

Saint Serra Club of Louisville VOCATION DIGEST

JANUARY, 2024 Newsletter

MISSION:

To foster and promote vocations to the priest-hood 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.

SENIOR WOMEN RELI-GIOUS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

On December 4, we hosted about 45 sisters, plus their drivers, for a Christmas Luncheon at the University Club on the U of L campus. Because of the pandemic, it had been four years since our last such Christmas luncheon for the sisters.

Bob Hublar, our emcee and President of the St. Serra Club of Louisville, opened our luncheon by introducing Archbishop Shelton Fabre, who led us in grace over our food.

Attending the luncheon were members of different orders, including the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, the Dominican Sisters, the Ursulines of Louisville, and the Ursulines of Mount St. Joseph.

After lunch, Bob Hublar asked the sisters for a show of hands as to how many had been with their orders for 40 years, then 45, 50, etc. The results were very impressive!

Sister Evie Hurley, SCN, at age 108, has been with the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth for 89 years! To Sister Evie, and all the sisters in our archdiocese, we say thanks for all the years of service to your communities and to the Church. Counting about 45 sisters, their drivers, as well as Serrans and guests, we had about 70 people in attendance at the 2023 luncheon.

After lunch, Archbishop Shelton spoke to all of us. Having been taught by the Sisters of the Holy

Ghost in Texas, he spoke of his appreciation and admiration for all religious sisters.

The archbishop spoke of Advent being his favorite part of the liturgical year, outside of Easter Sunday; and he elaborated on the images of the prophet Isaiah, and the challenges facing the Old Testament prophets.

He reminded us that with Christmas falling on a Monday this year, Advent would be at its shortest possible length.

Using the image of an airport, with lots of people waiting for arriving friends and relatives, Archbishop Shelton explained how this can remind us of Advent, with its waiting, anticipation, and joy. We are waiting for the arrival of the Lord. However, the Church, he says, also wishes to remind us that we are waiting for the end of time and Christ's second coming.

With the second part of Advent, we are trying to build up the Kingdom of God, preparing for Christ's birth, and recognizing that Emmanuel means "God with us." We long for his arrival, as a child longs for the arrival of a parent at the airport.

Advent can be overshadowed by the commercialism that surrounds Christmas. But if we are attentive to the hope and joy of Advent, it can empower us to truly live in the rest of the liturgical year, Archbishop Shelton reminded us.

He shared with us how, with the passage of time, Louisville has be-

come home to him more and more. Not only has he been here 16 months, but he and his family are selling the property in Louisiana where he lived as a child. He will no longer be able to go and visit his childhood home.

He also spoke of his additional duties (for the last five months) to serve the diocese of Knoxville until the Pope appoints a new bishop for that diocese. The archbishop speaks highly of the people in the Knoxville diocese. And he expects it could be another six to 12 months before a new bishop is announced.

When asked what prompted him to consider the priesthood, the archbishop spoke of a kindly Irish pastor who said "You should be a priest." It stuck; and the archbishop says he never dismissed the idea. He said the rest of his vocation story is a complex one, having moved in and out of the seminary several times.

Archbishop Shelton was told by someone in the audience that he is still missed in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, which bodes well for the Louisville Archdiocese.

Fr. Pat Dolan, the Chaplain for the St. Serra Club of Louisville, was then asked to speak. He was wearing his Army uniform, and was introduced as also being a chaplain for the Kentucky National Guard.

Fr. Pat thanked all women religious, and especially wanted to extend "warm and profound thanks" for all the sisters that have educated our children over the years. He said

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON (continued from page 1)

that a quarter of the military are Catholic, and a third of the officers are Catholic. Both of these statistics are disproportionately large compared to the actual percent of the population that is Catholic. And he says part of that is due to the good Catholic education instilled by the sisters across the country.

The Catholics who are in the Army were brought up, Fr. Pat said, "with purpose, guidance, hope, and kindness." These soldiers who were taught by the sisters saw the day-by-day example of the women religious living out their ministry.

At the end of our luncheon, we welcomed the U of L Cardinal Singers - an a cappella group of about three dozen singers wearing the traditional U of L red and black, and led by Director Dr. Kent Hatteberg. Their 30 minutes of nine seasonal songs included some in Latin and some in English, and, of course, popular Christmas carols. As always, this award-winning choir is a fantastic part of our annual luncheon for the senior women religious.

The songs included "Ding Dong Merrily on High," "Venite Gaudete," "See Dat Babe" (a traditional Christmas spiritual), "Jingle Bells," "Deck the Halls," and the "Wassail Song."

