



Club chartered May 22, 1955

Saint Serra Club of Louisville VOCATION DIGEST

"Always Forward, Never Back"

– Saint Junipero Serra

**DECEMBER, 2025
Newsletter**

MISSION:

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

MARNIE MCALLISTER, EDITOR OF THE RECORD, SPOKE AT OUR NOVEMBER 3 MEETING.

About Our Speaker

Marnie McAllister, who grew up in southern Georgia before moving back to her native Kentucky as an adult, has worked at [The Record](#) for almost 25 years, serving as editor since 2015. The weekly newspaper has a circulation of more than 56,000 in central Kentucky and a staff of seven.



She manages the news and advertising departments, as well as the website and print and digital production.

Under her leadership, The Record staff has won dozens of journalism awards from the Catholic Media Association and the local chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists - Louisville Pro Chapter.

She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Catholic Media Association (of the U.S. & Canada) and was just elected secretary of the board. She also chairs the association's education committee.

Marnie just concluded service on the board of the Society of Professional Journalists - Louisville Pro Chapter, serving as secretary for the last two years. She also serves her parish, St. Frances of Rome Church, as a sacristan, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, and is a wife and mother of three.

Her Presentation

Marnie says that Cindy Schurfranz (daughter of Serran Sarah Schurfranz), the Director of Communications at Assumption many years ago, set a high bar for Marnie for what a communication director should

be.

Our Serra club collaborates with The Record on announcements, articles (for example on the Newman Connection), and events for them to photograph (such as the Seminarian Luncheon).

The Record started as a monthly paper 146 years ago in 1879, by Monsignor Michael Bouchet (famous as the inventor of the adding machine).

Other Catholic publications for the archdiocese date back to 1836, when the paper was nothing but words, and no pictures. Some of those predecessor papers are in the archdiocesan archives.

When Marnie graduated from a Catholic Benedictine College, she decided that secular news was not her thing. She started at The Record August 1, 2001. And six weeks later, after the 9/11 event, she knew "my job matters" and started interviewing people who attended the noon Mass at the Cathedral that day.

The Record has changed a lot in 25 years, including



production, content, and delivery. Only five years ago, they switched from proofing paper copies of the articles to digital.

While digital opportunities abound, the printed paper is facing challenges. In the last few years, they changed presses three times. It used to be that the paper went to press at 4 pm on Wednesday and was at the Post Office by midnight that same day. It was in the hands of the postal carriers Thursday morning.

It still goes to press on Wednesdays but the earliest it will arrive is Saturday. Many receive The Record on Mondays. There is only one company within a few hours of Louisville which can handle the production

of 56,000 papers; and for comparison, the Courier Journal circulation is less than 40,000.

Postage has increased by about 12% twice a year over the last few years. The paper is purchased from Canada; and with the new tariffs, there was a lot of debate over the impact on newspapers. However, the federal government decided to exempt paper from the tariffs. Yet, The Record has experienced many increases in overhead – including paper, production, and postage – in addition to a decrease in advertising revenue.

Consequently, The Record has recently cut back from 48 issues per year to 39. They don't publish a printed edition on the first Thursday of each month. And they don't publish the weeks of Christmas and New Year's Day.

They are now encouraging people to read the paper digitally. After an article in September explained The Record's digital offerings and announced a reduction in print frequency, about 1,000 readers said they prefer to read the paper online and wanted to give up the paper version, thus saving the archdiocese money. If you'd like to do that, send an email to record@archlou.org and the staff will add you to the email newsletter subscription instead.

All parishes are assessed funds to run the archdiocese; and the funds used to run the communications ministry of the archdiocese help cover a portion of The Record's budget.

They get national and international articles from OSV News (part of "Our Sunday Visitor") ever since the Catholic News Service's DC bureau closed. Vati-

The Record has been on social media since 2012, including Facebook and Instagram. They also put short videos on their website. They now send a weekly digital newsletter to 26,000 people. To sign up for the weekly email newsletter, click [here](#). To check

them out on Facebook, click [here](#). To see them on Instagram, click [here](#).

Since the week beginning Sunday, November 2 was National Vocation Awareness Week, The Record's October 30 edition included many articles on vocations. You can access all of that edition [here](#).

For a link to "A day in the life of a seminarian" video, click [here](#).

Marnie is also in the November issue of What's New in ArchLou [here](#).

We want to thank Marnie McAllister for her update on our archdiocesan newspaper.

(Thanks, too, to Sam Willett and Sally Lynch 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.

Dec 1 (1st Mon) – **Sr. Katie Cummings, OSB**, will speak on her vocation journey, support for those who discern out of religious life, and her campus ministry at Spalding University.

Dec 8, (2nd Mon) - **Zoom Rosary for Vocations**, 7 pm. See the separate article for details.

