSION:

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

Club chartered May 22, 1955

**“Always Forward, Never Back”
– Saint Junipero Serra**

If you receive this through regular postal delivery, but would be willing to receive it by email, please contact Chuck Lynch, (502) 442-9302.

FR. PAT DOLAN GAVE THE HOMILY FOR OUR JUNE 5 MASS AND MEETING.

On June 5, at the St. Margaret Mary Hospitality Room, we met to elect officers for the coming fiscal year, to adopt updated by-laws, to celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving, and to share a wonderful lunch.



We had one of the largest

turnouts of members we have seen in quite a while! All but five of our thirty members were able to attend.

In Fr. Pat’s Mass and homily, he told us about the stole he was wearing. It was made by a friend of his mother’s, who had gotten a sewing machine about the time that he was ordained a transitional deacon in Rome. This woman had a personal desire to make something useful, using ordinary things. Some of Fr. Pat’s relatives came to Rome for the ordination.

The stole is covered with symbols of many things including the Sacraments of baptism, marriage, confirmation, anointing of the sick, Eucharist - and using two different

liturgical colors. The chain was added in such a way that the stole could be used initially by a deacon, and then later moved so that the stole could be used by a priest. Fr. Pat has used it now for 46 years.

He said we are like this woman - doing things that are good and useful for the Church, promoting the Kingdom of God, with our prayers, activities, and encouragement. Just as his mother’s friend practiced her hobby, he said we do the same. Fr. Pat added, “You often do not see what your practicing accomplishes ... because it may be decades later” that the seeds we plant could turn into vocations.

That day’s Mass reading, from the book of Tobit, talks about someone being faithful, even during exile, oppression and persecution. God sends all kinds of trials at first. Then God sent the archangel Raphael to turn it into something good.

We are like Tobit and other faithful people in the Church. We Serrans, by our good example and fostering vocations, support the Kingdom of God on earth. Our activities will eventually help create vocations.

Fr. Pat also spoke of his Mass kit, which has been used by him as a military chaplain for many years, including time in Iraq. He can fit all he needs to serve Mass in a container the size of a cigar box.

After the homily, Ken Peet, our

Regional Director, led the special prayers and readings, with officers reciting their oaths of leadership. The newly elected officers are **Bob Hublar** – President and VP of Vocations; **Ken Peet** – Secretary; **Jerry Gonsoski** – Treasurer; **Lynn Haner** – VP of Membership; **Melody Denson** – VP of Programs; **Chuck Lynch** – VP of Communications; and **Theresa Fiedler, Debbie Farmer, and Kevin Thieneman** – Trustees.

In addition to Fr. Pat, we want to thank everyone who helped out with organizing this lunch – Bob Hublar, Jerry Gonsoski, Charlie Francesconi, Debbie Farmer, Jerry Zimmerer, Lynn Haner, Paul Koprucki, Richard and Peggy Spalding, Paul Willett and Chuck Lynch.

(Thanks to Jerry Zimmerer for the picture with this article.)

**THANK YOU TO ST.
MARGARET MARY PARISH
FOR ALLOWING US
TO USE THEIR HOSPITALITY
ROOM FOR OUR
JUNE 5 MEETING.**

NEW SLATE OF OFFICERS ELECTED JUNE 5

The annual election of officers was made at the June 5 meeting. Officers are listed above.

Our **Chaplain Fr. Pat Dolan** and **Assistant Chaplain Fr. Jeff Hopper** will continue in their existing roles.

NEW SLATE OF OFFICERS ELECTED (continued from page 1)



We thank all of our volunteers! And we want to especially thank **Ralph Williams**, who is coming off of the Board after being one of our Board members for about a quarter of a century! He has also been a President for the club, a District Governor, and VP of Programs. Ralph, thanks for all you've done for Serra!



KEVIN WELLS SPOKE AT OUR JUNE 10 "SERRA MEETS."

Kevin Wells is a former award-winning sports journalist with the Tampa Tribune where he covered Major League Baseball and other sports. He is the best-selling author of the book "The Priests We Need to Save the Church," a written plea for holy priests to live like the great saints before them. Kevin is president of the [Monsignor Thomas Wells Society](#) for vocations, which commits itself to the promotion of strong priests and seminarians. Practicing the fullness of the Catholic faith, his work with youth earned him the James Cardinal Hickey National figure award from the Archdiocese of Washington.

