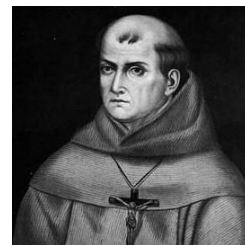




# SERRA CLUB OF ORANGE COUNTY



February 2022

Region 11

District 79

Charter 438

Newsletter

**OUR MISSION IS TO FOSTER, AFFIRM AND PROMOTE VOCATION TO MINISTRY IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

## FUTURE EVENTS

**Feb. 3 - Club Meeting, Speaker: Deacon Tony Patronite**

**Feb. 5-6 - World Day for Consecrated Life**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



### Celebrating Consecrated Life

Wishing a blessed New Year to you all. May this year be better than the last.

As we begin the second month of the year we celebrate World Day for Consecrated Life. In 1997, Pope Saint John Paul II instituted a day of prayer for women and men in consecrated life. You'll notice that the logo for this features a candle. This celebration is attached to the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord on February 2nd which is also known as Candlemas Day - the day on which candles are blessed symbolizing Christ who is the light of the world. So too, those in consecrated life are called to reflect the light of Jesus Christ to all people.



World Day for Consecrated Life is observed in parishes on the Sunday after February 2nd which this year is February 5-6.



Virginia Mort represented our club in presenting to Vocations Director Father Brandon Dang a \$6,000 check to the OC Vocations Office. This was part of this year's distribution of the Monsignor Sammon Fund which also included a \$2,000 grant to Bishop White Seminary and a \$2,000 grant to St. John's Seminary.



Finally, let us remember those in consecrated life who have gone before us. Students at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School in Yorba Linda did just that as they participated in a service project in November where they visited Holy Sepulcher Cemetery to clean the gravesites of the Sisters of St. Joseph and many others. They said it was a beautiful experience and it felt good to honor those that have passed on.

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We have an update on Erin Lyons whom you'll recall spoke to us an aspirant to the Sisters of the Holy Cross at our Zoom Meeting in December 2020. She spoke on behalf of the Labouré Society - [rescuevocations.org](http://rescuevocations.org). Our club as well as some individual members made contributions to this society which helps reduce student loan debts of aspiring priests, brothers and sisters. Erin entered the Bethany Convent in Carrollton, Ohio as an aspirant in March 2021 and has now applied to continue her formation as a postulant. She will wear a light gray habit without the scapular or veil. She thanks us for allowing her to enter the convent through the reduction of her debt and asks for our continued prayers.



Happy Saint Valentine's Day ! ❤️

In God's Love,  
Catherine Walton, President

## SPEAKER



This month's guest speaker was Fr. Eugene Lee, Pastor at St. Thomas More Parish in Irvine. A popular homilist at the parish, the Serrans were all eager to get to know Fr. Eugene much better.

Fr. Eugene was born in Philadelphia but raised in Long Beach, California. His father is an OBGYN and his mother runs the office. Fr. Eugene graduated from Cal State Long Beach as an English major and since his high school days worked at a printing press which was his passion. He acquired the business with his parents' financial backing and worked hard to make it prosper. He enjoyed everything about the printing business but was naïve about it. Father was the main designer in the business and curiously enough 60% of his income came from a strip club franchise (Fr. Eugene would put the stars in all the right places). Although he was a good Catholic, he felt Church was one thing and business was another. This state of oblivion lasted until his best friend, J.J., came into the office to help with a project. J.J. is a Catholic apologist who worked for Catholic Answers and upon seeing the back office, which was like a porthole into Sodom and Gomorrah, quickly admonished Fr. Eugene. His first reaction was to become defensive but he later realized that the comment sparked something. He decided to integrate his Catholic life with the business and got rid of the putrid environment of the back office. Amidst many arguments with his investors (his parents), Father was working long hours to compensate for the loss of this major account, and he felt burnt out. Father was looking for something different...he found it after attending one of J.J.'s lectures at UC San Diego

for the Korean Catholic Club on the subject of the Eucharist. J.J. would quote from the Bible, especially John 6:55-57 "For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me." Fr. Eugene admits that this "blew his mind" for as a child he had attended elementary classes at a Baptist school and although he had attended Catechism classes at Korean Martyrs in Westminster, he had never heard of such a concept. On the way home from the lecture, J.J. discusses about the Church Fathers. Fr. Eugene is now facing an epiphany! He feels an irresistible urge to enter seminary. He tells his parents on their 23<sup>rd</sup> Wedding Anniversary at Ruth's Chris Steak House in Irvine and his mother cries and his father is silent. He enters Mt. Angel Seminary in Oregon, and Fr. Eugene Lee is ordained in 2004.

Father Eugene offered this advice for lasting vocations: Do things "distinctly Catholic." Our faith is rooted in the Eucharist and our devotion to Our Lady. To be sure, it's honorable to do good things for the community, but if it's social work, others can do it, why go Catholic? Father Eugene's life was changed after acknowledging that the Holy Eucharist was the true body of Christ. Moreover, our devotion to the Virgin Mary, our most trusted intercessor, is a stronghold to our doctrine.

Gabriella Negrete

## VOCATIONS REPORT



The seminarian who received the gift card for January, donated by Silvia Uriarte, is David Hoang. David is from Holy Spirit Parish and is in College 4 at Bishop White Seminary. David expressed his

gratitude to the Serra Members for their prayers and thoughtful gift. David shared that the seminarians have us in their prayers and especially pray for our protection during the pandemic.

We all realize the last year and a half has been stressful for everyone. Our club had not been having in person meetings for many months. Fortunately we now have resumed our meetings. It is important that we support the activities supporting our seminarians. Members can sign up for the 31 Club. You choose one day a month to especially pray for our seminarians and attend Mass if possible. We now have just seventeen seminarians studying for our Diocese of Orange. Adopting a seminarian is the most rewarding activity. The road to ordination is at times challenging and long. The seminarians all agree that our prayers and support help them on their journey. Members can sign up to adopt a seminarian at our meeting. The seminarians appreciate receiving cards and notes from our members.

Any questions regarding discernment, contact our Vocations Director, Father Brandon Dang, at 714-282-3036 or [bdang@rcbo.org](mailto:bdang@rcbo.org).

**VOCATIONS PRAYER:** God our Father, You made each of us to use our gifts in the Body of Christ. We ask that You inspire young people whom You call to the priesthood and consecrated life to courageously follow Your will. Send workers into Your great harvest so that the Gospel is preached, the poor are served with love, the suffering are comforted, and Your people are strengthened by the sacraments. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mary Brockschmidt  
Vice President, Vocations

## MEMBER PROFILE

We welcome our new member  
Barbara Beneville



I left my hometown of Nutley, NJ after marrying Ed and moved to San Rafael, CA. A few more moves and we settled in Tustin where we raised our 5 rambunctious children. I had a few jobs along the way including librarian, secretary in my husband's insurance office, assistant to the dean of studies at a graduate school, and a stint at Roger's Gardens in sales. I try and make it out to Joshua Tree when possible with my dog Sparkey.

I'm delighted to be a part of Serra Club. I have the time now to attend meetings and hopefully be an active supporter. I am a product of Catholic schools through college and have received the benefits of advice and counsel from both priests and nuns. Time to pay it forward and contribute to the mission of Serra Club. Thank you Pat Manzo for recruiting me.

Blessings to all.

**SERRAN BIRTHDAYS IN  
FEBRUARY  
MARY BROCKSCHMIDT  
BRUCE JUNOR  
AND SOPHIA WICKSON**