Through the windows behind the singers, we could see beautiful red and green holly trees, and even a cardinal in one of those trees.

We want to thank our President, Bob Hublar, for organizing this event. Thanks also to all the Serrans that helped with preparing for the event.

We also want to thank our individual and corporate financial sponsors for this event: the Archdiocese of Louisville; American Vietnam Veterans Assoc., Chapter 454; Catholic Education Foundation; Theresa Fiedler; Charlie & Sandy Francesconi; Deacon Scott & JoAnn Haner; a Friend of the Sisters of Loretto; Chuck & Sally Lynch; St.

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. Non-members wanting to attend should contact Chuck Lynch in advance.

<u>Jan 1 (1st Mon)</u> - No meeting due to the holiday. <u>Jan 8 (2nd Mon)</u> - Rosary for Vocations, 7 pm, by Zoom. See separate article for details.

Jan 13 (2nd Sat) - "Serra Meets" - 12 Noon Louisville time - national Zoom meeting for all Serrans – for details, click here.

Jan 15 (3rd Mon) - Serran Tom Kennedy, Philosophy Professor - "Swimming Against the Current: Responding to the Culture of Relativism."

Jan 17 (Wed) - Holy Hour for Vocations - 12:45 at St. Margaret Mary Chapel, after the Noon Mass. Jan 23 (Tue) - 12:45 - Serra Board Meeting - St. Margaret Mary Spirituality Center.

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

Margaret Mary Parish; Trinity High School; and Jerry & Regina Zimmerer.

As the largest of our Serra Club events, this Christmas Luncheon is always a day of great pride, a good time with many of our women religious, and a joyful beginning to Advent. The sisters told us how much they appreciated it!

(Thanks to Jerry Zimmerer and Paul Willett for all the pictures.)







ST. SERRA CLUB OF LOUISVILLE, KY
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"SERRA MEETS" WAS HELD ON DEC 9.

Our speaker for this 36th "Serra Meets" was Bishop Thomas Daly. He joined us to give us an Advent Reflection.

About Bishop Thomas Daly

Most Rev. Thomas A Daly was born April 30, 1960, in San Francisco. He earned a bachelor's degree from the University of San Francisco in 1982; a master of divinity from St. Patrick Seminary in Menlo Park, California, in 1987; and a master of education degree from Boston College in 1996. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of San Francisco in 1987.

Pope Benedict XVI named him auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of San Jose on March 16, 2011. He was ordained a bishop on May

25, 2011.

Pope Francis named him the seventh Bishop of Spokane on March 12, 2015. Bishop Daly was installed on May 20, 2015 in the Cathedral of Our Lady of Lourdes in Spokane. He currently serves as the chairman of the USCCB Committee of Catholic Education, and is also the Episcopal Advisor to the U.S. Council of Serra.

His Advent Reflection

Bishop Daly began by saying it

has been a tremendous grace to be our Episcopal Advisor. He said he wanted to touch on four areas for his reflection on Advent.

First was hope. Our readings for Advent come from Isaiah, which speaks of all nations living in peace. Hope, he said, comes from God's desire for all of us. We need hope, particularly because we live in a fractured world. It's easy, he said, to be a cynic. He noted that when a diocese goes through a bankruptcy, many pastors get cynical, people become paralyzed, and some priests sort of become lone ranger types. All these things happen because people lose hope.

Yet Bishop Daly says hope is realistic; and God calls us to trust him. With hope, we can have trust in God and be spurred to action. He said, "Our efforts are our own. The results are always up to the Lord. It is only God who can fulfill our hope."

Second is the gift of faith. Bishop Daly's confessor always reminds him to "Keep the faith." The bishop likes to say, "Keep the faith; and the faith will keep you." God doesn't hide the truth.

Also, he said that our faith cannot grow if we are not humble.

With schools for all grades, no one can accuse the Church of being anti-intellectual. Bishop Daly says we need to redirect our schools to more strongly teach the faith.

Faith and reason work together. He noted that many often think youth are leaving the Church thinking faith and science are in opposition. However, they are not in opposition. And pride can be an obstacle to a deeper faith in God. Faith has to be in both our head and our heart.

Serra Clubs have a mission of developing our own faith life, which we use to help our parishes and the whole Church.

Third is listening to God. This is crucial to faith. Do we really listen to God in the silence of our hearts? Parents sometimes say to their children, "If only you'd

> listened to me, this would not have happened."

God spoke to his people in the Scriptures, through his prophets; but the people did not always listen. The Jewish leaders were not happy with John the Baptist, living on locusts and honey, while preaching in the desert. However, life is about both locusts (the bad) and honey (the good).

