



Club chartered May 22, 1955

Saint Serra Club of Louisville VOCATION DIGEST

“Always Forward, Never Back”

– Saint Junipero Serra

**SEPTEMBER, 2025
Newsletter**

MISSION:

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

ON AUGUST 8 WE HOSTED OUR ANNUAL SEMINARIAN LUNCHEON

Every year we have a send-off luncheon in August, prior to our seminarians going back to their seminaries.

President Chuck Lynch emceed the meeting, which included Archbishop Shelton Fabre, Vocation Director Fr. Martin Linebach, Associate Director of Vocations, Todd Popson, Secretary of the Vocation Office, Vanessa Haulk, all 23 of our seminarians, and many of our Serrans.

Archbishop Shelton Fabre led our meeting with a prayer.

Fr. Martin Linebach said



that we are blessed to have all these seminarians, the most we've had in about 20 years. He also said that, related to the Jubilee Year, while there was a prediction of 500,000 youth joining the Pope in Rome this month, there ended up being a million! Pope Leo also had a day devoted to seminarians; and the Basilica

in Rome was filled with seminarians from around the world. Fr. Martin said the event was just electric. The Pope was grateful to be with them and thanked them for “your enthusiasm, and your energy, and joy, which is a great gift.”

Our own seminarians had just returned from a retreat at the Bethany Retreat House (TN), which is part of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia.

One of the sisters at the retreat house said that there was something different this year, compared to the same retreat held there one year earlier. Fr. Martin agreed that all the seminarians are “really forging a fraternal bond with each other.”

After speaking of all the blessings he's experienced with these young men, Fr. Martin said, “How could



you not love this job?” Then he had the seminarians speak on their summer activities and their upcoming semester at school.

Deacon Evrard Muhoza, said it was joyful to be at this luncheon. He's in his last year of formation; and he said he's happy about that. He spent the summer working at Holy Spirit with Fr. Anthony Chandler, Fr. Matt Millay, and Fr. Mark Hamilton. He had the opportunity to do both preaching and baptizing. After hearing a priest tell people to reflect on the cross, he found himself in his summer job facing a cross on his office wall for ten weeks! Deacon Evrard was most appreciative of all our prayers.



Cuong Le, originally from Vietnam, will be in his third year of theology, at Theological College, in the Catholic University of America (CUA) in DC. He took summer courses and felt it was very productive; he also worked at St. Martha's parish. He helped with visiting people in nursing homes, helping with funerals, baptisms, communion services, and serving at Mass. He

reminded younger seminarians that they're not walking this journey alone, but with many others. Cuong led an evening discussion at St. Martha about Vietnamese Culture and the Catholic faith in Vietnam. About 50 people attended.

Thanh Phan, started his seminary years in Vietnam, coming to the U.S. late in 2023. He studied English at the Theological College in DC. He was also able to visit with his brother here in



(continued on page 3)

Bringing Back Fallen Away Catholics

Net Proceeds to Seminarian Education Fund

Saturday, Sept. 6, 2025
St. John Paul II Community
Center,
3539 Goldsmith Ln., Louisville, KY,
40220
9am – 11:30am



OUR SPONSORS INCLUDE

Catholic Archdiocese of Louisville
Retirement Management Services LLC
St. Margaret Mary Church
Ken J. Buehner & Son Heating & A/C Co.
Gary Montgomery
Deacon Scott & JoAnn Haner
Thomas & Jillian Davis
Lynn Haner
Garry Burry, Catholic Financial Planner
Gil & Teresa Wentzel
Bob Hublar
Charlie & Sandy Francesconi
Don & Mary Carol Kelly
Theresa Fiedler
Evelyn Siemens
Jay Comstock
Anonymous



Gary Montgomery
Gary, an award-winning catechist, will help us grow in our faith as we pray for and approach our fallen-away Catholic friends and relatives. With inspiration, motivation, and Scriptures, he will guide us in how to get them back into the Church.

Admission -
Free Will Offering
To register, contact: Chuck
Lynch -
502-442-9302 or
ChuckLynch4782@gmail.com

the U.S., as well as work with Fr. Randy Hubbard at St. Joseph Proto-Cathedral in Bardstown. Thanh asked for our prayers.



David Vest will be going into his third year of theology at Mt. St. Mary's of the West Seminary in Cincinnati. He's also a grad of St. Athanasius School. He told us of his appreciation for our support and prayers. He was in Bardstown at the Proto-Cathedral and really enjoyed working with its 1700 families. He was able to teach,

introduce liturgy of the hours to the parishioners, and learn a lot about large parish life.