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

Dec 15 (3rd Mon) – **Chaplain Fr. Pat Dolan** will speak on an Advent topic.

Dec 15 (3rd Mon) - **"Serra Meets"** by Zoom – **8 pm** Louisville time. **Chris Kreslins**, of Vianney Vocations, will be the speaker. Click [here](#) for details.

No board meeting this month due to the holidays.

Questions? - Contact Chuck Lynch at (502) 442-



Help yourself
to
HAPPINESS

This is the sign over the door to our meeting room.

can coverage comes from Catholic News Service's Rome bureau.

Marnie says that although she makes final decisions about what is reported, she interacts with many others in the archdiocese, including the chancellor, the director of communications, and the pastoral ministry offices.

ALL OF US SERRANS ARE RECRUITERS FOR THE SERRA CLUB. "EACH ONE, BRING ONE."

NEW SERRAN – NORB NOPPER

Norb recently became a member and was referred by his sister, Serran Sarah Schurfranz, and Ralph Williams, another member of the Holy Trinity Parish with Norb. His wife Mary Lou passed away May 5 of this year; and they had been married for almost 59 years, having married when they were in their 20s.

He has two daughters; his only son, Chuck, passed away September 26 of 2024, after having a brain tumor.



Norb graduated from Trinity High School in 1959 and then went to Bellarmine. He once worked in a drug store run by his father, as well as Jefferson Lumber Co. and Cox & Crawley Construction Co, before starting his own Nopper Construction Company.

For many years, Norb was involved with the St. Joseph Children's Home, serving on the board for three years.

Norb has nine grandchildren, eight of whom are granddaughters! His grandson goes to Trinity High School. He also has eight great grandchildren. All his children and grandchildren are here in Louisville and see each other regularly.

Norb has known about the Serra Club for many years, as he knew the Thornbury family, with Mr. Thornbury being a Serran decades ago. He wants to continue supporting vocations.

Norb, welcome to the St. Serra Club of Louisville! *(Thanks to Lincoln Lewis for the photo with this article.)*

TERRY LESCH, OF HOLY TRINITY PARISH'S STEPHEN MINISTRY PROGRAM, SPOKE AT OUR NOVEMBER 17 MEETING.

About Our Speaker

Terry Lesch has been a parishioner at Holy Trinity for 35 years. She was a medical social worker for Caretenders Home Health and then Senior Care experts. She has two children and four grandchildren. Her son is a forensic psychiatrist here in Louisville and

her daughter is a school social worker in Durham, NC. Terry is married to Dennis Lesch who is a physical therapy professor at Bellarmine.

She's not formally working at present except for lots of time helping with grandchildren and volunteer work like Stephen Ministries!

Terry joined us today to talk about Holy Trinity Parish's Stephen Ministry Program.

Her Presentation

Stephen Ministry is an interdenominational, international, not-for-profit ministry established in 1975, and headquartered in St. Louis. It equips lay people to provide one-on-one Christian care to people, in their congregation or community, who are experiencing difficult times in their lives. It is a confidential, free ministry for people dealing with such problems as loss of a loved one, divorce or separation, illness, job loss, a recent move, and other stressful life events.

In addition, they've also helped people deal with a new disability, or the loss of a pet. Sometimes, the care receiver may simply need someone to listen to them, or to interact with someone outside of their families.

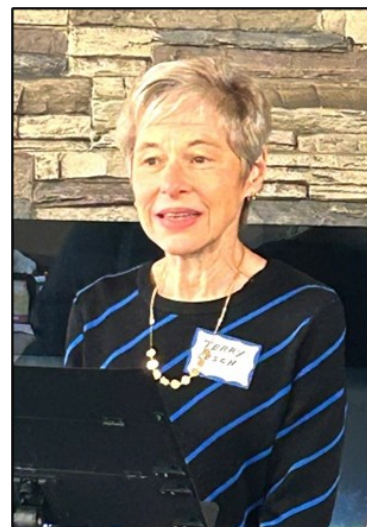
The emphasis is on weekly, nonjudgmental, "active listening with the heart" - encouraging hope, positivity, support, and keeping people from hurting alone.

The caregivers are trained and supervised, going through a 50-hour training program that lasts 20 weeks. Then they are commissioned through their church or congregation. The training even exposes the caregiver to things such as suicide prevention. A caregiver is expected to commit to a two-year period of volunteering. However, the volunteers can drop out, if necessary. Caregivers also meet every other week to continue learning, with special speakers, learning of community resources, etc.

This is not therapy; and new care receivers go through a screening process to be sure they don't, instead, need professional mental counseling.

So, this is not case management or running errands for the care receivers. The caregiver and care receiver don't have to become friends; but sometimes that happens. The interaction time can be days or weeks. But sometimes it becomes months or years.

Terry is trying to get the word out about this ministry, especially with the holidays coming up. She's



talking with people in other parishes after Masses. A related article in The Record can be found [here](#).