Faith is a gift, with God not forcing us to believe in him. God respects our freedom – almost too much. But to God our freedom is sacred. Although we have the

freedom to ignore God, we must take time to listen to

Fourth is the role of Mother Mary. Bishop Daly talked about the difference between Mary's questioning of the Angel Gabriel and Zechariah's (father of John the Baptist) questioning of God.

He also spoke of Mary's "Yes" and faith in God. Mary reminds us that faith is "not beyond reason, but not against it." Mary is the ideal role model for us all, with a willingness to question and ponder things, while also having the faith to say yes to God.

Sometimes we say yes not knowing where it all will lead, as in Mary's case. Bishop Daly said, "Small yeses allow us to say the big yeses to God." Discipleship is about saying yes to God.

We should pray to have Mother Mary intercede for

You can view the entire presentation here.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

OUR CHAPLAIN, FR. PAT DOLAN, ON "CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD"

Fr. Pat Dolan, Chaplain for the St. Serra Club of Louisville, was the speaker for our Dec 18 luncheon meeting. Wearing his "Jesus is the reason for the season" shirt, he spoke on Advent and Christmas tradi-

tions from around the world, as well as his own childhood. Saying that the secular culture is taking over Christmas, he encouraged all of us, especially for the benefit of children, to do what we can to keep Christ in Christmas.

Prior to Vatican II, Thanksgiving was looked down upon by some Catholics, as a Protestant tradition. But now we have Catholic prayers for that holiday, as well as a Mass at which some people have their Thanksgiving breads blessed.

In Holland, December 6 was for celebrating St. Nick, who was a generous Catholic bishop many years ago. However, in the U.S. he's now just a jolly old fat elf.

Fr. Pat spoke of how children can make paper chains for Christmas tree garland. Some people even make them with special words and messages on the paper used for the chains.

Wreaths were used in ancient Rome and northern Europe centuries ago, symbolizing unbroken circles, and the unbroken love of God. We can add candles and make Advent wreaths.

The "The Holly & The Ivy" is a song in which the holly reminds us of different aspects of Christ.

Fr. Pat remembers his dad's custom, for both Advent and Lent, of going to daily Mass at St. Peters in downtown Chicago. Since the Mass catered to many workers, who had very little time for Mass, Communion



was given out during the entire Mass.

Traditions around St. Lucy (284-304 AD) were big in Scandinavia. She was a young Christian in Rome, a virgin (symbolized by a white gown) and a martyr

(symbolized by a red sash). She was offered many things if she would only give up her Christianity; but she refused and was martyred. Her feast day became known as the festival of lights. She became a patron of the blind, due to the loss of her eyes during martyrdom.

One tradition still celebrated by some families is to have children, if they've been good, to put a

> piece of straw in baby Jesus' empty crib for each day they were good in Advent.

> Another was to have the statues of the Holy Family, as well as those of the Magi, move across the room, a short distance each day, until the Holy Family arrives at the nativity scene on Christmas, and the Magi arrive on Epiphany.

> Fr. Pat also reminded us that Nativity scenes have been a custom for 800 vears, since St. Francis started the first one in 1223.

A tradition from Ireland, at the time in history when Catholics were persecuted for not being part of the

Protestant Church of England, was that the secret Catholics would put a candle in the window of the house where Mass was to be secretly held. We now have many people putting (electric) candles in windows during Advent. Fr. Pat said some people now put The Elf on the Shelf figure in a window.

There is a tradition called the St. Barbara's Branch. Her fest day is December 4. Young girls would take a piece of a flowering tree and put it in warm water on that day, hoping it would blossom on Christmas Day. The belief was that if it blossomed on Christmas Day, then the girl would be married the following year. Some people now display Amaryllis bulbs, with stores selling lots of them after Thanksgiving.

The Jesse Tree tradition is based on Isaiah 11:1-2.

The "O" Antiphons are all about proclaiming the coming of Christ, with different names, descriptions and attributes of the coming Savior – e.g., "O Wisdom of our God Most High," "O Root of Jesse's stem," "O Key of David," "O King of all nations and keystone of the Church." They end with "O Emmanual ..." – which reminds us that "God is with us."

Before the Church allowed Christmas Eve masses, the earliest you could attend Christmas Mass was the Midnight Mass, which was very popular when many of us were children.

Caroling and delivering cookies was always a

FR. PAT DOLAN (continued from page 5)

great tradition, and still done by many people, oftentimes to nursing homes before Epiphany.

