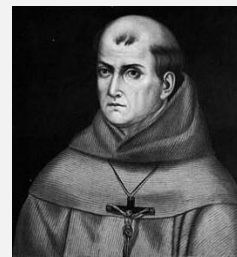




# SERRA CLUB OF ORANGE COUNTY



July 2025

Pacific Region

District 79

Charter 438

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

## FUTURE EVENTS

**July 1 - Feast Day of St. Junipero Serra**

**July 3 – Club Meeting, Speaker: Msgr. John Urell**

**July 15 – Ordinati Luncheon**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Serrans,

June was a very busy month for our Serra Club and for our seminarians. Now that summer is here and their studies are done, our seminarians are out on their summer assignments busily putting to work all that they have learned. Some are at parishes learning what a parish priest is expected to do for his parishioners, some are acting chaplains at hospitals, others are presenting and holding discussions on various topics at their parishes. This is a wonderful opportunity for adoptive moms and dads to meet up with their seminarians for a lunch or dinner and get to know them better. They are the future of our Catholic Church and through them, we are spreading the Word of the Lord.



Several of our members attended the basketball game at Mater Dei which was a fun and sold-out event. The seminarians beat the priests by 5 points!

Some of us attended the funeral Mass of Wally Drazba. What a beautiful Mass that was, and the church was at full capacity. Fr. Sy, pastor of Holy Family Church was the celebrant and was assisted by 6 to 8 other priests that knew Wally and Harriet well. The tenor and soprano beautified his Mass with their magnificent voices, and Wally's children's tributes were heartwarming. Everyone was invited to a lovely reception after the Mass to celebrate his life.

We also had the ordination of Oliver Coughlin this month. Some of our club members attended. Barbara, Silvia, Diane, Molly and I got together to plan the floral centerpieces for the Ordinati Luncheon on July 15. They are going to be beautiful, and we had so much fun together.

Several of our members are already planning and preparing for our upcoming golf tournament in September. It is our club's biggest fundraiser. Pat Manzo has been an incredible source of information and help to me in planning this event. Let us make this an especially fun and profitable event, since it is our club's 50<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary. Lily has been busy working on the advertising for the golf tournament. I encourage you all to join in by volunteering your talents, golfing, or attending the dinner, and encouraging golfers to attend. It will be an enjoyable event for all!

And lastly, Pat Manzo, Virginia Mort and Tom Woore represented our club at the Serra International Convention in Kansas City, Mo.

I sincerely thank all of you for your clerical help, kindness and enthusiasm in promoting these events for the support of religious vocations.

May our Lord bless us all,

Lourdes (Lulu) Papac  
President

## SPEAKER



"We'll figure it out together." Margot Ang shared these words with the ladies at her lunch table. Margot explained earlier she was at a loss to set up for our Communion Service and she was rescued by our June Speaker, Deacon John Reza. He said to her - "We'll figure it out together." Our many years of Christian living have taught us, "you cannot give what you have not received" and "going it alone is really difficult." No different for the Deacon. Through his story we see he always shoulders his cross and that his cross is lighter when working

together with others to figure it out. In my time as a Serran, this is the first talk where the speaker invited someone to stand with him at the podium. Deacon John invited his wife of 30 years, Vilma, to stand with him. For her part in the "together" equation, she had surprised him by attending our June meeting. He spoke to us, together with her.

Growing up in a three-bedroom home, the youngest of seven children, Deacon John, undoubtedly had many opportunities to figure it out together. The "when", "where", and "how" to share that space must have been an important life lesson. His parents, especially his mother, knew how to keep the family focused first on God. According to John, she was prayerful and smart. For example, in their home a statue of Mother Mary stood on top of the TV set with a rosary draped upon it. Ready for prayer at any time and visible to all while watching TV. This smart and pious woman must have given her family many tools needed to figure it out together. His mother died when John was 20 years old.

There was another prayerful and smart woman in John's life. In the beginning, John knew that woman together with friends. She took the initiative to invite John out on their first date. The exchange went something like: "What are you doing tonight?" "Parking Cars." "Wanna go to my father's office party?" And together they went to the event. Together in 1995 they married.

Life for John appears to be always in community. Together John and Vilma opened a Latino bookstore to serve the community. It was a family business. They were building something. Children were slow to come. It was ten years before the birth of their first child. And then there was a second. A boy and a girl to raise up. Like all parents with young children, they were very busy. Add the building a family business, they may have been busier than most. Three years after their first baby was born, they were hit hard by the 2008 recession. At that point they were too busy. They split up roles and responsibilities. John worked constantly to keep the business open. Vilma took on the role of family spiritual leader. John's cross was so heavy. Ultimately the business went bankrupt, and they lost their home. No longer figuring it out together, John was dragging his cross.

