

# ORGANIZING & CHARTERING

## A NEW SERRA CLUB



# *QUICK START MANUAL*

*Note: This QUICK START MANUAL is to be used with the more comprehensive ORGANIZING & CHARTERING A NEW SERRA CLUB Manual (2014), or the NEW CLUB CHARTER RESOURCE MANUAL*

*All manuals are available by contacting your Serra District Governor or*

*Phone: 1-312-419-7411, Website: [Serraus.org](http://Serraus.org)*

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## **Suggested Role for Bishop**

- Meet with Serra Club Formation Team consisting of Serra Region, District, or local leaders who will acquaint you with the mission, purpose and operation of a Serra Club, and the benefits that its existence will provide to foster and affirm religious and priestly vocations in your diocese
- Review history of Serra and its “Aggregation to the Vatican” in 1951
- Review “endorsement” letter(s) from other Bishops.
- Review support a local Serra Club can give to the Vocation Director and diocesan seminarians.
- Review Serraspark.org for examples of vocation promotion activities supported and sponsored by Serra Clubs around the United States and the world.
- Draft letter of support for the establishment of a Serra Club to be sent to key Pastors, Deacons, and lay groups. (See Resource Manual for suggested formats)
- Suggest names of potential Serra prospects.
- Determine preferred area (city or deanery) for Serra Club.
- Appoint an acting Chaplain.
- Establish a proposed charter date for the new club, typically 9 – 15 months into the future.

## **Suggested Role for the Vocation Director**

- Meet with the Serra Club Formation Team to become acquainted with the benefits, purpose and operation of a Serra Club.
- Review history of Serra International and its “Aggregation to the Vatican” in 1951.
- Review benefits of endorsement and support from the Bishop(s).
- Consider what factors (2 or 3) would be most helpful to you in your work as Vocation Director. Review popular and effective Serra activities as listed on the Serra Spark website ([www.serraspark.org](http://www.serraspark.org)).
- Identify local pastors or parishes (2 or 3) who have demonstrated extraordinary support for VOCATIONS promotion. Enlist their support.
- With the Serra Club Formation Team, identify who do you get support from now? Knights of Columbus? Others? In what way?
- Coordinate meetings of the Serra Club Formation Team with Bishop, Priest/Parish leaders to discuss roles, action plan and proposed new Club Charter date.

## **Suggested Role for Supporting Parish Priest or Deacon**

- Meet with members of the Serra Formation team. Learn about Serra's mission, its history and its long-time connection (aggregation) with the Vatican. Discuss in detail the **PURPOSE** of Serra.
- Review endorsement and support letters of your local Bishop and from other bishops throughout the U.S.
- If your parish has a parish-based vocations ministry, review how active it is. Recommend leadership from this group to assist with the formation of a new Serra Club?
- Successful Serra club formation is based upon private and communal **PRAYER**, specifically parish-based **ADORATION**, and activities to address the ever-present needs of the diocese for more Priests and Religious vocations. The laity must be involved. Pastor support of the establishment of a new Serra club at parish events is very important.
- Invite prospective members to a Serra information event. Encourage those attending to join and to help recruit more prospective Serra members.

## **Suggested Roles for Parish-based Vocation Group**

- Support the formation of a new Serra Club endorsed by the Bishop and Vocation Director of your Diocese
- Invite the Serra Point Person or someone from the Serra Club Formation Team to attend a parish-sponsored Serra Club information event with the pastor and interested parish laity. The purpose of this information event is to inform them of the dire need for more religious vocations and how the establishment of a local Serra Club will address this important need of the Church.
- Distribute Serra printed materials; namely, the Serra Prayer for Vocations and other information materials regarding the purpose of a Serra Club and its proven benefits to the vocation ministry needs of the Church.
- Explore and initiate activities (SerraSpark.org) that will lead to a culture of vocations and an increased vocation awareness within your parish. Select projects which are within the capabilities of the local supporters and future club members.
- With the approval and cooperation of your pastor, organize and sponsor parish-based prayer and adoration for vocations events on a regular basis. Use Serra Spark for recommended activities.

## **Role for District Governor and the Serra Club Formation Team**

- Once the approval of the local Bishop for the formation of a new Serra Club has been obtained, assemble the Serra Club Formation Team and serve as its POINT PERSON (Team Leader) for the charter process.
- The Serra Club Formation Team consists of
  - District Governor
  - Other designated, experienced Serra leaders (Ambassador)
  - Local or nearby Serra Club Leaders
  - District Extension Team members
- With the Formation Team determine a plan to recruit new club-in-formation charter members from:
  - 1) deanery or designated area parishes,
  - 2) from existing clubs (expansion within a diocese that already has a Serra Club(s), or
  - 3) from a larger, central parish with surrounding distant parishes (Hub & Spokes Rural Club alignment)
- Commit to frequent and regular visits to club-in-formation to share the Serra vision and to sustain effort to get the new club chartered.
- Under certain circumstances, when extra travel and time is required to charter new clubs in distant dioceses, a Membership Ambassador may be appointed to assist the POINT PERSON
- After charter event, the District Governor will continue frequent contact to ensure that newly Chartered Club is supported for first year of operation or for as long as necessary.