Connor McClure is going to St. Meinrad in Southern Indiana and entering his second year of theology. He spent time at the Institute for Priestly Formation, a program in Omaha run by the Jesuits and devoted to spiritual growth and advancement in prayer. Using his background in accounting, Connor then worked in the finance office with Robert Cecil, CFO for the archdiocese. Feeling he learned more this summer than in prior summers, he was also able to find mistakes in a parish audit before it was finalized.



Harrison Frey spent the summer at St. Athanasius Parish. He had the opportunity to bring the Church to the people who cannot go to church, working with residents at the Little Sisters of the Poor's St. Joseph Home. In addition, he got to work with the Cathedral soup kitchen on



"Bologna Alley." He will be going

to the Theological College at CUA this fall.

David Hairston, age 51, is one of our six new seminarians this fall, a transfer from the diocese of Richmond, VA, and a convert to the Catholic Church from the Episcopal Church five years ago. Consequently, he did not have a Louisville archdiocesan assignment for the summer. He'll be in second theology at St. Meinrad this fall. His home base has been Our Lady of Lourdes in St. Matthews. His new home parish is the Cathedral of the Assump-



tion. He used the summer to get to know Louisville, its people, government officials, and his fellow seminarians. Visiting parishes, he was asked to lector and play the organ (which was his first vocation years ago). He has studied and played the organ all over the world, after studying it on Long Island, NY, his hometown. With his fellow seminarians, they created a small, ad hoc, seminarian schola for one of their masses at the Tennessee retreat.



Tung Ho, originally from Vietnam, is going into his second year of theology at Theological College (DC) - his seventh year of the seminary, counting his time in a Vietnamese seminary. He studied more English this summer and devoted time to St. Michael's Parish. Unfortunately, he was unable to travel back to Vietnam to see

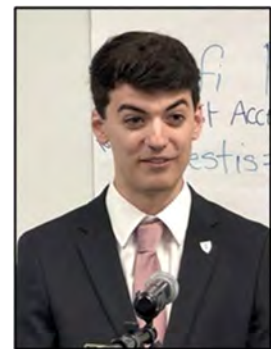
his parents and a new-born niece, due to the concerns about student visas. But he was able to phone home. His father encouraged him to recognize that all the Church people he serves are his family.

Amos Stinson is starting first theology this fall at the Theological College in DC. His home parish is St. Louis Bertrand, but grew up going to St. Patrick Parish. For the summer he was assigned to St. Dominic Parish in Springfield, KY. He enjoyed the small parish life and



its Catholic history.

Samuel Mattingly is starting his fourth year of college undergrad studies at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. He'll be in his final Discipleship year. He spent a month in Lima, Peru with other Detroit seminarians for a Spanish immersion trip, which he said was a huge blessing. Then



he was assigned to Annunciation Parish in Shelbyville, where he was able to hone his Spanish skills, really be a part of the community, and enjoy working with Fr. Jean Gonzalez Romero.

Trenton Thieneman (whose father is a Serran) grew up in St. Gabriel Parish. In the



spring, he finished his undergraduate degree at the Theological College in DC. He's been working on a thesis for a graduate degree and will return to Theological College this fall for graduate work. He said that the fruits of Serran prayers are obvious as our number of seminarians is growing each year.

Zachary Moore, from Guardian Angels Parish, just finished his second year of seminary at Mt. St. Mary's of the West in Cincinnati, studying his last year of philosophy. He spent the summer at St. Margaret Mary Parish, learning about large parish life. He learned a lot from the liturgies, staff meetings, parish council meetings, and more. Then he spent two weeks on a pilgrimage to Fatima. This summer he made his second trip to the El Camino de Santiago in Spain, spending time with seminarians from Charlotte, NC.



Emerson Wells is a seminarian from St. Albert the Great Parish. He is entering his third year at Mt. St. Mary's of the West Seminary in Cincinnati, taking Discipleship II. He worked at St. Francis of Assisi in the Highlands, with Fr. Jonathan Erdman, who was "a really good mentor." He enjoyed learning how parish administration works, as well as

learning Fr. Erdman's pastoral style. Fr. Erdman told him how important a pastoral style is since parishioners want to see something that is genuinely who you are.

Thomas Wichman just finished his first year in the seminary at St. Meinrad this spring. For the summer he, too, was at St. Francis of Assisi Parish. He enjoyed working with Fr. Erdman, seeing parish life from the inside, and enjoyed studying the pastoral side of Fr. Erdman's life. He, too, spoke highly of Fr. Erdman. He



thanked Serrans for their prayers and said he "knows for a fact that we are living off these prayers. I know that it's doing a lot."

