

A Voice for Vocations

November, 2008

Serra Club City of Orange

Region 11, District 127, Charter 643



OUR PREZ SEZ Jim Baer, President "Wherefore Growth?"

Our Mission.. to foster and affirm vocations to the ordained priesthood and vowed religious life in the United States and, through this ministry, our members' common Catholic faith.

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Sister Bernice Jordan

District 127 Governor

Wally Drazba

With approximately 20 other Serrans from Orange County, I attended the Serra Western Regional Convention in Reno, NV. from October 17 through 19, 2008. It was a memorable event - with well-known speakers and plenty of information on challenges before us to ponder and discuss.

I would like to present to you my reflections regarding a meeting, the Serra Leadership Breakfast, which many members never attend. The following conference attendees were invited: Club Presidents, Club Presidents-Elect, Club Representatives, Governors, Governors-Elect, District Leaders, Regional Leaders and National Board Members. Held on Saturday morning, it preceded the Keynote address.

Chaired by the Regional Director, Pat Manzo (Serra Club of Orange County), there were approximately 40 attendees. The vast majority present were males who appeared to be in their

70's or 80's. Pat asked each of us to give our name, position in Serra, years in Serra, and to describe what was working, especially in attracting new members.

As the President of the City of Orange Club, I noted that I had approximately nine years in Serra. Tongue-in-check, I stated I had brought in my wife and sister-in-law as new members but would only be able to do that once. I had no miracle answers to the problems of recruitment and retention. It was interesting and encouraging hearing many of the leaders say they had 10, 20 or 30+ years in the movement.

Attendees at the meeting had few success stories to share. Despite the USA Council's goal of establishing a new club in each district in the current Serran year, a few weak clubs were looking to consolidate with more viable ones. Membership has increased when Serrans concentrate on asking daily mass attendees to join Serra. Unfortunately,

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Upcoming Events

NOV 22 - Transitional Deacon Ordination, Holy Family Cathedral

DEC 13 - Priesthood Ordination, Deacon W. Hubbard

JAN 11-16 - National Vocations Awareness Week

JAN 17 -Altar Server Recognition

AUG 27-30, 2009 Serra Int'l Convention, Omaha, NE

OCT 9-11-09 - Dist 127, Region 11 Conference, Hilton, CM, CA

District Doings

Wally Drazba, District Governor

The biggest thing that has happened in the past month was the Regional Convention. Twenty-five members of our district attended the convention, including Fr. Bill Barman, Chaplain of the County Club, and Sr. Bernice Jordan CSJ, spiritual advisor for the City Club. All but one of our four clubs was represented, but only one of the presidents were able to attend, which was disappointing. Those of us who did attend got a great spiritual boost. The opportunity to speak with Serrans from all over our region and learn from them what they have found to work for them was invaluable. Next year with the convention in our back yard it will provide a better chance for more of us to get these benefits.

This past Sunday was **Priesthood Sunday**. I hope that many of our parishes took the opportunity to honor their priests. This year we tried to reach as many parishes as possible through the deacons. We'll see what happens.

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Newz

OCT 7th - Father John Block from St. Cecilia Parish celebrated our Mass, assisted by Deacon Tom McGuine, who was also our guest speaker for the day's meeting.

Deacon McGuine told of his career with the Los Angeles Police Department where he spent 23 years working homicide in the Watts area. From there he took his family back to his native Wisconsin where he pursued a growing interest in the diaconate program. He was ordained a permanent deacon in 1992 for the Diocese of Milwaukee. Tom and his wife have six children, the oldest of whom is their son Peter, a priest, who was assigned to be rector at the North American Pontifical College in Rome. He led 61 new students, sent by their bishops, as well as 230 full time students who will return to the U.S. to complete their studies and serve in their local parishes.

Tom and his family moved to St. Angela's parish in Orange County and continued serving as deacon at Holy Family parish, assisting with baptisms, helping with marriage preparation, and doing investigative work for the annulment process for the Marriage Tribunal. Tom says that we have 85 active deacons in the diocese today...at least one in each parish.

President Jim Baer requested prayers for Serra member Mary Booth, of Holy Family, and Denise Costanza, wife of Joe Costanza of St. Norbert, both of whom passed away in early October. We welcomed our guest, Benjamin Hoang, who recently transferred from Mt. St. Angel in Oregon to Orange County. He will serve a one-year internship at St. Cecilia parish before enrolling in the seminary to study for the priesthood.

Sister Bernice chose the Rosary as the topic for the day's lesson. She brought a 15 decade rosary, which is the original Dominican rosary, and she also brought the rosary that was part of the habit of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange. Sister said that the rosary always played an important part in her life. She shared a story of faith in the power of the rosary when she was a principal, and was in desperate need of a religion and math teacher. After praying the rosary to Mary, her prayers were answered.