Although there are no fees to the care receivers, a parish could bear costs for materials in training its caregivers. A parish would not provide this ministry without support from the pastor.

There are 13,000 church congregations around the world providing this ministry.

We want to thank Terry Lesch for updating us on this valuable ministry. For more information, Terry can be reached at (502) 641-8725.

(Thanks, too, to Lincoln Lewis for the photo with this article.)

BISHOP THOMAS DALY SPOKE AT OUR NATIONAL ZOOM MEETING OF NOVEMBER 17.

This was the 60th monthly Serra Meets. The first one was December 12, 2020, during the pandemic.

About Our Speaker

Bishop Thomas Daly, of the Diocese of Spokane, WA, is the Episcopal Adviser to the USA Council of Serra International. More on Bishop Daly can be found [here](#).

His Advent Reflection

Bishop Daly spoke of the Gospel for the first Sunday of Advent this year – from [Matt 24:37-44](#). It is the story of when Christ said, “So will it be also at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be out in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two



women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left.”

This is a reading we’ve heard many times. However, Bishop Daly had a priest teacher tell the story of being called, on the first weekend of one Advent, to the scene of a robbery, shooting, and death of the college-age

son of a friend. When the priest took the call, the first thing he thought of was this Gospel, on which he had just preached. The priest said that Advent was never the same for him after that.

The story reminds Bishop Daly of how fragile life is. He thinks of how much crime we have in many of our cities. Are we prepared for a sudden an unexpected death? Advent is all about getting prepared. We all need conversion.

Bishop Daly suggests we all start our day offering it to God, maybe saying the prayer, “God, I give this day to you.” He says we need to work to prevent apathy and live the day as a gift.

With the days being short, he finds the cold and quiet of early evenings in Advent conducive to prayer. He advises us to use such times to increase our relationship with Christ. He suggests we make a retreat. “Do we want to be a sleeper or a watcher?” he asks. Have initiative. Stay awake. Be on watch; and reflect. Bishop Daly reminds us Serrans that we are religious in mind, heart and soul.

Being aware of the big question people discuss now – Are you spiritual or religious? – he reminds us that religion requires discipline. But we have to be careful that it’s not all about actions. The spiritual world is about the heart, too. A spiritual life that is strong is all about how we are growing our heart. St. John Henry Newman said, “Heart speaks to heart.” And that’s what it means to be spiritual – being committed.

Bishop Daly heard a priest at a retreat once say, “You’re spiritual if you have the capacity for transcendence.” Do we realize there is something more than what meets the eye? We may see it in everything from Eucharistic Adoration to holding a newborn.

Thomas Merton, a convert to Catholicism, once said, “I felt I was prayed to this moment,” when he was ordained. It was an experience of the transcendent.

Bishop Daly suggests we ask ourselves, how spiritual are we? Is our spiritual life active, and allowing for quiet time? Do we try to share and live our lives in a relationship with Christ?

A spiritual person has a sense of vocation, mission, or calling; and it’s not just those who have taken religious vows. Bishop Daly said, “We’re put here for a reason. ... What we do matters.”

We need to find our God-given plan or mission. We should have a sense that there is something more. Like Mary, we are to ponder these things. A spiritual person is ok with questions and mystery but ponders in prayer and trusts God. The spiritual person uses resources from God.

Suggesting the prayer, “Your will, my peace.” Bishop Daly reminds us that we lack peace when we lack humility. The spiritual person does Christ-like things with forgiveness and compassion. Spend time striving for a spiritual life.

He reminds us, “The Devil divides, distracts, discourages, deceives, and, if not stopped, destroys.”

His Comments on the Recent USCCB Conference of Bishops

Our country is going to be consecrated to the Sacred Heart.

In the discussions of immigrants, he would like to have seen more use of the word “refugee” to remind us that when Mary, Joseph and Jesus fled to Egypt, it was because Jesus was going to be killed. This is what many immigrants to the U.S. experience – life and death situations.

There will soon be a study of the new “propaedeutic year.” Bishop Daly thinks it should be conducted at seminaries. It’s about getting the seminarians away from technology; living a fraternal life; learning service, especially for the poor; deepening their prayer life; and learning the generosity of heart that comes from a communal life. A young man could be a good academic student; but he may need human formation – a part of the purpose of the propaedeutic year.

Bishop Daly said that we are experiencing more people going through the OCIA program (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults). In his cathedral parish, they have 70 people in the OCIA program now.

He also sees more young men going through a change. We have all worried about young men whose lives have been adrift, having no drive, dealing with toxic masculinity. However, some are now seeking a spiritual life. And it may even have an impact on vocations.

The next National Eucharistic Conference will be in 2029. But the location has not yet been determined.