Likewise, <u>"wassailing"</u> was an ancient custom of singing, eating and drinking, often for all of the Twelve Days of Christmas (from Christmas to the arrival of the three Wise Men).

In Mexico, they celebrate with peppers in hot chocolate!

Giving trees have become very secularized, with stores and public schools offering them, while having no mention of Christ. However, we can put Christ back in the custom by purchasing items for gifts, and under the wrapping paper include a message about the real meaning of Christ and Christmas.

A custom that Fr. Pat has promoted in his parishes is a New Year's Eve blessing of the past and a letting go of the past year. People are given a matchstick or twig (to represent the portion of Christ's cross we carried with Him that past year) to put in a fire, with a ceremony to burn these with prayers.

<u>Candlemas Day</u> (with the blessing of the candles, and recognizing Christ as the light of our lives) is another tradition celebrated each year on February 2 (the 40th day of Christmas), marking the presentation of the child Jesus in the temple.

Fr. Pat says the challenge is to keep Christ as a part of all our Advent and Christmas celebrations.

For an additional recording Fr. Pat made with the Catholic Radio of Indianapolis, on the importance of family traditions during Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, click here.

We want to thank Fr. Pat for his wonderful talk on Christmas traditions, and for all the time he devotes to being our Chaplain.

Thanks, too, for the pictures with this article, taken by Paul Willett and Ken Peet.

NEW SEMINARIAN! – AMOS STINSON



According to our Vocation Office Facebook page, Archbishop Shelton Fabre has accepted Amos as a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Louisville. Amos is 28 years old and a member of St. Louis Bertrand Parish. He is the son of

Madonna & Amos (deceased) Stinson. He is the oldest of three brothers. Amos graduated from Trinity High School & then got his degree in Finance from the University of Louisville.

Amos said, "nothing would bring me greater joy than allowing God to use me to bring someone closer to Him."

SWEETS FOR OVER 400 SISTERS!



For the fourth year in a row, the St. Serra Club of Louisville decided to give a box of candy to every sister in the Archdiocese – both active and retired. We distributed over 400 boxes of candies made by the local Muth's Candies company, driving the boxes to about 18 locations all over the Archdiocese mid-December.

We thank the sisters again for their many years of past and current dedication to the Church, our Archdio-

cese, and the many causes and ministries they support.

Also, thanks to our Club President, Bob Hublar, for organizing this project, Ralph Williams for coordinating the shopping and purchasing of the candies, Fr.

Pat Dolan (our Chaplain) for composing the note put with every box of candy, Chuck Lynch for printing and folding the notes, those who delivered the candies all over the Archdiocese (Paul Willett, Ramsey Kraft, Phil Lawver, Melody Denson, Kevin Thieneman, Lincoln Lewis, Theresa Fiedler, Bob Hublar, Ralph and Joann Williams, Deacon Bill Klump, and Ken Peet), and to Paul Willett for the pictures with this article.



NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Consider one or more of the following as something you might resolve to do in the new year:

- 1) Join the Seven Serrans to pray for your Diocesan Vocation Director and Vocation Office staff.
- 2) Start or join a 31 Club in your parish people covering every day of the month for one hour of prayers for vocations.
- 3) Increase your prayers for vocations somehow.
- 4) Consider more Rosaries for vocations.
- 5) Do more spiritual reading, especially as it relates to vocations.
- 6) Get more involved in your parish's vocation minis-
- 7) Invite to dinner someone who has chosen a religious vocation.
- 8) Adopt a seminarian.
- 9) Adopt a priest.
- 10) Attend more Holy Hours for Vocations.

ANNUAL VOCATION POSTER AND ESSAY CONTESTS

Schools, parishes, home-schoolers and youth leaders were notified in October of the annual Vocation Essay and Poster Contests sponsored by the Vocation Office and the Saint Serra Club of Louisville.

The Contest started with the National Vocation Awareness Week (the week beginning November 5 this year); and entries must be received in the Vocation Office by Monday, January 8.

The Saint Serra Club will provide cash prizes to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in each contest – the Essay Contest (grades 7 & 8) and the Poster Contest (grades 4 through 6).

JOIN US BY ZOOM FOR OUR MONTH-LY "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.