Nicolas Caicedo ("Nico") is from Holy Spirit Parish, and a graduate of Trinity High School and U of L. He just finished his first year at St. Meinrad. He's excited to enter philosophy at St.

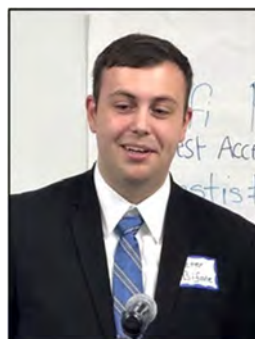


Meinrad this fall. He appreciates our letters and reaching out to him and his fellow seminarians.

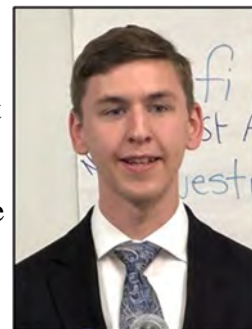
Ryan Rassmussen goes to St. Meinrad, having just finished his first year of seminary in the spring. He'll be entering Discipleship I this fall. His home parish is St. Aloysius in Peewee Valley. He's a grad of Immaculata Academy. For the summer he was at St. Edward Parish with Fr. Scott Murphy. He enjoyed the experience of a parish he had not lived in, being able to serve in the liturgy, seeing how a parish works, and visiting the homebound and residents of a nursing home, which he found to be one of his favorite experiences. He also learned a lot working with the Spanish community.



Peter Bifone will be at St. Meinrad this fall, taking Discipleship I, after spending the summer at St. Edward Parish. He learned a lot about the Hispanic community and Masses. He learned a lot of the immigrant population. Peter said he was also surprised at all the paperwork involved in running a parish. He said the summer was a great experience. With a background in computer science, he wrote a program and prepared an Excel spreadsheet to help the parish with its administration.



Jonathan Heitkemper, from St. Martin of Tours Parish, will be in his second year of college at St. John Paul II Seminary in DC this fall; and he is the youngest seminarian of our archdiocese. He spent the summer at St. Athanasius. It's been great to learn how a parish is run, to learn about the archdiocese, and to work with Fr. Matthew Hardesty.



Ben Crouch, one of our new seminarians, is from Immaculate Conception Parish in LaGrange. A year and a half ago Fr. Linebach suggested he wait another year to attend the seminary. Ben accepted that as the right timing, saying this was a reasonable request. He said he's signing up for a life of serving the Church; and if he can't abide by the request of his superiors, he's not going to



make a good priest. He also said it helped him to practice patience. He'll be going to Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit for his [propaedeutic year](#) of college seminary. During the summer he got to know his fellow seminarians.

Joseph Randolph, one of our new seminarians, is entering his first year at St. John Paul II Seminary in D.C. – his second year of college. He did one year at U of L studying exercise physiology, being a very active person. At U of L, he got to know Fr. John Baptist Huong, OP, who is the campus minister. He's excited about this 180-degree change in his life and entering the seminary this fall.



Donald Whitworth, another one of our new seminarians, from Guardian Angels Parish, is starting his first year, a propaedeutic year, at St. John Paul II Seminary in D.C. He's a 2022 convert to the Catholic faith, saying he tried dating and considering other careers, but decided to pursue the seminary life. He credits former seminarian Michael Wolf with steering him to our archdiocese and to Fr. Martin Linebach. He comes from the diocese of Evansville, IN; and he knows this is where he should be.



George Olokojo, one of our new seminarians, is from Uganda and spoke of this day being only his 13th day in America! He had hoped to be with us last year but didn't get his visa to the U.S. While trying to get a student visa to the U.S., to be a seminarian, he was working in a pharmacy and did not get the visa. A year later he was working as a missionary for NET Ministries in Uganda. Apparently, that made the difference; and he got his visa. He is so grateful to be in the U.S. His fellow seminarians told him they had been waiting for him.



Michael Murphy, another new seminarian, is from St. Albert the Great Parish, even though he got his sacraments from Epiphany Parish. He went to Trinity High School and had

two years at Bellarmine University. He is going to Theological College in D.C. He studied Spanish in the summer, in addition to travels with his family.

So, we now have 23 seminarians this fall, the most we've had in about 20 years, going to five seminaries.

All the seminarians thanked us for our prayers, letters, e-mailings, and care packages, telling us that they also pray for the Serrans.

Archbishop Shelton Fabre began his talk by saying how grateful he is for all our prayers and our Serran dedication to vocations to the priesthood and to the consecrated religious life.

He also encouraged our seminarians to trust their formators to accomplish what they ask the seminarians to do, and, "even more importantly, to build those bonds of fraternity with your brother seminarians from Louisville, and other seminarians that you will form friendships with, because you will need those friendships, as I have said, in your priesthood you will rely upon them a lot; and you will rely heavily upon the memories you are making now.