Finally, the Catholic Church is planning to celebrate the [2,000th anniversary](#) of the Great Commission (Christ’s command to make disciples of all nations) in 2033.

You can watch the whole presentation, including the business portion of the meeting, [here](#).

A NEWLY ORDAINED PRIEST, FR. MICHAEL SCHULTZ, SHARES HIS FAITH JOURNEY.

See Episode #47 of the podcasts from the Catholic Education Foundation [here](#).

ANNUAL VOCATION POSTER AND ESSAY CONTESTS

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

The Contest started with the National Vocation Awareness Week (the week that began November 2 this year); and entries must be received in the Voca-

tion Office by January 14.

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

ADVENT IS HERE!

It’s always good to pick out some spiritual reading for Advent, especially since we get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of Christmas shopping and decorating this time of year. See if you can find something to read that is not only spiritual, but pertains to the reason for the season.

Contest (grades 7 & 8).

SHOPPING FOR CHRISTMAS

Shop for Christmas and support our local seminarians and religious orders.

St. Meinrad Archabbey - click [here](#).

Franciscans - click [here](#).

Passionists - click [here](#).

Srs. of St. Benedict (Ferdinand, IN) - click [here](#).

Trappists in Gethsemani - click [here](#).

Ursulines (Mt. St. Joseph) - click [here](#).

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. The asterisk (*) indicates “Retired.”

BELL, REV. GERALD L.*, 12/15/73, 52 yrs

CARDENAS, REV. BRITO, 12/21/03, 22 yrs

CARRICO, REV. ADAM B., 12/19/15, **10 yrs**

DESOUZA, C.P., REV. BRUNO, 12/4/04, 21 yrs

GIBSON, C.P., REV. CHRISTOPHER, 12/20/75, **50 yrs**

HERNÁNDEZ MENDÉZ, REV. FRANCISCO J., 12/8/17, 8 yrs

JOSE, C.M.I., REV. THOMASON A., 12/27/00, **25 yrs**

JOSEPH, C.M.I., REV. AUGUSTINE, 12/29/09, 16 yrs

MARTINEZ, REV. BENITO E., 12/15/84, 41 yrs

MERKT, REV. JOSEPH T.*, 12/17/66, 59 yrs

MUNJANATTU, OFM CONV., REV. GEORGE M., 12/26/00, **25 yrs**
 MURPHY, REV. J. SCOTT, 12/12/09, 16 yrs
 POZHATHUPARAMBIL, OFM CONV., REV. JOHN, 12/30/01, 24 yrs
 PUTHUSSERY, OFM CONV., REV. SHAJU, 12/30/01, 24 yrs
 SHOONER, REV. JEFFREY P., 12/11/04, 21 yrs
 STILES, REV. J. ROY*, 12/18/63, 62 yrs
 THANDIACKAL C. M. I., REV. SEEJO, 12/28/04, 21 yrs
 THOMAS, C.M.I., REV. JINTO, 12/28/11, 14 yrs
 THOMAS, C.M.I., REV. JOSEPH, 12/30/98, 27 yrs
 VADAKUMPADAN, C.M.I., REV. SAJU M., 12/29/92, 33 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 two of our seminarians this month:

GEORGE OLOKOJO – DEC. 16
SAM MATTINGLY – DEC. 29

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.

ON HOLINESS AND SPIRITUALITY

The third part of our Serran mission statement is to further the holiness of our members. Here is some good reading to help us all:

Distinguishing between what God wills and what God allows – Read the article [here](#).

Five Bible verses for when you feel pulled in all directions – Read the article [here](#).

Learning to accept when God says 'no' in prayer – Read the article [here](#).

An important lesson about unanswered prayer –

*And the Word became flesh - and made
his dwelling among us, and we
saw his glory, the glory as of
the Father's only Son, full of grace
and truth. - John 1:14
MERRY CHRISTMAS!*

Read the article [here](#).

Prayer as adoration: But do we know how to adore? - - Read the article [here](#).

If you want to learn how to pray, ask Jesus to teach you. - Read the article [here](#).

Do you know the three words that describe God's style? Pope Francis' answer - Read the article [here](#).

VARIOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST

Serran Birthdays this month:

Neil Manias, Dec 25

Mike Knoop, Dec 27

Pope's Prayer Intention for the month of December - For Christians in areas of conflict - Let us

pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.

Don't forget the Serra International Foundation

when making any end-of-year charitable donations.

You can give [here](#) or just mail your check to Serra International Foundation, 134 N. LaSalle, Suite 1900, Chicago, Illinois, 60602.

On the Christmas Rush - "We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that fact. This enables us to do something and to do it very, very well. We may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a stop along the way, an opportunity for grace to enter in and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the Master Builder and the workers. We are the workers, not Master Builders ... ministers, not Messiahs. We are prophets of a future that is not our own."
- Cardinal John Dearden

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

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