



Serra New Member Orientation

Welcome to Serra!

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Orientation 7-15-2019



Overview

- The Big Picture (above the Club level)
 - Serra International
 - Serra Foundation
 - US Council of Serra
 - The State of US Vocations
- How Clubs Work
- Vocations Activities

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Serra: The Big Picture

Our Mission Statement:

*To foster and affirm vocations to the
ordained priesthood and vowed
religious life, and through this ministry,
to grow in our own Catholic faith.*

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Three Distinct Missions:

- To Foster **NEW** Vocations
- To Affirm **EXISTING** Vocations
- To Grow in our own Holiness

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History & Role of Serra Organization

- 1935: Started by four Catholics in Seattle, WA
- 1951: Became Official apostolate of Catholic Church
 - The **only** lay apostolate officially aggregated to the Church
- Our Role is to be the **LEADERS** on vocations effort
 - We **LEAD** by our own efforts: prayer, service & fellowship
 - We **LEAD** by encouraging and supporting vocations efforts by other Catholic lay organizations
 - We **LEAD** by engaging **all** Catholics in creating a culture of vocations.

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Saint Junipero Serra

"Always Forward, Never Back"

- Born 1713 in Mallorca, Spain
- At age 16 joined the Franciscans
- At age 36 volunteered to go to new world as a missionary; working in missions in Mexico
- At age 56 began establishing missions in California
- 1784 died at age 70 in California
 - traveled 24,000 miles as a missionary
- Canonized : September 2015
- Feast Day: July 1

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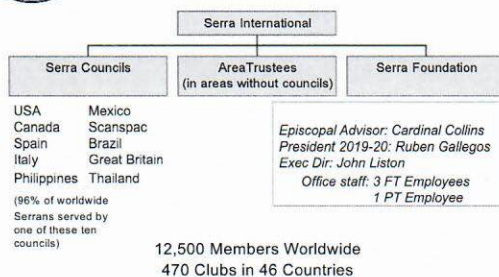
Five things to Know about St. Serra

- Chose a life of humble service
- Suffered constant pain as a missionary
- Believed in the power of persistent prayer
- Advocated for the indigenous people
- The significance of the Bell

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Organization of Serra



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Value of Serra Intl to local Clubs

- Our mission is to serve the **worldwide** Catholic Church
- SI spreads the Serra model to areas of the world where no such vocation effort exists adapted as necessary to local culture
- SI brings Serrans together once a year at an international convention.
- SI coordinates Serra activities with the worldwide priorities of the Vatican

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Serra Intl Foundation

- Mission
 - To fund programs that foster & promote religious vocations
 - To fund formation programs for men & women in consecrated religious life
 - To enhance recognition of Serra International

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Serra Foundation Grants

- Paid in 2016:
 - To 9 USA organizations: \$ 71,500
 - To 16 org. in 8 other countries: \$ 85,000
 - Total **\$156,500**
- Paid in 2017:
 - To 18 USA organizations: \$ 71,000
 - To 35 org. in 12 other countries: \$ 80,500
 - Total **\$151,500**
- Paid in 2018: **\$123,000**

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Serra US Council

President: Judy Cozzens (2018-20)

Regions

U.S. Regions, Effective July 1, 2018

9 Regions:
each with a
Regional
Director

44 Districts:
each with a
District
Governor



Overall USA:
7,500 Serrans
201 Clubs

US Episcopal
Advisor:
Archbishop Tom
Daly (Spokane)