Unknown to John, Vilma was not working alone. She was constantly praying to God that John would again become the spiritual leader of their family. In John's words, "Christ was knocking hard at the door." A loud knock came from Deacon Henry at St. Hedwig's Parish. He invited John to start a Men's Fellowship Group, proposing a turn-key program developed in Texas titled, This Man is You. A shy person by nature, John hesitated but Christ kept knocking. The deacon confessed there was pride involved in his decision to move forward with the request. John wanted to succeed in building something after the bookstore failure. The fellowship program did succeed! One step at a time he was moving back to that place of "together."

Next step, John made his Cursillo. This step was a big struggle for John. Like an addict going through withdrawals, John experienced sweats, shakes, and an overwhelming desire to go home and sit in front of the TV with its pictures, sounds, and stories to numb his being. By the grace of God, John finished the weekend. On his first day home, John went to daily mass. Through, with, and in the Body of Christ. Together. Step by step, he was better able to carry his cross.

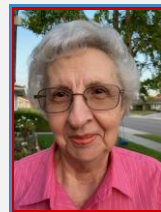
Now shouldering his cross, John came alive. At one point, God asked John, "What did you do with the two gifts of life I gave to you?" Those two gifts needed to be educated and formed in the faith. John and Vilma had little money. But together with gifts of money and more importantly prayers from groups like the Serra Club, they were able to send both children to St Hedwig's school. His son graduated from Servite High School. His daughter graduated from Rosary Academy.

Next step, an invitation, again from Deacon Henry, suggesting John petition for acceptance into the diaconate. Deacon Henry encouraged him to "Just say Yes." The permanent diaconate is a five-year formation program. John & Vilma were living with her parents at the time. John said "yes." In 2023 John was ordained a deacon. His first assignment was at his home parish, St Hedwig's in Los Alamitos. Last year in December he was assigned to St. Cecilia's Parish in Tustin.

Six months ago, he was asked to bear the "Cross of Hope" for all Pilgrims journeying into Christ Cathedral. Deacon John exhorts, "Our cross is God's Will for us. It is heavy, but don't give up. We need to be together and to keep going." Remember, Jesus commanded, "Be one as the Father and I are one." "We'll figure it out together." Words always reassuring, communal, persistent and full of Hope in this Jubilee year of Hope.

Jeanne Bullington  
Secretary

## VOCATIONS REPORT



The July Gift Card was presented to Alvin Huynh and was donated by Virginia Mort. I received a very nice "Thank You" note from him. I was advised that Alvin had some surgery and immediately sent him a card with prayers for his health and healing from all Serra Club members.

August Gift Card will be presented to Jose 'Trino' Juarez. The card was donated by Teresa Barajas, a prospective member.

Oliver's Ordinati Mass and Luncheon was attended by his parents and Serra members and several of our Seminarians. He gave a wonderful talk on his life and on entering the seminary, giving his thanks to the Serra Club for their prayers and support. Silvia and I have already approached him to say Mass for us, and he has agreed to do so.

Any questions concerning discernment, contact our Vocations Director, Father Cheeyoon Chun or Elizabeth Sandoval, his assistant at [esandoval@rcbo.org](mailto:esandoval@rcbo.org)

**VOCATIONS PRAYER:** Oh God, you have constituted Your only-begotten Son supreme and eternal Priest for the glory of Your majesty and the salvation of mankind. Grant that those whom He has chosen ministers and dispensers of His mysteries may be found faithful in fulfilling the ministry they have received. Amen.

Phyllis Soloy  
Vice President, Vocations

**SERRAN BIRTHDAYS IN JULY**  
**LILY HANSON**  
**JAMES PAPAC**  
**BARBARA BENEVILLE**

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**SERRA INTERNATIONAL  
CONVENTION**

It isn't until you attend a Serra International Convention and meet Serrans from around the world that you fully understand what an honor it is to be a Serran.

The 336 Serrans that attended the Kansas City "Chosen to Serve" International Convention came away feeling it certainly was worth the time, effort, and money to attend this very special event. Twenty-one Serrans came from countries such as: Nigeria, Taiwan, Scotland, Italy, Canada, Mexico, Switzerland and England. Serra Clubs have a footprint around the world.

Serra Club began 90 years ago when a group of men in Seattle, Washington got together with the specific mission to pray for an increase of religious vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life. There are 189 Serran Clubs in the US, and club 190 is on the drawing board. This growth is increasing around the world; for example, there are 51 Clubs in

Italy. No matter where a club is located, the goals remain the same: to expand an awareness of our mission, to differentiate between Serra Clubs and the Sierra Clubs, to expand, increase and support the religious and to pray for an increase in religious vocations. There is a great need to grow our clubs. We also face the fact that worldwide, 189 Serrans passed away this year (3 from our club). Each year in every club around the world there is a great need to increase our membership.