Going back to Belgium mid-August, Archbishop Shelton said he, with a couple of other priests, will visit a seminary at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium - a seminary which is closing. This is the final gathering of the alumni reunion at that seminary, saying farewell to a place that formed them – a place they loved so very much.

Archbishop Shelton reminded us that seminarians, in the midst of their long studies, often say, "My vocation is not to be a seminarian, thanks be to God." He says he knows that studies can be difficult and aggravating; but he encourages them to rely heavily on the memories they are now making. If they accomplish what God is asking of them, it will implant faith and make memories that will last a lifetime.

He promised his prayers and gratitude to our seminarians.

For more on this meeting, see The Record article [here](#).

For more information on all our seminarians see the Vocation Office [seminarian webpage](#), where you can also click a picture and get details on a seminarian's hometown, parish, past education, family background, the seminary he's attending, current level of classes, favorites, hobbies, and more.

We thank Archbishop Shelton Fabre, Fr. Martin Linebach, the Vocation Office, and all our seminarians for joining us for this special luncheon. Thanks to all the Serrans who were helped organize this great event.

(Thanks, also, to Jerry Zimmerer for taking pictures at this meeting.)

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Regular meetings - We target to have *most* meetings on the first and third Mondays of each month, at **11:30**, at the **Golden Corral** (4032 Taylorsville Road) in Hikes Point, unless noted otherwise below. The charge will be \$12 for members and \$15 for guests. Non-members wanting to attend should contact Chuck Lynch in advance.

Sep 1 (1st Mon) – No meeting due to Labor Day holiday.

Sep 6 (Sat) – Retreat (open to the public) 9-11:30 am – **Registration required** by Sep 3. See the full-page flyer in this newsletter.

Sep 8 (2^d Mon) – **Zoom Rosary for Vocations**, 7 pm. See the separate article for details.

Sep 10 (2nd Wed) - **Holy Hour for Vocations** – After the noon Mass in St. Margaret Mary Chapel.

Sep 15 (3rd Mon) – **Garry Burry and John Sohl** will speak about the Family Renewal Project.

Sep 15 (3rd Mon) – “**Serra Meets**” by Zoom – **8 pm** Louisville time. Erin Kinsella, Consecrated Virgin, will be the speaker. Click [here](#) for the link to participate.

Sep 23 (Tue) – 11:45 - **Serra Board Meeting** - St. Margaret Mary Spirituality Center.

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

FR. BERTRAND HEBERT, OP, SPOKE OF HIS VOCATION JOUR- NEY AT OUR AUG 18 MEETING.

About Our Speaker



Fr. Bertrand Hebert, OP, was born in south-central Louisiana in a small rice farming town named Crowley, which is near Lafayette. He's the youngest of four siblings, with three older sisters. Since he's both the youngest and the only boy, he likes to say that he was both spoiled and tortured!

He was raised Catholic and went to Catholic school all his life. After graduating from high school in 2013, Fr. Bertrand first entered diocesan seminary for his home diocese of Lafayette. He studied at St. Joseph Seminary College in Covington, LA, for two years before he was invited to go to another seminary and pursue an ad-

vanced degree in philosophy. So, Fr. Bertrand moved to Washington, DC, in 2015 and studied at Theological College of the Catholic University of America (CUA) for three years. It was during that time that he met the Dominican friars of the Province of St. Joseph, whom he would later join.

After graduating from the Catholic University of America in 2018, Fr. Bertrand left the diocesan seminary and moved to Cincinnati to begin his novitiate with the Dominicans. He professed simple vows in 2019 and moved back to Washington, DC to begin studying theology at the Dominican House of Studies. During his time in formation with the Dominicans, he has spent summers in New York City, Bologna (Italy), Washington, and Baltimore. Father Bertrand was able to finish his theological studies somewhat early, and so he began pursuing a degree in Canon Law from the CUA in 2023.

Father Bertrand professed solemn vows in 2024 and was ordained a deacon in the same semester of that year. A little over a year later, on June 5, 2025, he was ordained a priest in Washington, DC, with six other friars. Father Bertrand has been assisting at St. Louis Bertrand parish here in Louisville for the summer, and he will return to DC at the end of August to finish his degree in canon law.

Fr. Bertrand's Presentation

Fr. Bertrand says that Serrans supported him in his formation years, and that he took the “scenic route” to ordination, starting out in a seminary for diocesan priests but ending up a Dominican priest. He also noted that his 2013 to 2025 formation years coincided with the papacy of Pope Francis.