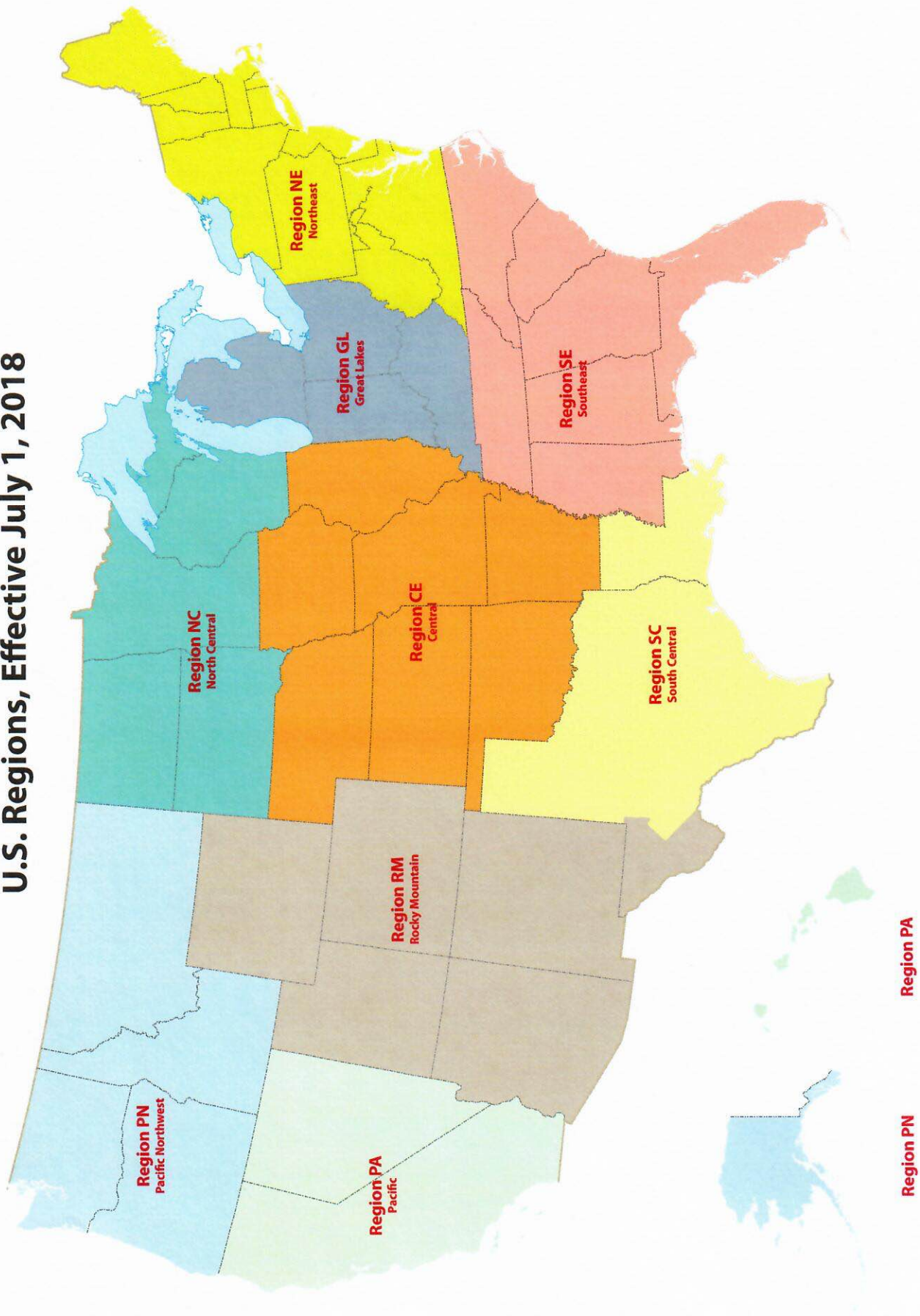
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2018 Slate of Grants Approved by the Serra International Board