Highlights from the keynote speaker, Cardinal Thomas T. Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, Canada:

He related several anecdotes about selecting our new Pope. 133 Cardinals under 80 years of age were allowed to vote. He told about what great lengths were taken to keep the Cardinals apart until they elected a Pope. Their phones were taken away, and their individual rooms were sealed. He said that the most enchanting moments were when the Cardinals went into the voting room chanting the Litany to the Holy Spirit for enlightenment to elect God's choice to be the next successor of Peter. The Dean of Cardinals carried out each step according to protocol until a Pope was elected. He joked when he said our new Pope is Bob from Chicago.

The remaining speakers were equally dynamic as Cardinal Collins. Perhaps at future Serra Club meetings I can highlight each keynote speaker.

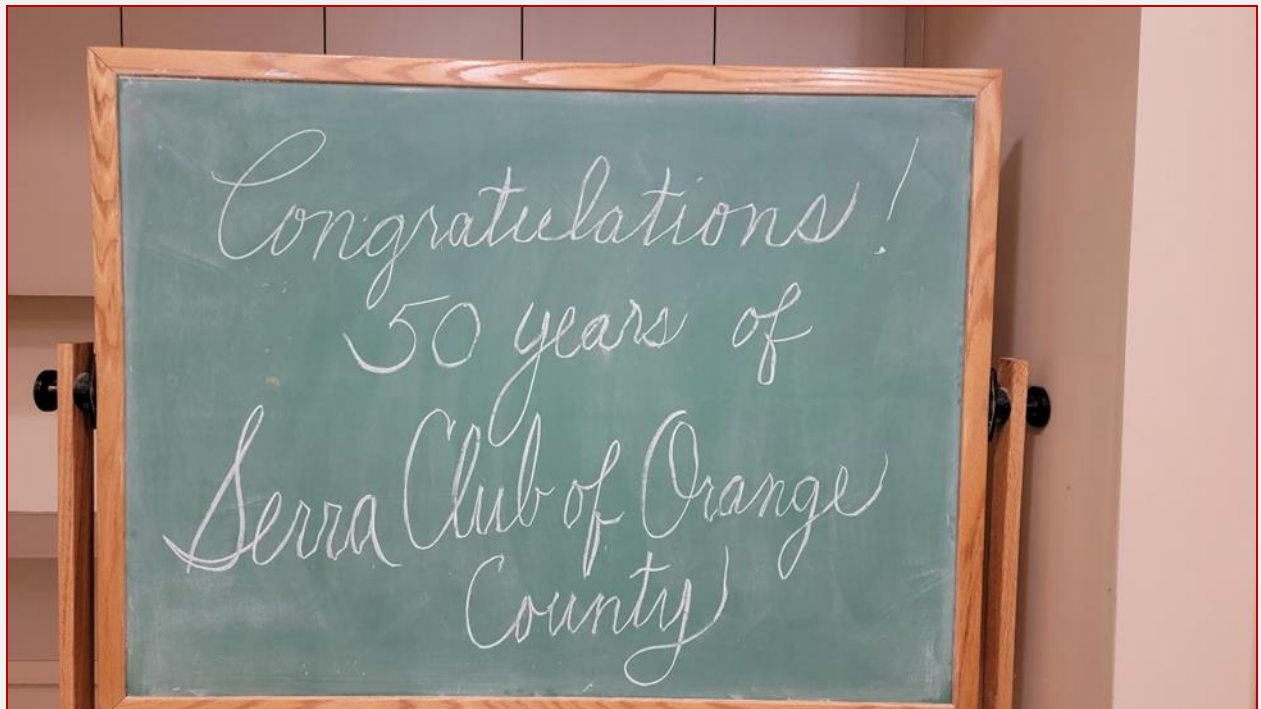
We attended Mass at the Cathedral and two other Masses were held at the hotel. There was the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and confessions daily along with Catholic vendors selling beautiful articles for purchase. The hotel meals were over the top delicious, especially the filet at the final banquet. It tasted like butter in your mouth.

The four Serra Clubs of Kansas City, Missouri left no detail to chance. Their hours of planning and attention to detail provided an unforgettable experience for all Serran attendees. Hats off to the Serra Clubs in Kansas City, Missouri. They certainly earned their gold trophy.

Virginia Mort



## JUNE MEETING











Catherine Walton presents Madrienne Peters with a pin commemorating 25 or more years of service to Serra. Madrienne has been a Serran for 28 years, serving in numerous capacities.



Past Serra Presidents Catherine Walton, Virginia Mort, Madrienne Peters (seated), and Pat Manzo join current President Lulu Papac in celebrating 50 years of the Serra Club of Orange County.







## PRIESTHOOD ORDINATION



Vice President of Vocations Phyllis Soloy with newly ordained Father Oliver Coughlin at St. Justin Martyr on the occasion of the celebration of his first Mass as a priest.

# SERRA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