Uncle Amos' Amblings

Shared Grace

The first time we went there we were enthralled! We had our favorite places to visit and our quiet hideaways where we could just enjoy the silence, the color and the views. It was the perfect place to share our thoughts and our feelings with each other. We selfishly kept this treasure to ourselves for a couple of times before we realized that it was too good not to share with friends and family. We discovered that the joy we had in sharing this treasure with others actually enhanced and kept our appreciation of this gift on a high! As we watched the expressions of excitement and joy on their faces, we continued to relive and renew our own enjoyment.

I have found the same to be true of our faith experiences. There was a time when I used to sop up every opportunity to experience and grow in my own personal faith. I knew I needed every sense of God I could grab and I was sure that if I didn't take the opportunity while it presented itself, it would be gone forever! Then, one of those chances included not only my spouse, but a greater part of the community as well. That was when I found that my faith was not just for me, but was to be shared with all, and that we all need each other.

This past week, as some 25 of us shared the Serra Regional Convention in Reno, I was once again struck with the wonderful realization that, surrounded by fellow Serra friends we were together accepting another wonderful gift to our faith. Your camaraderie, your spirit, along with the splendid words of hope and joy we received, added immensely to our commitment to vocations, to the Church and to God!

For those unable to make it this time, we encourage you to be sure to take part in the next Regional Conference in October 2009, as Orange County is the host. If you have never been to a Regional, you will assuredly be filled with the Holy Spirit and have one of the times of your lives!

Prez Sez
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most of those present had been experiencing little success recruiting new members, and were unsure of what works.

The consensus of the group was that the greatest problem was the aging of the membership. Why younger men and women don't readily join was not fully explored; however, it was suggested that younger Catholics, especially with young children, don't have the time to devote to Serra. Several members said it might be the day or hour of the meeting or the location, or the quality of the speaker. The lack of commitment, the lack of active participation, and the lack of enthusiasm were mentioned as hindrances to having a vibrant club. The lack of transportation, a disability or ill health, or ineffective leadership could also be responsible for inactive members.

I believe the breakfast meeting was a welcome opportunity for those in leadership positions to express their frustrations with challenges at various levels in the Serra organization. In my opinion, these Serrans are anxious to share their struggles and successes, and support each other. In a less than ideal world, what more can you ask? I came away from the meeting feeling blessed that I'm representing a Serra Club with so many committed members. I pray that you will remain faithful to the call you have received to work in the harvest for vocations.

District Doings, Wally Drazba
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Next year we could do a better job of promoting this celebration. I'm curious about what your parish did? Please let me know.

On November 22 we will have the ordination of five seminarians to the office of deacon. The ordination will take place at Holy Family Cathedral at 11:00 AM. The City club will be the main host, but all clubs should participate. This is one of the main things we have been doing as Serrans in our Diocese. Please sign up to help. The presidents have all received sign up sheets to pass around at your meeting. Should you miss your meeting, please call him and volunteer. And lastly, a *Happy Thanksgiving* to all!

Reflections on the Reno Convention
Sister Bernice Jordan

"Joy in the Midst of Challenge - Vocations in the 21st Century" was the title of the Keynote speaker in Reno, Rev. Donald Cozzens, PHD. The following points from his talk were significant for me. A vocation is a "whispered imagination" nourished by family, prayer and example. There are four challenges for Serrans.

- 1) The average number of children in the family today is two.
- 2) Parents who do not support a vocation to the priesthood or religious life,
- 3) Clergy scandals.
- 4) Young men say they have a calling to two sacraments, Holy Orders and Matrimony, but in the end Marriage wins out.

Young people ages twenty to thirty-nine are interested in Lay Ministry. Half of the young men show interest in priesthood and 2 out of 5 women show interest in the Religious life. Priestly vocations in Ireland are lower than in the USA.

There is a harmony in the order of the world and we invite people to live in harmony with God's order. There is an unseen harmony. Priests on Sunday see people living in faith with harmony to God's plan. Priest minister to the people and the people minister to the priest.

An Order of Religious Women called "The Handmaids of the Precious Blood" resides at the Servants of the Paraclete Monastery in Jemez Springs between Albuquerque and Santa Fe, NM. Their only ministry is to pray for priests. They have perpetual adoration in their chapel.

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click on**

<http://www.serraus.org>

**Don't put a question mark where
God put a period.**

Young Compassion

Author and lecturer, Leo Buscaglia, once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child. The winner was:

A four-year-old child, whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman, who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there.

When his mother asked him what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy just said,

"Nothing, I just helped him cry."

Ministers for Serra Masses

**“Always forward,
never back!”
Junipero Serra**

NOV. 18, 2008

EMS
Carol Aaron HOST
Jim Baer CUP
Patty Baer CUP
Carol Cagle CUP

DEC 2, 2008

LECTORS
Loretta Callopy
Sandy Toner
Terry Toner



**Carol Cagle
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