In southern Louisiana, where he grew up, the Catholic faith was everything; and a large part of the population were Catholics. This could be dangerous, Fr. Bertrand said, because some people didn't take their faith seriously since it was so common. He felt his own prayer life was superficial when he was young. He didn't see God as loving and didn't feel God was asking him to be a priest. His parents were divorced; and he had a difficult childhood. So, he eventually turned to God.

How did he get past all of this? Fr. Bertrand said he had a generous outpouring of grace when he was Confirmed as a junior in high school. Although he was already planning on med school, it became clear to him during Confirmation preparation that he was “loved by God from all eternity.” He wanted to know more of God and began reading a lot. A priest hearing his confession suggested he should pray about the priesthood. While sitting in his car, he thought about it and realized that his entire life led him to this point. It all made sense; and he wept.

Realizing he'd repaid God so poorly, he changed his life path and called a vocation director. So, in February of his high school senior year he was planning on med school. By May, he had been accepted into the seminary.

He called it a "whirlwind of grace;" and he loved seminary college. Prior to college, he had not really known any priests of religious orders; all he knew were diocesan priests. But he began to meet seminarians and priests of different orders. He was particularly impressed with the 70 young Dominican friars he met in DC, who worshiped with reverence and such unity. So, he read up on the Dominicans while it became increasingly clear that God wanted him to consider the Dominican life. He loved that they studied the truth, desired to preach, and gave their lives to God. Two years later, in 2018, he left his diocesan studies to join the Dominicans.

Fr. Bertrand felt that studying Canon Law is a way to serve the Church and is now close to the end of that three-year program. "I fell in love with the Lord and his Church," he said. So, Canon Law was a perfect avenue for him to pursue.

For this summer at St. Louis Bertrand, he says he's been "filling in gaps," helping with Masses, Confessions, funerals, and anointing the sick.

When asked about the book that influenced him the most, Fr. Bertrand spoke of Fr. Reginald Garrigou-LaGrange's "The Three Conversions in the Spiritual Life." When asked about a priest who most impacted his going into the seminary, he spoke of that priest who, while hearing his Confession, suggested he pray about seeking the priesthood – a priest who became his regular confessor.

We want to thank Fr. Bertrand Hebert, OP, for sharing his vocation journey.

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

BISHOP MICHAEL BURBIDGE SPOKE AT "SERRA MEETS" ON AUGUST 18

About Our Speaker

The Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge is a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He went to St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, as well as Villanova University and Immaculata College. He was ordained a priest in 1984. Bishop Burbidge has had many jobs – from parish priest to secretary to the Archbishop of Philadelphia, to a seminary rector, to auxiliary bishop of Philadelphia, to the Bishop of Raleigh, to currently being the Bishop of Arlington, VA.

Bishop Burbidge has held several leadership positions with the USCCB and has also written several books. For more biographical information, click [here](#).

Bishop Burbidge's Presentation

Bishop Burbidge's talk was titled "Fostering a Culture for Promoting and Supporting Vocations to the Priesthood." He began by saying how appreciative he was of us Serrans. And he had the honor this spring of ordaining 12 new priests in his diocese of only 70 parishes. How! He says, "By the grace of God."

We are called to cooperate with God's grace. And in response to questions of how to make this happen, Bishop Burbidge says, "It's not one thing; it's every-



thing. It's not one group; it's everyone."

In his diocese, the founding bishop, who had also been a seminary rector, made promoting and praying for vocations a priority. In fact, he invited the Poor Clares to establish a monastery in his diocese specifically for the purpose of vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. Bishop Burbidge feels the presence of the Poor Clares is the reason for their many vocations.

He said that in Raleigh, he promoted a priest to be vocation director. However, that priest said that his first year's work would not be on new seminarians, but getting the diocese to pray for vocations. And it worked!

Priests can inspire, he said, and then he spoke of a newly ordained priest who spoke with Pope Leo, whose response was "Be rooted in prayer and never, ever lose the joy of living the priesthood."

Holy families and holy marriages are also sources of vocations, Bishop Burbidge said.

He said we must "foster the idea of inviting, not hounding" young men, but inviting them personally. For his own vocation story, he speaks of being in a high school with 3,000 students and 30 diocesan

priests on the faculty. One day, as a junior in high school, he was asked by a priest who was not even one of his teachers, if he'd ever considered being a priest. He said, "not really." Then the priest asked him to think about it. From that moment on, he never stopped thinking about it. And that priest never asked him about it again! The priest had planted the seed; and that's all it took. That priest was present for his ordination and his installation as a bishop.

