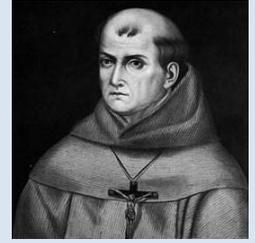




# SERRA CLUB OF ORANGE COUNTY



August 2023

Pacific Region

District 79

Charter 438

Newsletter

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

## FUTURE EVENTS

**Aug. 3 - Club Meeting, Speaker: Rev. Thomas Tran**

**Aug. 4 - St. John Vianney (Patron of Priests) Feast Day**

**Aug. 23 - Ordinati Luncheon - Christ Cathedral**

**Sept. 7 - Club Meeting, Speaker: Rev. Sy Nguyen**

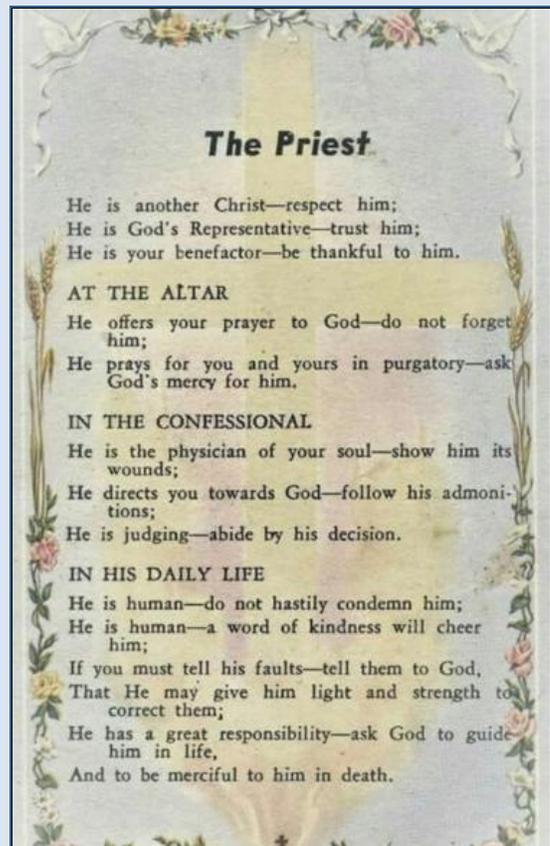
**Sept. 8 - Serra Meets - 9am - Zoom - Dale Ahlquist, President of Chesterton Academy**

**Sept. 18 - 16th Annual Monsignor Sammon Golf Outing**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



July saw the yearly change of priest assignments. We may be sad to see certain priests leave our parish. After being a Serran for many years I have come to have a different perspective. Seeing almost all of the priests and deacons in the Diocese present at the ordinations, I view the clergy and us as one large family. Hearing the backgrounds and vocation stories of the priests who speak to us and the current issues they face makes me empathize with them more. This, in turn, makes any priest who comes to



my parish more approachable, whether or not they have spoken to our group. I really appreciate this benefit of our Serra club.

Two signature Serra events are coming up in the next two months. One is the Ordinati Luncheon. After a 3 year absence we will once again celebrate with our newly ordained priests. The other is our Golf Tournament where we show appreciation for the ordained and religious of our Diocese. Please support these two events.

In God's Love,  
Catherine Walton

## SPEAKER



For many people, reading or hearing about the 20 year Vietnam War was just a story from the history books; however, for Father Pascal Nguyen, Norbertine priest and his family, it was an unbelievable story that they actually endured.

The North Vietnamese troops were on the march to take over South Vietnam. Father Pascal's father worked for the US Embassy. One ordinary day, a jeep pulled up to his house announcing that the family had 30 minutes to pack up and leave everything his parents had worked for behind. They were being evacuated now. Packing up for six children, his heartbroken 8 1/2 month pregnant mother prayed, cried and made it happen. They were flown to Saigon to wait and wonder, where to next in this journey for survival and freedom. The family were now war refugees.