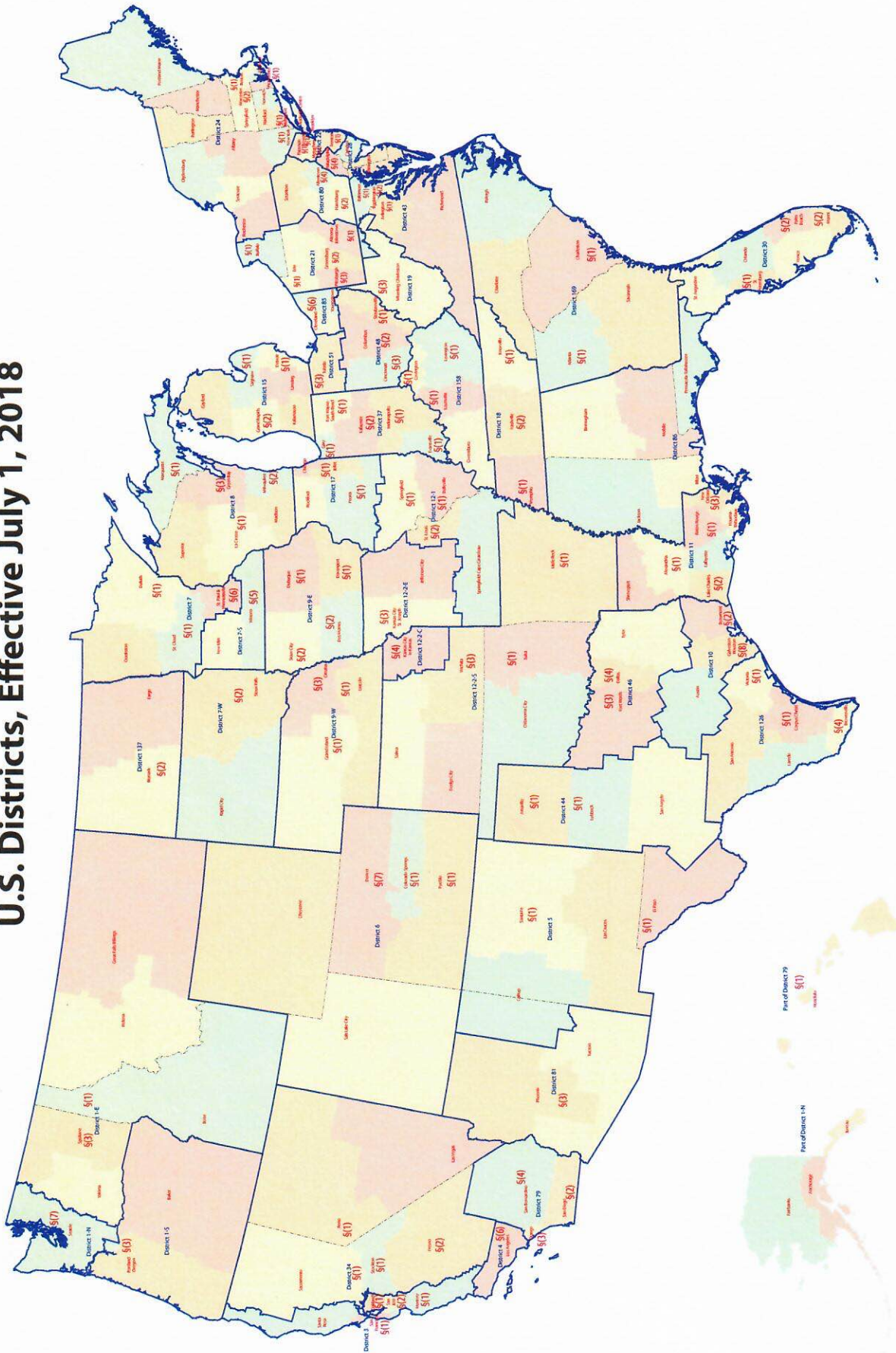
Organization	Country	Amount Request	What the Grant's Recommended 2018 Allocation
Augustinians of The Assumption	TANZANIA	\$10,000.00	Solely for academic fees. \$2,000.00
Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles	U.S.A.	\$8,000.00	Vocation outreach program. \$5,000.00
Community of the Sisters of Poor Clare Monastery	Nigeria	\$15,000.00	Initial formation for eight sisters. \$3,000.00
Didde Catholic Campus Center	U.S.A.	\$80,000.00	A community house for young women \$5,000.00
Divine Word College	U.S.A.	\$10,000.00	To fund programs of vocations \$2,500.00
Life Teen's	U.S.A.	\$10,000.00	Discernment resources \$2,000.00
Lump Sum for grants from the Diocese of Kampala	Uganda	\$130,000	The Foundation received over 30 grant applications from this diocese. \$15,000.00
Male Vocations Training Centre	UGANDA - E.A.	\$9,500.00	Priesthood formation project \$2,000.00
Malindi Catholic Priests Voc, Train. Centre	KENYA	\$16,500.00	Priesthood formation project \$3,000.00
Mater Redemptoris House of Formation	U.S.A.	\$10,000.00	Assist young women to discern their vocation \$2,000.00
N.C.D.V.D.	U.S.A.	\$18,000.00	2017 vocation booklet \$10,000.00
Nyombayirebaziga Priest Vocational Centre	RWANDA	\$11,000.00	Training programs \$5,000.00
Pathways to Children	U.S.A.	\$5,000.00	Retreat for 13 seminarians and 1 priest \$1,000.00
Salem Diocese Society	INDIA	\$5,000.00	Priesthood formation \$1,000.00
Seminario San Jose	MEXICO	\$19,000.00	Priesthood formation project \$5,000.00
Serra Club of Northwest Houston	U.S.A.	\$8,000.00	Vocation program. \$1,000.00
Serra's National Council for the United States, Inc.	U.S.A.	\$7,500.00	Support and promote vocations. \$7,500.00