Bishop Burbidge says the [St. Andrew Dinners](#) serve two purposes – they get young men to learn more about the priesthood, and they remind the priests that all priests are vocation directors. He tells the priests to approach these young men personally, by name, and not by mail, or email, or in a bulletin announcement.

He stresses that if you create this culture of vocations, then you have to avoid two extremes. **Anti-clericalism** is one. He explained that if you're afraid to celebrate and lift up the dignity of the priesthood, it won't work. Yes, all vocations are great; but the priesthood is very special. And yet, you also have to avoid **clericalism**, putting the priests above all others. No, the vocation is one of humility, sacrifice and service, he says.

He says that the seminary admission process of the last 20 to 30 years is more serious than in previous generations – accepting young men into spiritual, intellectual, emotional, pastoral, and human formation. They don't have to be saints; but they must be strong men.

Another factor he emphasized is relationships. He remembers when a bishop wouldn't necessarily know all his seminarians and might not even meet some of them until their final year in the seminary; but now, it is common for there to be a strong relationship between the bishop and *every* one of his seminarians. They even have his cell phone number. They must all be as close as family. His seminarians today call him their "spiritual father."

Accompaniment is what it's all about. The bishop, vocation director, and vocation office, as well as families, parishes, schools, and Serrans must all accompany the seminarians on their journey.

In response to one question, he said just how hard it is to be a vocation director, especially when they hear "no" from so many young men. However, he says there's nothing better than the joy of seeing a young man complete his journey all the way to the priesthood. We need to support our vocation directors and pray for them often.

We want to thank Bishop Burbidge for his presentation.

To view the entire presentation, along with the business part of the "Serra Meets," click [here](#).

CONGRATULATIONS TO FOUR SEMINARIANS WHO FORMALLY DECLARED THEIR INTENTIONS TO BE PRIESTS

When a young man enters the seminary, it is to discern whether to be a priest. At some point, before he finishes his studies, he realizes that this truly is God's call. Traditionally, the formal declaration (the Rite of Admission to Candidacy for Holy Orders) is made in the seminary. However, it was decided to have four of our seminarians make this declaration at the Cathedral of the Assumption.

The four seminarians who just made this declaration are **Harrison Frey, Tung Ho, Thanh Phan, and Amos Stinson**. To read more about this touching August 3 event, click [here](#).

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR VOCATIONS, TODD POPSON, SPOKE ON VOCATIONS

In August, Todd Popson, Associate Director for Vocations for the Archdiocese, spoke on "Pastoral Services and Creating a Culture of Vocations." It was a presentation to the Agency Directors of the Archdiocese. This is a summary of his talk.



Remember, a culture of vocations creates a community...

- * where young men aspire to be a priest and young women aspire to be a religious sister
- * where parents encourage their children to consider

religious life or priesthood

- * in which every Catholic family has a son, daughter, brother, sister, cousin, aunt, or uncle that is a priest or religious

- * where it is not unusual to have more than one member of a family that responds to God's call to be a priest or consecrated religious person

- * where many young Catholic men enter high school or college seminary move on to major seminary – and ultimately are ordained a priest
- * where parents dream of having a priest in the family that can be a part of family baptisms, first communion, and officiate at family weddings

(continued on page 10)

PILGRIMS OF HOPE:

Stepping out in Faith

A Discernment Retreat for Women

**Un Retiro de Discernimiento
para Mujeres**

**Tĩnh tâm- người hành hương
của hy vọng trong niềm tin**

Catholic, single women,
ages 18-45 are invited to
attend a FREE 3-day Retreat
to explore religious life as a
Dominican Sister of Peace.
Travel assistance available.

**SEPTEMBER
12-14**

Columbus, OH

**REGISTER
NOW!**

Deadline - September 8



**FREE
EVENT!**



CONTACT

SR. JUNE FITZGERALD, OP

at (570) 336-3991 or
june.fitzgerald@oppeace.org



Dominican
Sisters of Peace
Sisters and Associates
in Mission
oppeace.org



- * where parents may receive the anointing of the sick or last rights from one of their own sons
- * in which each Catholic community has more than one priest and nuns are regular participants in our weekly mass
- * where religious are often a part of our Catholic schools as librarians, teachers, lunchroom workers and principals
- * where significant events in our family find pictures punctuated with priests and religious – at the hospital for our child’s birth, at birthday, graduation, anniversary, and retirement parties
- * where we don’t even think about how many seminarians are in formation because there is never a shortage

He also presented a brief recap of *Creating a Culture of Vocations*:

INVITATION

Invite those that appear to have the traits of a religious vocation to consider it. “Have you ever considered being a priest?” “You have the traits that would make a good priest.”