He is a freelance writer, active evangelist, and speaker.

Kevin said, "I love the Serrans ... You just have an instinct to be witnesses in the world."

Kevin spoke of the piecemeal collapse of society these days, the breaking of moral laws. He said the Church is suffering terribly, and undergoing a crucifixion right now.

He's from a family of 10 children; and he and his wife wanted a large family. He was a sports writer in Florida early in their marriage. Since he and his wife were struggling with infertility, Kevin gave up writ-

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Regular meetings - We target to have most meetings the first and third Mondays of each month, at **11:30 AM**, in the **Golden Corral at Hikes Point** (4032 Taylorsville Road). The charge will be \$12 for members and \$15 for guests.

July 3 (1st Mon) – NO MEETING DUE TO THE HOLIDAY.

July 8 (2nd Sat) – 12 Noon Louisville time - "Serra Meets" - national Zoom meeting for all Serrans – for details, click [here](#).

July 10 (2nd Mon) – 7 pm - **Rosary for Vocations**, by Zoom. See separate article for details.

July 12 - Holy Hour for Vocations – 12:45 at St. Margaret Mary Chapel, after the Noon Mass.

July 17 (3rd Mon) – **Fr. Bob Ray** speaks on "Church and Vocation: Business as Usual or Something Unusual? What is the Call?"

July 25 (Tue) – 12:45 - **Serra Board meeting** - St. Margaret Mary Spirituality Center.

Questions? - Contact Chuck Lynch at (502) 442-9302 or ChuckLynch4782@gmail.com.

ing; he and his wife agreed to move back to Maryland to be near relatives; and he joined the family masonry business.

Dealing with the inability to have children early in their marriage, Kevin and his wife sought spiritual guidance from Fr. Thomas Wells, Kevin's uncle. "Fr. Tommy" spoke of redemptive suffering and offering up their problems to the Lord.

Two days later, Fr. Wells was murdered in his rectory where they had met with their uncle, causing the family unspeakable pain. Their lives were changed forever.

Kevin and his wife eventually decided to adopt. And now they have three children ages 15 to 21.

KEVIN WELLS
(continued from page 2)

On a retreat at age 40, Kevin realized he was too comfortable in life, but he wasn't getting done what he felt he needed to do; he wasn't loving enough. He was too prideful. He felt he had been saved by a priest, Fr. Tommy Wells, but hadn't given back to God what he should have.

He felt the Holy Spirit suggesting he needed to be re-made, hit by a lightning bolt, and made a better man in the eyes of God. A month later, to the day, he had a brain aneurysm, and was told he should have died.

As he thought he was going to die, he thought of all his shortcomings and how he would have to face God. He felt his life had not been worthy enough.

Kevin had eight hours of brain surgery for a malformation deep in his brain – one surgeons could not reach without causing death. Kevin's wife called a priest friend who immediately came to the hospital. Fr. Jim Stack knelt at his bedside, and asked if there were any saints whose intercession Kevin would like to request. Kevin mentioned his deceased uncle, Fr. Tommy Wells. They prayed for intercession by Fr. Tommy.

They all felt a strange temperature change in the room. Kevin had a supernatural experience, seeing lights and his dead Uncle Tommy at his side.

The next day he went through cat scans and found that all the problems were gone! He had to re-learn to walk; but he recovered! Kevin began to understand and appreciate the sacred order of the priesthood, the anointing that priests can do, the power of the priesthood.

His whole life was changed. He eventually got back to his job in the family's masonry business, but began to see fellow workers, "not just as architects, engineers, and superintendents, but as souls." He began to attend weekday Mass.

He felt that the priests at Mass weren't proclaiming all that they were supposed to proclaim.

He spoke with his brothers in the masonry business and decided to take a sabbatical, to write a book about the priesthood. He studied the lives of many priest-saints – including John Vianney, Maximilian Kolbe, John Henry Newman, Damian the leper, John Bosco, and others. And he included stories of his uncle, Fr. Tommy Wells.

He was getting rejections from publishers after sending them several chapters. He even felt he was



failing his wife, and that Satan was picking on him.