Servants of the Plan of God	PERU	\$5,000.00	To evangelize in a native language.	\$1,000.00
Sisters of St. Therese of the Child Jesus of Buea	CAMEROON	\$10,000.00	Financial assistance for a sabbatical program.	\$1,000.00
Social Community of Faith	INDIA	\$15,000.00	Educational and general expenses.	\$1,000.00
St. Augustine Vocation Centre	SUDAN	\$6,000.00	Education materials and furniture.	\$1,000.00
St. Michael's Abbey	U.S.A.	\$14,100.00	Vocation recruitment	\$10,000.00
The Institute for Priestly Formation	U.S.A.	\$10,000.00	Summer Program	\$10,000.00
The Pontifical North American College	U.S.A.	\$25,000.00	Priestly formation	\$25,000.00
Thika Minor Seminary	KENYA	\$8,000.00	Youth vocation training	\$1,000.00
Youth Come Together Initiative	RWANDA	\$6,350.00	Youth vocation training	\$1,000.00
Total Grants				\$123,000.00

U.S. Regions, Effective July 1, 2018



U.S. Districts, Effective July 1, 2018





Value of US Council to local Serra Clubs

- Repository of "Wisdom" of Serra through the years
 - Training programs, officer & club manuals
- Clearing House for new ideas and problem solving
 - National workshops, national conventions*
 - Serran magazine (with SI);
- Communicates vocation priorities of US Bishops
 - Annual vocation awareness program support materials
 - Newman Connection
 - Digital resources for Vocations Directors / SerraSpark.org
- Professional support for all-volunteer clubs
 - Maintenance of membership records/database/mailling labels
 - Liability insurance certificates for club & vocation activities
 - Maintaining serraus.org website

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Status of US Vocations

- Shortage of Priests remains a CRISIS
- Lots of Good things happening:
 - New priest ordinations increasing since 2000
 - Grad level seminarians up since 1995
- Total No. Diocesan Priests still declining
 - Down 30% since 1965
- US Catholic population up 50% since 1965!
- 35% of US Catholics are Hispanic while only 5% of priests are Hispanic

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What We Know about Vocations

(from A Priest in the Family by Fr. Brannen).

- Holy Spirit calls the vocation, not us
- Culture of Vocations critical to call being heard
- Key influencers: **Priests**/Spiritual Directors, Mothers, others
- Time of most serious consideration: **Age 17**
- Time spent in **Eucharistic Adoration**
- 60% of Priests were **altar servers**
- 50 % of Seminarians "discern out"
- 92% of Priests are happy being priests
- Celibacy not cause of shortage--mainline protestant churches have same shortage

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**CARA Research Report
Current US Catholic Data**

	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2016	2017
Total priests	58,632	59,192	58,909	58,398	57,317	52,124	49,054	45,699	41,399	39,993	37,192	37,181
Diocesan priests	35,925	37,272	36,005	35,627	35,052	34,114	32,349	30,607	28,094	27,182	25,760	25,757
Religious priests	22,707	21,920	22,904	22,771	22,265	18,010	16,705	15,092	13,305	12,811	11,432	11,424
Religious sisters	179,954	160,931	135,225	126,517	115,386	102,504	90,809	79,814	68,634	57,544	47,170	45,605
Priestly ordinations	994	805	771	593	533	595	511	442	454	459	548	504
Graduate-level seminarians	8,325	6,602	5,279	4,197	4,063	3,658	3,172	3,474	3,308	3,483	3,520	3,405
Parishes	17,637	18,224	18,515	18,794	19,244	19,620	19,331	19,236	18,891	17,958	17,233	17,156
Parishes without a resident priest pastor	549	571	702	791	1,051	1,812	2,161	2,843	3,251	3,353	3,499	3,552
% of diocesan priests active in ministry	94%	90%	88%	85%	84%	80%	76%	74%	70%	68%	63%	63%
Catholic population (<i>The Official Catholic L</i>	46.3m	47.9m	48.7m	50.5m	52.3m	55.7m	57.4m	59.9m	64.8m	65.6m	67.7m	68.5m
Foreign-born adult Catholics (survey-based)	--	--	4.7m	4.1m	4.8m	5.6m	7.0m	10.9m	15.8m	13.2m	15.1m	16.9m