PRAY

Instill frequent and focused prayer for people to listen to God’s invitation to religious life, the diaconate, or priesthood. We prefer that groups use the Archdiocese of Louisville Vocation Prayer (see page 12). This can be done as petitions or at meetings within parishes and the Archdiocese as well as at Holy Mass.

LEARN

Help people to learn about vocations (priesthood, diaconate, married life, single life) in the life of the church. Use saints, prophets, apostles as well as those in our community as examples.

TEACH

Teach others how each vocation can sanctify them. Ask consecrated religious, permanent deacons, and priests to share their stories.

LISTEN

Help others know what discernment is and create opportunities for them to listen for God’s call in their lives. Adoration, especially with time for quiet reflection, is very helpful while discerning.

SUPPORT

Affirm those that exemplify different vocations. Make a habit to thank those people verbally and with written notes, birthday cards, emails, texts and recognition in bulletins and social media.

Some hurdles to vocations:

Parents – Many parents are resistant to their child pursuing a religious vocation. There are many reasons for this, but primarily, it does not meet their current vision of the future that will make their child successful and/or happy.

Sexual Abuse – Many people in the Archdiocese of Louisville have recent memories of abuse and abusers which raise concern when thinking about religious vocations.

Immigration Status – The lack of permanent legal resident status in the U.S. can prevent people from starting seminary or other religious formation.

Todd said, “We have resources to address these positive and negative issues that surround creating a culture of vocations. As always, let me know if there are ways we can collaborate.” He can always be reached through the Vocation Office [here](#).

We want to thank Todd Popson for sharing this summary of his presentation.

TEN YEARS A SAINT!

September 23 is the tenth anniversary of the canonization of our Patron, **St. Junipero Serra**! He was the first saint canonized on U.S. soil.

QUOTE

“Be rich in what matters to God.” - Vocation Director, Fr. Martin Linebach

SAVE THE DATE – SERRA LEADERSHIP RALLY

Calling all Serra U.S. leaders! The next USA Council Leadership Rally will be Jan 22-25, 2026, at the Augustine Institute Retreat Center, St. Louis, Missouri. You can view a 4-minute video about the Rally [here](#).

HUNDREDS GATHERED TO SAY GOODBYE TO THE SISTERS OF MERCY.

If you missed the article in *The Record*, read [here](#) about how hundreds gather at a special Mass to thank the sisters for 155 years of ministry to Louisville. We are so thankful for all these sisters have done for Louisville. And now, the last two of the Louisville Sisters of Mercy, **Sister Justina Heneghan and Sister Paulanne Diebold**, are moving to Cincinnati. We will miss you!

PRIESTHOOD SUNDAY

Now is the time to start preparing for Priesthood Sunday, which is a special day set aside for Catholics to thank, affirm and share their love and support for our priests. It is celebrated on the last Sunday of September each year (Sep 28th this year); and it’s been promoted primarily by the USA Council of Serra Inter-

(continued on page 12)

NEWMAN CONNECTION

Help your new college students CONNECT to their Catholic faith in campus communities at all colleges and universities.

As many young adults start a college, they have an opportunity to connect with their new Catholic campus faith community, but many don't ... until they are personally invited.

We are speaking here of all colleges and university campuses across the country. And if there's not a Newman Center or Catholic ministry *on* campus, there are parishes close to the campus.



Did you know:

- * There are 6,000 college and university campuses in the U.S.
- * Also, Pew Research shows that 79% of disaffiliated Catholics leave the Church by age 23 – during the college years.
- * Thirty percent of U.S. adults now identify with no religion, with higher percentages among Millennials (born 1980 - 1995) and Gen Z (born 1996 - 2010).
- * Despite 3.1 million Catholic college students in the U.S., only one in four four-year institutions and one in 64 community colleges have a campus ministry presence.
- * Eighty-two percent of students engaged in Catholic campus ministry remain active in their faith post-graduation.
- * Students engaged in campus ministry are six times more likely to attend Mass regularly post-graduation.
- * They are five times more likely to consider a religious vocation.
- * They are eight times more likely to stay connected to parish life after college.
- * Students who are active in their faith during college and attend Mass, give four times more than their non-church going counterparts after college. (Source: Catholic Campus Ministry Association)

YOU CAN HELP, AND IT'S EASY.

If you will be an incoming college student this fall or are their parent, complete the form at <https://signupnc.newmanministry.com/> to have your information passed on to your college or university campus ministry.

If you are a friend or relative of a new college student, first obtain permission from the student to share their contact information. Then, with their permission, complete the form at <https://signupnc.newmanministry.com/> to have the student's information passed on to their college or university campus ministry.

