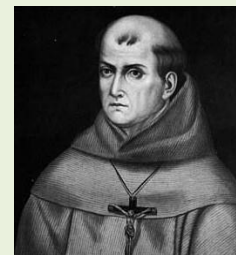




SERRA CLUB OF ORANGE COUNTY



April 2025

Pacific Region

District 79

Charter 438

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

FUTURE EVENTS

April 3 – Club Meeting, Speaker: Monsignor Kerry Beaulieu

May 1 – Religious Brothers Day

May 1 – Club Meeting, Speaker: TBD

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Serrans,

“Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.” ...as I write this on the Solemnity of the Annunciation, let us take the time to reflect on our own lives and how we can imitate the Virgin Mary’s virtues. Fr. Michael E. Gaitley’s book, “33 Days to Morning Glory,” lists and reviews ten virtues that Our Lady possessed, but let us focus on four of them and how they relate to the Annunciation of the Lord.

Prudence~Virgin most prudent, you pondered in your heart all that God spoke to you throughout your life. You recognized and reflected on all that God was asking of you. Please help me to develop that



same attitude of pondering. Help me to reflect on all that God is doing in my life and through the people around me, so that I may respond to Him with generosity.

Humility~Most Humble Mother, God lavished on you the extraordinary grace of the Immaculate Conception not on account of your merits, but because it delighted Him to do so. Teach me to accept with joy all the graces that God gives me each day, knowing that I don’t deserve them.

Faith~Mary, you are most faithful. You accepted all that God asked of you. So great was your willingness to follow Him and place everything in His hands. I worry, faithful Mother, about many things: my life, my family, my job, my future, the future of the country. Teach me to have faith in God. Teach me to place my trust in Him as you did, surrendering all things to His holy will.

Obedience~Mother Most Holy, through your loving obedience to the will of God, you brought into the world its Savior. I am often torn between doing my will and doing God's will. Help me to surrender my stubborn will, even if it sometimes seems like I have no hope of changing. Help me also to love the will of God, even when it is difficult to accept. It is through these prayers that we ask Our Sweet Lady to help us be more like her in all that we do in our lives. May we all continue to persevere in our prayer life for the increase of vocations. Amen.

God bless,
Gabriella Negrete

SPEAKER



It is fitting that our speaker gave his talk in March, the month dedicated to St. Joseph. I read through my notes from Father Joseph Knerr's talk. The notes were simple and short. I mused how like St. Joseph our Father Joseph seemed to be. Simple and quiet with one simple and quiet message. At every crossroads and with every question, Fr Joseph told us, "*I chose what gave me peace,*" and once the choice was made "*I was ALL-IN.*" Oddly, I did not equate Father's name with St. Joseph, till I began writing. As we have said all this term, "there are no coincidences." Fr Joseph is another glorious example of that truth.

A priest for 45 years, in 2024 serving as the Pastor of St Bonaventure Church in Huntington Beach, Father Joseph Knerr retired. He happily shared with us that his freedom from daily pastoral duties was a blessing; however as a man who quietly knows himself, he understood his need to live in community and to work. So today he lives in residence at St. Kilian's Parish in Mission Viejo where their weekly bulletin lists him as an Assisting Priest. He enjoys the work of being an "on-call" priest, quietly understanding the dignity of work and serving like his namesake, St. Joseph.

Now 70 years old, I suspect novels could be written about his life, but he simply shared with us that his father was stationed in Occupied Germany during the Reconstruction Years and there his father met a 23 year old fräulein who worked at the restaurant he frequented, married the fräulein and brought her to the United States where her deep Roman Catholic Faith kept her going and took root in her son. Fr. Joseph's education was seriously Catholic. His early years were lived in Fullerton. He went to St. Mary's where the Pastor, Fr. Seibert, served for over 25 years. It was there that Joseph came to the belief "you gotta be old, to be a priest." St Mary's school was packed with kids and Joseph was educated at the school annex across the street which eventually became St. Julianna's. At the age of 6 he was given a St. Joseph Missal, the Latin/English side-by-side version with a section in the back on the Saints. He loved to read about saints. At that young age of six he felt he was going to be a priest. His family moved from Fullerton to Orange where he attended Holy Family, then Cathedral, and St. Norbert's school through the fourth grade. It was in these years Joseph realized priests could be young and here we find Joseph at one of his earliest crossroads. His family offered him the opportunity to attend St Catherine Military School taught by the Dominican Nuns. Joseph chose to attend and was **All-In**.