## **Role of Serra Club Formation Team Point Person**

- The POINT PERSON is a dedicated, experienced Serran who has been a member of an existing Club for 3 years or more and has held leadership positions, including being the president of a Serra Club. In most cases, this will be the District Governor. Under certain conditions the point person may be another experienced Serran (Membership Ambassador) within the diocese, or one nearby, with the same qualifications. The Point Person is the leader of the Serra Club Formation Team.
- The primary role of the Point Person is to promote Serra and its mission, and, when invited, to give an informed, focused and enthusiastic introduction of Serra to an interested Bishop, Vocation Director, and local supporting Priests, Deacons and laity.
- The necessary and important details of forming a new Serra club should NOT be the emphasis at the initial meeting. Rather, it is better for the Point Person to convey the integrity, positive experience and proven results of Serra as verified by other Bishops and Vocation Directors.
- Most Bishops and Vocations Directors are rarely “micro managers.” They look to key leaders within the parish or diocese to use their talents to accomplish a task and reach a goal. If they believe, after a successful introduction, that the Serra Point Person and the Serra Club Formation Team can provide the training and support necessary to start a successful Serra Club, they will encourage it.
- Serra is a person to person activity built upon a foundation of personal and communal prayer and is expressed through vocation promotion and affirmation activities as a response to the need for more religious vocations. People join Serra to participate in effective and meaningful vocation activities that affirm existing vocations and help to foster more religious vocations. The specific club activities, while similar around the world, are uniquely tailored to the present and anticipated needs of the local diocese. This is evident by the wide variety of effective, time-tested activities many Serra Clubs sponsor and support worldwide.



## **Role for Proposed New Club Members**

- First, every baptized Catholic is called to regularly PRAY for more religious vocations. Some are called to more...to become a Serran. Could it be you?
- Do you have a heart for the remarkable mission of Serra?
  - Do you have any family members who are priests, religious or deacons? Your membership in a Serra club is a way to support them.
  - Do you want to be part of a team that works to increase the number of priests, deacons and religious and affirms those who have already made that definitive, life-long decision?
  - Have you ever visited a seminary, a convent, or attended an ordination mass? Did it inspire you?
  - Do you have family members or Catholic friends who are concerned about the need for more religious vocations but do not know how to help resolve the issue?
- If yes, then attend and invite others to a Serra formation meeting.
  - At the Serra formation meeting, learn about Serra's long history and its remarkable mission to foster and support our priests and religious vocations.
  - Pray also that others will receive the "call" to participate in the special work of Serra.
  - Recite the Serra Prayer for Vocations daily.
- Act! Join Serra. Invite like-minded Catholics that you know to join as well.

## **Role and Purpose of Serra Club Charter Event**

### ***Celebrating the Formation of a New Serra Club!***

- While recognizing the formation of a new Serra Community, the Charter Event serves to **INDUCT** new members and **INSTALL** the officers of the Club.
- While the charter event happens only once in the life of a Serra Club, an Induction and Installation Banquet may become an important annual club event.
- Usually this is an evening event held at a Parish Center or local Community Center
- The Charter Event is most memorable and meaningful when it includes Mass with Bishop as principal celebrant with supporting Priests/Deacons
- Charter Event Invitees include:
  - New charter members and their families
  - Representatives of local religious communities and friends
  - Key leaders of parishes and community
  - Guest Serrans from other Clubs and the larger Serra Community.

## **Mass and Banquet Dinner/Formal Reception**

### **Typical Order of Events:**

- Introduction of Guests
- Welcome remarks by Bishop, Vocations Director, Serra Int'l representative and other Serra leaders.
- New club charter presentation to Bishop by Serra District Governor
- Induction of New Members by Bishop or appointee
- Installation of Officers by Serra District Governor
- Presentation of Serra symbols, club banners and gifts
- Group photo
- Announce date, time and location of regular meetings
- Closing prayer by Bishop or new Serra Club Chaplain

## **Timeline to Charter Event – Point Person**

- Determine a suggested timeline and process for the new club in formation. Start with Bishop and Vocations Director approval to form a Club and end with a proposed Charter event date, typically 9-15 months into the future.
- Use suggested Serra formation process as a general guide, remaining sensitive to geographic location and needs of the area
- Discussion of “style” and operation of the New Club should begin early and be ongoing between the Serra Club Formation Point Person and initial key leaders of the new club-in-formation. Most Serra Clubs do similar activities that are then adapted uniquely to their local vocation needs and member capabilities. This is also true for club activities designed to invite new and retain existing members
- The first year of club operations is critical. Experience proves that if a newly formed Club has successfully operated for a full year, steadily growing its membership base and increasing its vocations directed activities, it will continue to have growth.