CHATHELY, C.M.I., REVEREND A. BIJU, 1/2/05, 19 years

DIETZ, O.C.S.O. RT. REV. ELIAS, 1/25/03, 21

GONZALEZ ROMERO, REVEREND JEANS, 1/2/04, **20** years

ILLIKKAL, C.M.I., REV. GEORGE S., 1/2/05, 19

KALAN, C.M.I., REVEREND JIHTIN J., 1/1/20, 4 vears

PENGIPARAMBIL, C.M.I., REV. BENNI, 1/1/2000, 24 years

SEMINARIAN BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

Happy Birthday to two of our seminarians this month: Le Cuong - Jan. 18, Cole McDowell – Jan. 24 Deacon Van Tran - Jan. 27

You can get more information on all our seminarians. as well as their email addresses, videos on hobbies, and videos on vocation stories by clicking here.

ON HOLINESS AND SPIRITUALITY

Seven reasons you've never considered for giving thanks. Read the article here. *************

The Desert Fathers – Learn more of their ancient wisdom. Read the article here.

How to stop complaining and start loving life a lit**tle more.** Read the article here.

New ways to find joy in a troubled world. Read the article here. **************

See how to watch the film "Mission: Joy" here. ****************

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, on Meditation and Contemplative Prayer. ***************

Advice from St. Francis de Sales on how to be a virtuous person - Read the article here. **************

The secret to spiritual peace, according to St. Josemaria Escriva - Read the article here. **********

Lay ministry vs. lay apostolate - Read the article

A prayer to St. Ann for wayward grandchildren -Read the article here.

THE CALLED BY NAME **PROGRAM**

Do you know a faithful young man or woman who may have a vocation to the priesthood or religious life? We believe that our future priests will come from our own parishes and schools, but we need your help to identify them.

The Vocations Office is looking for high school age and older, young men and women. Please feel free to submit names even if you do not have all contact information. Just click here.

SAVE THE DATE – FOR THE 2024 GREAT LAKES REGIONAL SUMMIT

The Great Lakes Region includes the St. Serra Club of Louisville. We will have a Regional Summit Friday and Saturday, April 12-13, at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio.

Questions? – Contact Anne at (319) 321-3966 or AnneMallampalli@comcast.net.

More details are coming to members soon – including how to register, hotels, things to do and restaurants to use in Columbus, OH.

QUOTES TO PONDER AS WE START A NEW YEAR

In his commencement speech, author and social scientist Arthur Brooks (Catholic University of America) addressed the anxiety that many graduates face when determining what's next in life. Brooks said the solution lies in looking to one's foremost identity. "We're beings made in God's image to love others," said Brooks. "That's your vocation. Just love."

"We have to be contemplative souls in the middle of the world who strive to turn our work into prayer. Your work must become a personal prayer, must become a real conversation with

Our Father in heaven." - St. Josemaría Escrivá

"I am always puzzled, very puzzled, by the "talkers" with their endless talk and no action." -Pope Francis **********

"Why I am Catholic is that there are 10,000 reasons all amounting to one reason: that Catholicism is true." - G.K. Chesterton

VARIOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST

Serran Birthdays this month:

Bill Moriarity, Jan 2 Bob Hublar, Jan 3 Lincoln Lewis, Jan 10 Ron Eades, Jan 31 Kelly McLemore (Voc. Office), Jan 31

Pope's Prayer Intention for the month of JANUARY: For The Gift Of Diversity In The **Church** - Let us pray that the Holy Spirit helps us recognize the gift of different charisms within the Christian community, and to discover the richness of

different ritual traditions in the heart of the Catholic Church.

January 1 is World Day of Peace. To read the Pope's message for this occasion click here.

The next Serra Rally will be in Miami January 18-21, 2024. For more details, click here.

Six important dates for celebrating vocations in 2024:

- 1) World Day for Consecrated Life (WDCL) The Sunday coincident with or immediately following Feb 2 (the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord). The next one celebrated in parishes is Sunday, 2/4/24.
- 2) National Catholic Sisters Week (NCSW) Celebrated March 8 to 14 each year, regardless of the day of the week on which March 8 falls. This was just created in the last few years. It's part of Women's History Month.
- 3) World Day of Prayer for Vocations (WDPV) -Usually observed on "Good Shephard Sunday" - the fourth Sunday of the Easter season (i.e., the third Sunday after Easter). The next one is Sunday, 4/21/24.
- 4) Priesthood Sunday The last Sunday of September each year. The next one is Sunday, 9/29/24.
- 5) Deacon Sunday Celebrated on the second Sunday of October. The next one is Sunday, 10/13/24.
- 6) National Vocation Awareness Week (NVAW) -The week beginning on the first Sunday in November each year. The next one is the week beginning on Sunday, 11/3/24.

Thanks to **Paul Willett** for maintaining our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SerraLouisville.

Thanks to Lynn Haner & Charlie Francesconi for proofing our newsletters.

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