He kept working on the book. Then all the media started covering the scandals surrounding Cardinal McCarrick. All of a sudden, the publishers were getting back to him.

The president of EWTN called to say he heard that Kevin was writing a book, making a plea for the sanctity of the priesthood, for priests to live up to their calling and to overcome all the recent bad news about the priesthood.

On August 15, 2019, the Feast of the Assumption, his book was released – "The Priests We Need to Save the Church" and, as Kevin put it, "not because of the old washed up sports writer," it became a Catholic bestseller.

And what happened was this – "Throughout the world not just the country, something I could have never perceived happened" – priests, bishops,

seminarians, and even an Anglican priest, contacted him to say they read his book and were moved by it. Kevin credited all the success to God.

Kevin's 240-page book "[The Priests We Need to Save the Church](#)" was published by Sophia Institute Press. Amazon customer reviews rate it 4.7 out of 5.

The new book price is \$17.95, but used copies are available on the Internet. One [review of the book](#) (by Rey Flores with "The Wanderer") said, "The point of Kevin's book is that it is only the sure and sacrificial work of parish priests that can get the Church back onto the straight and narrow path, making it once more the holy and bountiful institution Christ established two thousand years ago."

Kevin wants to encourage priests to do more prayer, devotion to Mary, mortification, and living life boldly. He knows of priests who, after the sex scandals of recent decades, have "put their foot on the brake" and given up some of what they hoped to do when first ordained.

He said a couple who read his book suggested he write a book about venerable Fr. Aloysius Schwartz - a priest (who he had never heard of) from Washington, DC, born during the Depression who chose to become a missionary in 1957 at the age of 27. Fr. Al had asked to go to the neediest part of the world, and ended up in Korea after the Korean War – where there was a scorched landscape, beggars, orphans, thousands dying of tuberculosis, women (impregnated by American and European servicemen) living under bridges, war shrapnel, landmines, and more.

Fr. Al founded the Sisters of Mary to help address the country's problems. He built boys towns and girls towns and, in 15 years, turned around Korea. Eventually, 175,000 of these children were placed in these types

KEVIN WELLS
(continued from page 3)

of facilities all over the world. The 400 sisters in this order now address the needs of these children on several continents.

Kevin was so impressed by the life of venerable Fr. Al Schwartz, that he further changed his own life. He sees the children cared for by the Sisters of Mary as missionaries to the whole Church, through their example of growing up Catholic, praying the Rosary, and leading holy lives, while many adults are leaving the Church elsewhere.

Kevin wrote a biography of Venerable Fr. Aloysius Schwartz - **"Priest and Beggar: The Heroic Life of Venerable Aloysius Schwartz"** - \$17.95 You can read a review of the book [here](#).

Kevin's website can be found [here](#).

You can watch the entire June 10 "Serra Meets" presentation, including the usual business session, [here](#).

VOCATION CHALLENGE COINS
FOR YOUNG MEN

We recently offered to each of our priests the option to have Challenge Coins, which can be given to young men who might make good candidates to consider the priesthood. **We're now offering them to deacons in our Archdiocese.**



If any priest or deacon is interested, please contact Chuck Lynch at ChuckLynch4782@gmail.com or (502) 442-9302. Thanks to all priests who are participating in this promotion of the priesthood.

SEMINARIAN CONOR MCCLURE SPOKE
AT OUR JUNE 19 MEETING.

Our speaker for this meeting was seminarian Conor McClure. His parents, Patrick and Ann McClure, also attended the meeting.

Conor was born and raised here in Louisville. He grew up just the other side of the county line in Hillview, and his time growing up was split between Bullitt and Jefferson Counties.

He attended St. Aloysius Gonzaga school in Shepherdsville until it closed in 2012. Then his family became members of St. Athanasius, where they've

been ever since.

Both his parents still live in the house in Hillview where he grew up.

Conor graduated from Trinity High School in 2017 and UofL in 2021, with a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting. He started seminary last Fall, at St. Meinrad.

Conor has an older brother and sister, and one younger sister.

For this summer, Conor was assigned to assist at St. Margaret Mary Parish. And he's already joined the K of C Chapter at that parish.

Conor joined us for lunch to tell us about his vocation journey and his first year in the seminary.