One final comment...

- The fundamental mission of Serra International has remained unchanged for over 80 years. For this we are grateful to God. However, Serra’s success in the future can only be ensured by the continued SUPPORT -- in the form of time, talent and treasure -- of an active membership base found within its current and future clubs. New clubs are vital to the ongoing health of the entire Serra organization.

Mary, Queen of Vocations, Pray for us

St. Junipero Serra, Pray for us.

**Membership Committee**  
**UNITED STATES COUNCIL OF SERRA INTERNATIONAL**  
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**CHARTERING A NEW SERRA CLUB ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKLIST V5, 01-26-19**

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROSPECTIVE SERRA CLUB: DIOCESE** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY, STATE** \_\_\_\_\_

POINT PERSON NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:  DG  RD  Membership Ambassador  Other

DATE, \_\_\_\_\_ ACTION, \_\_\_\_\_ PERSON Responsible \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Serra Office staff (OFFICE) receives a NEW CLUB INQUIRY or notice of INTENTION TO START a Serra Club. OFFICE creates a New Serra Club Administrative Checklist (this form) on a shared drive that can be accessed by the Region Director, District Governor, Council President and Council VP of Membership. Once created, future updates to the list should be made only by RD, DG or the OFFICE staff. OFFICE creates a unique file for this potential club that will contain contact info, relevant correspondence, charter application, and other start up documents. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. OFFICE notifies RD, DG, US Council President and VP of Membership of NEW CLUB INQUIRY \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. RD and DG select the POINT PERSON for the formation of this new Serra Club (usually the District Governor or a Membership Ambassador) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. OFFICE emails electronic "New Serra Club Quick Start Manual" to the POINT PERSON \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. POINT PERSON communicates with local contacts ASAP to discuss interest level of the local community, introduces the "New Serra Club Quick Start Manual" to prospective Serrans, and contacts the Sponsoring Serra Club president or Serra District Extension Team (DET) members (if available) to determine interest and ability to assist in New Club formation \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. POINT PERSON meets with Bishop and Vocation Director, using the New Serra Club QUICK START MANUAL as a guide, and confirms interest in establishing a Serra Club in their diocese. Once confirmed by Ordinary, the status changes from a New Club Inquiry to Club-in-Formation. POINT PERSON then requests:

Ordinary approves request to Charter (expressed in written form) \_\_\_\_\_

Ordinary appoints an acting Club Chaplain \_\_\_\_\_

Ordinary sets the date for Charter event, 9-15 months in future \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Charter Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. POINT PERSON establishes a Serra Club Formation Team consisting of interested Serrans from nearby sponsoring Serra Clubs and Serra District Extension teams \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. POINT PERSON coordinates  
all recruiting activities to recruit a minimum of 25 charter members, \_\_\_\_\_  
guides the selection of initial club officers \_\_\_\_\_  
initiates early Club-in-Formation prayer and vocations activities \_\_\_\_\_  
oversees the completion of the charter application packet. \_\_\_\_\_

**A minimum of 30 days prior to the Charter Event, items 9-13**

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. A minimum of 30 days prior to charter event, POINT PERSON collects and submits initiation fees and completed charter application package to SI Executive Director \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. SI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR coordinates the SI Board of Trustees review and approval of new club charter application and sends Club charter documents to the Point Person \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. DG, RD, US COUNCIL VP MEMBERSHIP, and US COUNCIL PRESIDENT determine the key US Council leaders to attend the Charter event. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. POINT PERSON coordinates the purchase or gifting of the new club symbols (bell, gavel, banner, and statute of St. Junipero Serra) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. POINT PERSON coordinates local charter event program and responsibilities for the many incoming Serra Club officers at the Celebration Mass and charter event \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **14. CHARTER EVENT IS HELD**

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. DISTRICT GOVERNOR provides continuous support after the Charter Event for the first year of the club operation, coordinating visits between members of the local New Serra Club Formation Team and by officers of supporting local area Serra Clubs (if nearby) and regular mentoring communication between the President and four Vice Presidents \_\_\_\_\_