Only 5% of priests in the US identify as Hispanic or Latino. Hispanic Catholics make up 35% of US Catholics



How Clubs Work

- Clubs are chartered by Serra Intl and have a club number
- Organized by diocese: Work with and for Bishop and Vocations Director
- Focus:
 - Prayer
 - Service
 - Fellowship
- July 1 – June 30 typical planning cycle
- Vocations "recruitment" is not primary function

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How Clubs are Structured

- Board: current & former officers
- President & President Elect
- Vice Presidents:
 - Vocations
 - Programs
 - Membership
 - Communications
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - SI Foundation Rep

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Club Meetings & Activities

- Board meetings (quarterly)
- Monthly Member meetings (two per month)
 - Program meeting (3rd Week of month usually)
 - First Friday or First Saturday Mass w/ informal gathering
- Annual appreciation events (often in place of program meeting):
 - Ordination Mass
 - Priests' Appreciation event
 - Bishop's Appreciation dinner
 - Sisters' Appreciation event
 - Seminarian lunch or dinner

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Vocations Activities within the Club

- Adoration for Vocations (usually monthly)
- Weekly or monthly rosaries for vocations by individual members (31 Club)
- Adopt a Seminarian program
- Care packages for Seminarians
- Altar Server awards & recognition
- International Rosary for Vocations
- Newman Connection info gathering

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Newman Connection

www.newmanconnection.com

- 80% of Students Stop Practicing their Faith at Some Point During College
- A key time for vocation callings!
- Bishops believe young people who participate in Catholic campus ministry more likely to consider vocational call
- Serra Club involvement: Assist with gathering and uploading student information to Newman site (information from Catholic high schools and RE programs)
- In past three years, 150,000 students connected with Catholic College Ministries
- Contact ccampion@newmanconnection.com or 866-815-2034 x 708

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Special Serran Programs (within the Club)

- **Seminary Visits**
 - Weekend trips can be spiritual, educational & uplifting.
- **Retreat / Day of Reflection**
 - Usually Advent or Lent.
- **Annual Mass to Pray for Deceased Serrans**

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Vocations Activities Outside the Club

- Rosary programs in parishes (31 Club)
- Special Adorations for Vocations
- *Call By Name* program
- Parish Vocations Committees
- Seminarian Prayer Boards & Cards
- National Vocations Awareness Events
 - Priesthood Appreciation Sunday
 - Vocations Awareness Week
 - World Day for Consecrated Life
 - World Day of Prayer for Vocations
- Traveling Chalice/Crucifix/ Statue programs

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How YOU can ENGAGE in Serra Vocations Work

- Attend First Friday/Saturday Mass, Program meetings and Appreciation events
- Pray a rosary weekly or monthly for vocations
- One hour of Eucharistic Adoration for vocations per month
- Adopt a Seminarian
- Help with Newman Connection info gathering (May-August)
- Assist with Appreciation event planning
- Recruit new members to Serra!