Conor says that his vocation journey began at St. Aloysius parish, where Fr. David Naylor was pastor when Conor was in the third grade. In an attempt to get more priests out of altar servers, the parish did not allow girls to be altar servers at that time. As a third grader, Conor thought that if girls were not allowed, then being a server was the thing to do!

He served there until the school closed in 2012, when his family started going to St. Athanasius parish, which also needed servers. So, he was also a server there. He served every week, even until he was a junior in high school. He had helped train other servers, but then gave up serving and began to sit with his family in the pews. "This does not feel right!" he said to himself. He spoke about it with Fr. Gary Davis, who said, "Well, I think you'd be a good priest."

He wrestled with the idea for a while, even talking with the Vocation Office. Then he planned on attending a regular university, getting a degree and a career, and maybe later trying a year in the seminary. He went to UofL to major in accounting. After two to three years of school toward an accounting career, he began to think, "I wish I was in the seminary. This is not where I'm supposed to be."

Conor graduated from UofL in December of 2021, and got a job. But in May of 2022, he emailed Sr. Sa-



SEMINARIAN CONOR MCCLURE
(continued from page 4)

rah Yungwirth in the Vocation Office, with whom he hadn't communicated for several years, about reconsidering the seminary. Fr. Martin Linebach had just been appointed Interim Vocation Director. After some discussions and rushing some paperwork, they got him into the seminary for the Fall of 2022. He got his letter of acceptance about a week before the Fall semester was to start at St. Meinrad Seminary.

The Benedictine hospitality at St. Meinrad really impressed Conor. But he initially thought he'd eventually transfer to St. Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati. However, after a couple of months at St. Meinrad, he realized he had quit thinking that way. By that time, he'd become very attached to the community at St. Meinrad. He thought of the Benedictines as very wise and very spiritual teachers. He's now looking forward to going back there in the Fall.

He loves the teachers at St. Meinrad, and speaks highly of its experts and one professor who is a foremost scholar on the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre.

We thank Conor for taking the time to tell us of his vocation journey, and wish him well this Fall.

(Thanks, too, to Jerry Zimmerer for the pictures with this article.)

NEW MEMBER - LINCOLN LEWIS, JR.



Lincoln Lewis, Jr. is a member of St. Louis Bertrand Parish, and President of their parish council. He worked for 21 years at Brown and Williamson Tobacco, then owned his own marketing and advertising firm for over 20 years. He married a Notre Dame grad, Nancy, who was Associate Director for St. Vincent DePaul and passed

away three years ago. He has a son and a daughter and two grandchildren.

He met the Dominicans brothers through the St. Vincent DePaul, and eventually joined St. Louis Bertrand parish because of the Dominicans. When he heard that Brian Engelland was going to speak to our club last November, he attended one of our meetings. He has come to a number of our meetings since then, and has been impressed and wants to support the cause of the St. Serra Club.

After he applied to become a member, the Board

approved him on May 23.

Lincoln, welcome to the St. Serra Club of Louisville!

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION

Sometimes people wonder how we educate new members who join the St. Serra Club. We have several things to share with them:

First is the 2023, 35-minute [New Member Orientation Video](#).

Second are the [handouts](#) which go with the video.

Third is a [four-minute video](#) on the life of St. Junipero Serra.

Finally, we tell our members where to find the [Serra Channel on YouTube](#), with videos of many meetings, training courses, and much more.

JOIN US BY ZOOM FOR OUR MONTHLY "ROSARY FOR VOCATIONS"

Our Saint Serra Club of Louisville gathers online for our Zoom Rosary for Vocations at 7 pm, on the **second Monday of each month**. By link, click [here](#).

By phone, call (312) 626 6799. Meeting ID is 865 4452 6535.

PRIESTS CELEBRATING ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to our priests celebrating anniversaries of ordination this month. This list includes priests from religious orders and other dioceses, working in our Archdiocese. The asterisk (*) indicates "Retired."