The family went to the airport every day in hopes to board a transport plane for the United States. Someone had told his mom that there was no rice in the United States, so she made sure that the family had rice to eat. Each day they carried a huge bag of rice with them to the airport and each day they were not able to board a flight. Finally, the day arrived when it was their turn to go. They climbed onto a green bus with marines hanging out the bus windows with loaded guns to protect the people if necessary. Once on the transport, which was built to haul military supplies, not people, he quickly noticed there were no seats, no seatbelts, no pressurized air, only the sound of roaring engines. The awful trip was painful and very cold. His dad kept saying, just pray the Rosary. They were headed for Guam. They landed in Guam late at night and were given hot chicken soup to eat that he remembers was so delicious. They were told not to go outside because

there were big black poisonous snakes. They lived in Guam for two weeks when the day finally arrived for their flight to San Diego. The stewardess asked his mom that if she delivered a baby girl, would she please name her Carina. When they arrived in San Diego, an ambulance was waiting on the tarmac to take his mom to the naval hospital where baby Carina was born. The rest of the family went to Camp Pendelton which was set up to be a refugee camp.

Father spoke of how difficult it was to leave practically everything behind. Imagine having no idea of where they were being sent and wondering how they would live their lives.

Born in Vietnam in 1965, at eight years old, Father often wondered about where he would be and what he would be doing when he was 35 years old. He thought he would like to be a Bishop. Father Pascal wanted to be just like his uncle who was a tall Franciscan priest. Every class he took, he asked himself, would this class help me to become a priest. His first job was working in a store. Then he was hired at Jack in the Box. He earned \$ 2.25 an hour in wages. He went on to college but after three years he stopped and began his search for a congregation that was different from the Franciscans. His criteria was to find an Order that loved the Holy Eucharist and the Blessed Mother. It was there that he found the Order of Norbertines.

Father Pascal told us about the history of the Order. St. Norbert was the Founder of the Norbertines in 1121 in Northern France 900 years ago. The Order has stood the Test of Time. Father was ordained in 1994 and was sent to teach in San Pedro. The parents of these students worked in the Star Kist Factory. Father Pascal's parish was St. John the Baptist in San Pedro where he built up the church by 2002. His next assignment was to be the Treasurer to build the new Abbey. Currently, the community has over 100 men with 8 to 10 seminarians joining this year. They have a waiting list for potential entries into the Order of Norbertines. The Order just established a new community in Springfield, Illinois. Father Pascal first heard about the Serra Club 29 years ago when he was ordained a priest. He knew the sole mission of the Serra Club was to pray for an increase of religious vocations for which he is personally grateful.

Virginia Mort

## VOCATIONS REPORT



defend them from idolatry; the idolatry of vanity, the idolatry of pride, the idolatry of power, the idolatry of money. This prayer is to prepare these hearts so that they are able to follow Jesus closely.

Mary Brockschmidt  
Vice President, Vocations

The seminarian who received the gift card for August, donated by Virginia Mort, is Oliver Coughlin. Oliver is Barbara Beneville's adopted seminarian. Oliver is from St. John the Baptist Parish. He has completed his Pastoral Year at St. Justin Martyr Parish.

Seminarian Cody Schurter shared his feelings after completing his first year at St. John's Seminary. He thanks Serra Club members for their prayers and support. He feels it has been an incredible blessing to be at St. John's and study over this past year. He has seen himself grow immensely both in his intellectual life and his relationship with Jesus. There has been a lot of fruit that has come out of this year. His family had lived in Yorba Linda and now his parents are in Wexford, PA. His sister was here for part of the summer, working as a camp counselor, so he has spent time with her. In July Cody returned to the seminary for Greek summer classes. I am blessed to have Cody as my adopted seminarian.

Any questions concerning discernment, contact our Vocations Director, Father Brandon Dang, at 714-282-3036 or [bdang@rcbo.org](mailto:bdang@rcbo.org). Beginning last month Father Brandon has an Associate, Father Cheeyoon Chun. Father's assistant, Elizabeth Sandoval, can be reached at [esandoval@reco.org](mailto:esandoval@reco.org)

**VOCATIONS PRAYER:** We must pray so that the hearts of these young people may be emptied; emptied of other interests and other sentiments, so that they may become free. This is the prayer for vocations. Lord send us nuns and send us priests,

## SERRAN BIRTHDAY IN AUGUST

### GABRIELLA NEGRETE

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### 16TH ANNUAL MSGR. JOHN SAMMON GOLF OUTING

*Serra Club of Orange County invites you  
to have a fun day of golf, dining, and  
camaraderie with friends and the clergy  
of the Diocese of Orange*

**Tustin Ranch Golf Club  
12442 Tustin Ranch Road  
Tustin, California 92782**

**Monday, September 18, 2023**

**Entry Fee: \$186.00**

Golfing Fee  
Golf Cart Lunch  
Cocktails and Dinner

**Cocktails and  
Dinner Only: \$67.00**

For information contact:  
Maureen Kosinski 714-309-3206

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