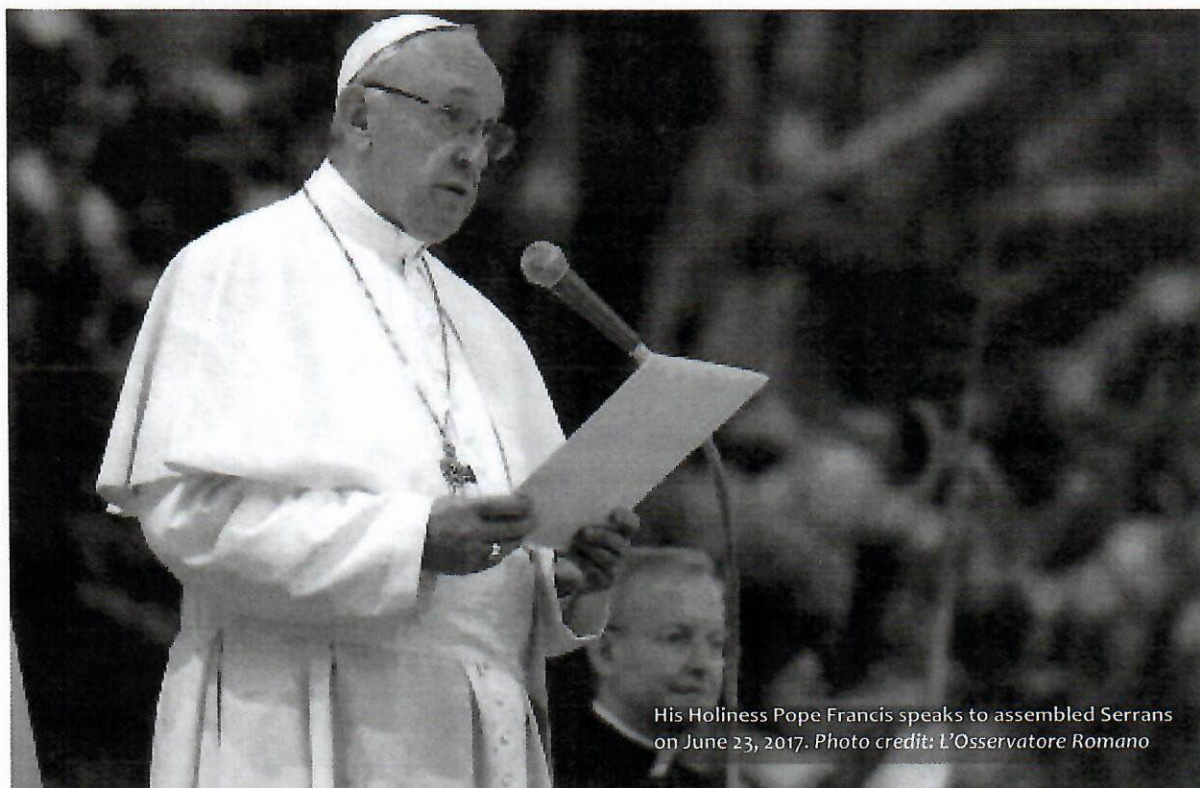
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His Holiness Pope Francis speaks to assembled Serrans on June 23, 2017. Photo credit: L'Osservatore Romano

Above all else, a Serran is a “special friend” A gift from God to seminarians and priests

At 12.30 p.m. on June 23, 2107, in Paul VI Hall in Vatican City, the Holy Father Pope Francis received in audience the participants in the 75th Convention of Serra International on the theme: “Siempre adelante. The Courage of Vocation,” which took place in Rome from June 22-25, 2017. The following is the Pope’s address to those present at the audience:

Your Eminence, Your Excellency,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am pleased to greet all of you. From throughout the world you have gathered for this International Convention, which has as its theme: “*Siempre Adelante: The Courage of Vocation.*” In the joy of the Gospel, and with that boldness typical of the Christian mission, you have gathered here to discover anew, at the school of the Master, the meaning of every Christian vocation: to offer our lives as a gift, “anointing” our brothers and sisters with the tenderness and mercy of God. I thank Mr Dante Vannini, the President of Serra International, for his kind words. I would like to reflect on something he said which, I believe, is central to the experience of faith: to be friends.

To be friends to priests, sustaining their vocation and accompanying them in their ministry: with this great

gift you enrich the Church! This is, above all else, what a Serran is – a “special friend” whom the Lord has brought into the lives of seminarians and priests.

Today the word “friend” has become a bit over-used. In our daily lives, we run into various people whom we call “friends,” but that is just a word we say. Within virtual communications, “friend” is one of the most frequently found words. Yet we know that superficial knowledge has little to do with that experience of encounter or closeness evoked by the word “friend.”