If you are a parish youth ministry leader or a Catholic high school campus ministry leader, you can get information and resources to help your graduating high school seniors at <https://newmanministry.com/#CTA-Forms>.

Or, you can contact us with the information; and we'll take care of the rest.

This information is sponsored by the St. Serra Club of Louisville.

Saint Serra Club of Louisville Contact: **Chuck Lynch**, (502) 442-9302, ChuckLynch4782@gmail.com

national and the Worldwide Marriage Encounter.

Some ideas for you, your family and your parish for celebrating this occasion: Pray for your priest and all priests. You could personally thank your priest on Priesthood Sunday, or any day. Send a thank you note or letter. Invite your priest for dinner with your family or friends. Send a card or letter to a priest who used to serve at your parish. Have children make a homemade card or color a picture. Go on an outing together - a restaurant, a play, golf, concert, or a movie. Send them goody baskets, balloon bouquets, or flowers.

For more ideas click [here](#) and [here](#).

ST. SERRA CLUB SUPPORT FOR SEMINARIANS IN TANZANIA

In our [August newsletter](#), we provided an update on Bishop Filbert Mhasi, from Tanzania. We are proud to announce that our club collected several thousand dollars that are being sent to Tanzania, through [Fr. John Judie Ministries, Inc.](#) Thanks to all Serrans who supported this cause.

PRIESTS CELEBRATING ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to our priests celebrating anniversaries of ordination this month. We always include here any priests, from religious orders and other dioceses, who are working in our Archdiocese.

AÑOVER, REV. ALBERT C., 9/20/05, 20 yrs

HARRIS, REV. DAVID W., 9/6/08, 17 yrs

OVERTON, REV. TROY D., 9/1/89, 36 yrs

A list of all our diocesan priests can be found [here](#). A list of other priests working in our diocese, from other dioceses and various religious orders, can be found [here](#).

SEMINARIAN BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

Happy Birthday to one of our seminarians this month: **Nico Caicedo – September 18**

You can get more information on all our seminarians, as well as where they're going to school, and other information by clicking [here](#).

JOIN US FOR OUR MONTHLY "ROSARY FOR VOCATIONS"

Our Saint Serra Club of Louisville gathers online by **Zoom** for a 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 874 8155 6033.

VARIOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST

Serran Birthdays this month:

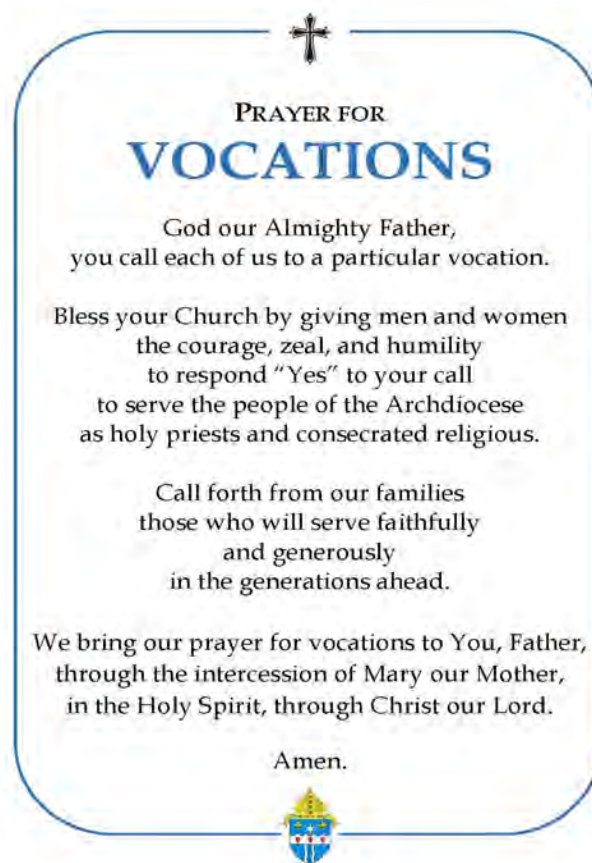
Phil Lawver, Sep 9 Deacon Bill Klump, Sep 10
Jim Williams, Sep 20 Jerry Gonsoski, Sep 21
Paul Willett, Sep 22 Thomas Davis, Sep 25

Pope's Prayer Intention for the month of August

– For our relationship with all of creation - Let us pray that, inspired by Saint Francis, we might experience our interdependence with all creatures who are loved by God and worthy of love and respect.

International Buy a Priest a Beer Day is September 9 each year!

Catholic Education - If you believe, as many do, that supporting Catholic education can help religious vocations in the long run, checkout this [CEF video](#).



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

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

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