DAY, C.P., REV. JOHN P., 7/8/72, 51 yrs

HAYDEN, REV. JOSEPH F.*, 7/14/63, 60 yrs

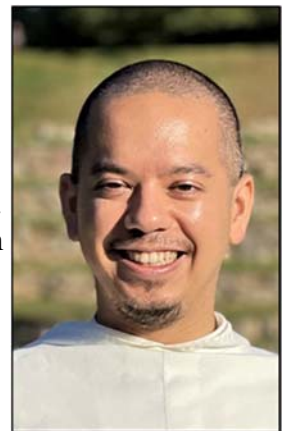
OTUMA, A.J., REV. GEORGE, 7/21/01, 22 yrs

PAYYAPPILLY, OFM, REV. LEO, 7/27/19, 4 yrs

SAVE THE DATE - OUR FALL RETREAT WILL BE ON NOVEMBER 11

Our Fall Retreat will be held at St. Margaret Mary Parish, in their Hospitality Room. It will take place on November 11, starting with Mass at 8:15. The Retreat will include lunch and run until 1 pm.

Fr. John Baptist Hoang, OP, will speak on "Holiness - Living Life to the Full."



“COME AND SEE” VOCATION WEEKEND - SEPTEMBER 1 TO 4 , 2023



MEN, COME VISIT GETHSEMANI AND THE TRAPPIST MONKS!

Is the Lord calling you to follow him in the monastic life? Experience this beautiful vocation during a weekend at the monastery

- You will attend the hours of prayer in choir with the monks, tour the work places of the monks, walk our extensive lands and enjoy the scenic knobs of Kentucky.
- On Sunday morning you will process into the Chapter Room with the monks and join the community for the Abbot's weekly spiritual talk.
- There will be opportunities to learn how God has worked in the lives of current monks and share your experiences with other men discerning God's call.

Come and experience a few days in a monastery that has not stopped praising and worshipping God daily in the heart of the Church for **175 years (1848-2023)**

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

Friday, September 1 - arrival in the afternoon before 3 p.m.

Monday, September 4 - departure in the morning (or Sunday afternoon)

Come and See weekend is open to all single men between the ages of 18 and 35. Participants must be Roman Catholic and enjoy good health of mind and body.

Space is limited, so an early response assures a place in the weekend experience. A detailed schedule of the weekend will be given upon arrival.

Meals and room accommodations are free. There is no charge or donation for this event.

We also provide Airport/bus pickup in Louisville. If you are driving, "Abbey of Gethsemani" is a destination on Google maps and most GPS devices.

Interested? Please contact Fr. Anton at vocations@monks.org or call 502-549-4116.

Please tag the subject line on your email "Come and See."

[ON HOLINESS AND SPIRITUALITY](#)

A sister’s commentary on AI - The Church can open minds on AI, says Sister Helen Alford – Read the article [here](#).

Ten Easy ways to grow in your faith this summer - Read the article [here](#).

Third World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly will be July 23 - Read the article [here](#).

How to practice contemplative meditation – Read the article [here](#). The related book, “The Cloud of Unknowing” can be purchased [here](#).

You are God’s Difference Maker – Read the article [here](#).

The Athanasian Creed - Read the article [here](#).

Brazilian triplets who also became religious sisters - Read the article [here](#).

How to use Scripture to fight a recurrent temptation or vice - Read the article [here](#).

Prayer is unhiddenness - Read the article [here](#).

The power of witness: How the early Church evangelized - Read the article [here](#).

Insights from an exorcist - An Interview with Exorcist Fr. Carlos Martins - Read the article [here](#).

Why people change religions - A rising number of Americans are switching religions - Read the article [here](#).

Consider praying the prayer of the Church: The Liturgy of the Hours - Read the article [here](#).

The best books on spirituality for Catholics - Read the article [here](#).

The Meaning of Life - Read the article [here](#).

Saint John Paul II on How Best to Pray - Read the article [here](#).

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

[COME-AND-SEE RETREAT](#)
[DOMINICAN SISTERS OF PEACE](#)

Have you ever wondered whether God is calling you to become a Sister or do you want to know more about consecrated life? We, the Dominican Sisters of Peace, are offering a **free** Come and See Discernment weekend retreat, **September 8-10, 2023**, in the beautiful hills of **St. Catharine, Kentucky** for single Catholic women ages 18-45.

Come and spend some time with us praying and talking with our Sisters, sharing with other women of FAITH, discovering God’s PURPOSE for your life, and enjoying an experience of COMMUNITY LIFE while exploring RELIGIOUS LIFE lived out as a Dominican Sister of Peace.