When Jesus speaks of his “friends,” He points to a hard truth: true friendship involves an encounter that draws me so near to the other person that I give something of my very self. Jesus says to His disciples: “No longer do I call you servants... but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you” (Jn 15:15). He thus establishes a new relationship between man and God, one that transcends the law and is grounded in trust and love. At the same time, Jesus frees friendship from sentimentalism and presents it to us as a responsibility that embraces our entire life: “Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (Jn 15:13).

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We become friends, then, only if our encounter is more than something outward or formal, and becomes instead a way of sharing in the life of another person, an experience of compassion, a relationship that involves giving ourselves for others.

It is good for us to reflect on what friends do. They stand at our side, gently and tenderly, along our journey; they listen to us closely, and can see beyond mere words; they are merciful when faced with our faults; they are non-judgmental. They are able to walk with us, helping us to feel joy in knowing that we are not alone. They do not always indulge us but, precisely because they love us, they honestly tell us when they disagree. They are there to pick us up whenever we fall.

This is the also the kind of friendship that you seek to offer to priests. The Serra Club helps foster this beautiful vocation of being laity who are friends to priests. Friends who know how to accompany and sustain them in faith, in fidelity to prayer and apostolic commitment. Friends who share the wonder of a vocation, the courage of a definitive decision, the joy and fatigue of ministry. Friends who can offer priests support and regard their generous efforts and human failings with understanding and tender love. In this way, you are to priests like the home of Bethany, where Jesus entrusted his weariness to Martha and Mary, and, thanks to their care, was able to find rest and refreshment.

There is another phrase that describes you. You chose it for the theme of this convention: *Siempre adelante!* Keep moving forward! Like you, I believe that this is a synonym for the Christian vocation. For the life of every missionary disciple bears the impress of his or her vocation. The voice of the Lord invites his disciples to leave the safety of their homeland and to begin the "holy journey" towards the promised land of encounter with him and with our brothers and sisters. Vocation is an invitation to go forth from ourselves, to rejoice in our relationship with the Lord, and to journey along the ways that he opens up before us.

Of course, we cannot make progress unless we take a risk. We do not advance toward the goal if, as the Gospel says, we are afraid to lose our lives (cf. Mt 16:25-26). No ship would ever set out into the deep if it feared leaving the safety of the harbour. So too, Christians cannot enter into the transforming experience of God's love unless they are open to new possibilities, and not tied to their own plans and cherished ways of doing things. Pastoral

structures can fall into this same temptation, being concerned more with self-preservation than with adapting themselves to the service of the Gospel.

On the other hand, when Christians go about their daily lives without fear, they can discover God's constant surprises. They need but have the courage to dare, not to let fear stifle their creativity, not to be suspicious of new things, but instead to embrace the challenges which the Spirit sets before them, even when this means changing plans and charting a different course.

We can take as our inspiration Saint Junípero, as he made his way, limping, towards San Diego to plant the cross there! I fear those Christians who do not keep walking, but remain enclosed in their own little niche. It is better to go forward limping, and even at times to fall, while always trusting in the mercy of God, than to be "museum Christians" who are afraid of change. Even though they received a charism or vocation, instead of serving the eternal newness of the Gospel, they are caught up in defending themselves and their own roles.

A vocation is a calling received from an Other. It entails letting go of ourselves, setting out and placing ourselves at the service of a greater cause. In humility, we become co-workers in the Lord's vineyard, renouncing every spirit of possession and vainglory. How sad it is to see that at times we, men and women of the Church, do not know how to cede our place. We do not let go of our responsibilities serenely, but find it hard to hand over to others the works that the Lord had entrusted to us!

So you too, *siempre adelante!* With courage, creativity and boldness. Do not be afraid to renew your structures. Do not rest on your laurels, but be ever ready to try new things. As in the Olympic Games, may you always be ready to "pass the torch," above all to future generations, knowing that the flame is lit from on high, precedes our response and exceeds our efforts. Such is the Christian mission: "One sows and another reaps" (Jn 4:37).

Dear brothers and sisters, I encourage you to be true friends to seminarians and priests, showing your love for them by promoting vocations and through prayer and pastoral cooperation. Please, keep pressing forward! Forward in hope, forward with your mission, ever looking beyond, opening new horizons, making room for the young and preparing the future. The Church and priestly vocations need you. May Mary Most Holy, Mother of the Church and Mother of priests, be with you every step of the way. And I ask you, please, to pray for me! ☪