One day at St. Catherine's, Joseph and three of his classmates were frightened by a call to the principal's office. Turned out, it was an invitation to attend an open house at Our Lady Queen of Angels Minor Seminary High School in Los Angeles. His mother drove them to the open house. Another crossroads, this time Joseph chose to attend this minor seminary for his high school years and again was **All-In**.

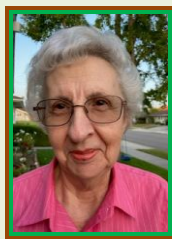
During these high school years Joseph Knerr met Rick Serra, who was three years ahead of him. They remained lifelong friends. At the end of the High School Seminary, a very subtle message came at another crossroads. This time he chose to go to the College Seminary. This choice brought him peace. Four years later the next subtle nudge and the question "Do I go on for four more years to study theology?" The answer "Yes." Again, Peace in his heart followed by **All-In**. The next crossroads, ordination verses secular life. Joseph prayed for an answer. What he heard was "*Whatever you do; you will do it well.*" Not the clear answer he prayed for,

still, he chose. He chose to be a priest and was **All-In.**

Happy to serve wherever and whenever asked, Father Joseph has served at St. Bonaventure two different times. It was his first assignment and his last assignment. He also served at St. Norbert Parish. After an intensive two-year study of Spanish, he served at St. Bonafice, then Holy Spirit, and St. Martin de Porres, before retiring from St. Bonaventure in 2024. His vocation continues. At St. Kilian's he continues to find peace when he responds to requests for service with a "Yes" and where he is also wise enough not to overload. Choose what gives Peace to your heart and then go **ALL-IN.**

Jeanne Bullington
Secretary

VOCATIONS REPORT



The March gift card went to Shane Duffy and was donated by Silvia Uriarte. Shane is a member of La Purisima Parish and is studying at St John's Seminary.

I received a beautiful "Thank You" note from Shane and was able to meet him at the seminary on Sunday.

April's gift card, donated by Virginia Mort, is being presented to David Hoang of Holy Family Parish in Fountain Valley. David is studying at Mt. Angel Seminary in Oregon.

VOCATIONS PRAYER: Good and faithful God, You sent your Son to be our Good Shepherd. Renew in us our commitment to serve You. Give insight to those discerning their vocation. Amen.

Phyllis Soloy
Vice President, Vocations

VISIT TO ST. JOHN'S SEMINARY

What a beautiful day we Serrans experienced on Sunday, March 23 at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo. Both Serra Clubs in Orange County car pooled together arriving in plenty of time to pray together at 11:00AM Mass. In addition to hosting Serrans, it was also Discernment Weekend for a very large group of men discerning the priesthood. What a showing for Christ! Seeing all these men dressed in suits and ties, who are considering leaving their professional occupations to work for Christ at almost no salary, was extremely heartwarming! These men were sincere and prayerful. I spoke to several of them and asked them how their Discernment weekend was going for them. Each smiled and their responses ranged from awesome to God spoke to me that I am in the right place. I thought to myself that our Serran prayers for an increase in religious vocations to the priesthood were certainly working in a very positive way. Let's keep up the prayers folks!

A beautiful buffet was served with brisket, salmon, so many vegetables, a salad bar, and ice cream and homemade ginger and chocolate chip cookies. It was all so yummy! Following lunch, Pat Manzo presented the seminary with a \$1000 donation from our golf proceeds money to help the seminary with expenses.

My adopted seminarian, Francis Ang, son of our member Margot Ang, conducted a tour of the seminary grounds, classrooms, and activity lounges. As Francis made eye contact with his mom, Margot Ang, he said to our group, I'll show you all the grounds, but not my room Mom. Everyone in our tour group smiled as we could only surmise why Francis would not show what a private room looked like.

Mother Nature cooperated with a gorgeous 78 degree day. Truly it was a day the Lord had made, let us rejoice and be glad. If you were unable to attend Seminary Sunday this year, do schedule this event on your calendar for next March when we Serrans are invited once again to St. John's Seminary for Seminary Sunday.

Virginia Mort

SEMINARY TRIP









MARCH MEETING