During this retreat, you will have time for quiet personal prayer and reflection, and there will be presentations on the discernment process and about the Dominican Sisters of Peace. Additionally, you will have a sister companion to speak with one-to-one for spiritual guidance and help in discerning your vocation in life. This year, we are offering an optional bonus day on Friday, September 8th. You may arrive Thursday and spend Friday, in prayer, community, fun, and touring our Dominican heritage sites with sisters and other discerners. To get a glimpse of what to expect, click [here](#) to view highlights from a previous retreat we held at our Motherhouse in St. Catharine, Kentucky.

If interested in this retreat, please contact Sr. Mai-Dung (*pronounced My-Zung*) Nguyen, OP at mai-dung.nguyen@oppeace.org or call/text her at (405) 248-7027 and she will get back to you with more details about this retreat opportunity! We look forward to hearing from you soon! You may register for the program by clicking [here](#).

[ST. JUNIPERO SERRA](#)
[FEAST DAY IS JULY 1](#)

As we celebrate the Feast Day of St. Junipero Serra, consider some of his quotes and the Spirituality of St. Serra:

"I pray God may preserve your health and life many years." – St. Serra

“To a willing heart, all is sweet.” – St. Serra

“Missionary Disciples: The Spirituality of St. Junipero Serra” can be read [here](#).

CALLING ALL MENTORS FOR IGNITE WORKSHOP PARISHES

At the May 13 *Serra Meets* Zoom presentation, **Dr. Anne Roat** (President-Elect of the USA Council) also spoke; and her brief announcement was that she needs mentors for parishes (all over the country) that have gone through the IGNITE Workshop. She made several points.



She said that what makes IGNITE workshops successful are the mentors. After several parishioners attend an IGNITE workshop, the parish is assigned a Serra Club mentor, who can come from anywhere in the country, but ideally from a nearby Serra Club.

The mentor attends a 45-minute online webinar to learn how to be a mentor.

The mentor accompanies the parish for one year, typically calling a parish contact person once a month to check in on their status, asking how the parish vocation ministry is coming along, answering questions, and asking if there's anything they can help with - usually taking 45 to 60 minutes per month.

VOCATIONS IN THE NEWS

Heart warming stories about sisters and nuns who have impacted so many – Read the article [here](#).

After nine years without ordinations, Argentine diocese has a new priest. – Read the article [here](#).

“Take a Risk for Christ”: Ireland starts vocation initiative – Read the article [here](#).

INTERVIEW OF SEMINARIAN DAVID VEST

For an interview of our seminarian David Vest, who just graduated from Bishop Simon Brute Seminary, click [here](#).

His bio for the seminary can be found [here](#).

David is spending the summer at St. Francis of Assisi (Louisville).



We want to thank the SENG Club (St. Agnes seniors) for their donation to our club, when our President, Bob Hublar, and VP of Membership, Lynn Haner, spoke at their June luncheon.

QUOTE FOR THE EUCHARISTIC REVIVAL

“Jesus is not an idea, a sentiment, a memory! Jesus is a ‘person,’ always alive and present with us! Love Jesus present in the Eucharist. He is present in a sacrificial way in Holy Mass, which renews the Sacrifice of the Cross. To go to Mass means going to Calvary to meet him, our Redeemer. He comes to us in Holy Communion and remains present in the tabernacles of our churches, for he is our friend.”

Pope St. John Paul II,

Address to Italian youth, Nov. 8, 1978

VARIOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST

Birthdays this month:

Chuck Lynch, July 7 Mary Means, July 10
Cheryl Bowling, July 18

Pope’s Prayer Intention for the month of JULY:

For a Eucharistic Life - We pray that Catholics may place the celebration of the Eucharist at the heart of their lives, transforming human relationships in a very deep way and opening to the encounter with God and all their brothers and sisters.

Archbishop Shelton Fabre's recent, national article on fatherhood can be read [here](#).

Save the date – The next Serra Rally will be in Miami, January 18-21, 2024. Details coming soon.

Survey of new priests. Read the article [here](#).

Some free Catholic online magazines – checkout the link [here](#).

Thanks to **Mary Means** and **Lynn Haner** for proofing our newsletters.

Newsletter questions, comments, or submissions? Contact Chuck Lynch, Editor, at (502) 442-9302.