



# *Serra GB*

## *focus*

### *August 2022*



***“But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart.” Luke 2:19***

**To foster and promote vocations to the ministerial priesthood in the Catholic Church as a particular vocation to service, and to support priests in their sacred ministry.**

**To encourage and affirm vocations to consecrated religious life in the Catholic Church.**

**To assist its members to recognize and respond in their own lives to God’s call to holiness in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.**

**Consider joining our Serran apostolate contact the editor Alex Duncan: [serra.glasgow@aol.com](mailto:serra.glasgow@aol.com)**

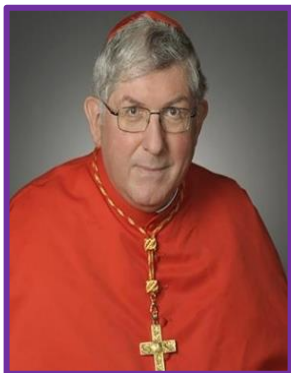
**Under the patronage of the His Eminence Most Reverend Vincent Cardinal Nichols  
For more information visit: <http://www.serragreatbritain.org.uk>**

## Report from SI Convention Toronto



The Serra International Convention in Toronto has just ended, a convention that will be remembered as one of the most beautiful and interesting in our history, summarized by our President Chris Kelly of Serra Great Britain council, supporting the flags of the Vatican, Canada and Serra International

The theme of the convention,  
“ *Witnesses of the Word: Serrans Called to Action.* “



The opening Mass in the beautiful Cathedral of Toronto, concelebrated by two cardinals and five bishops, immediately warmed hearts of the attendees.

In particular, the words of welcome and good wishes from Cardinal Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, and Episcopal Advisor to Serra International and Cardinal Lacroix, Archbishop of Quebec, conveyed to those present their esteem and affection for the work of Serrans throughout the world



Cardinal Collins, and Cardinal Lacroix were present throughout the Convention, despite the feverish preparations for the Pope's arrival in Canada in the coming days.

The relic of the Saint Junipero Serra (personally guarded by Cardinal Collins) was exposed throughout the convention.

The room dedicated to the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (without interruption at night) is always very popular.

Interesting working groups on programs, membership, vocations, and communications were most useful and

constructive comparing the different national realities that make up Serra International.

The Assembly of Delegates took place in an orderly and productive way, approving the budgets, some statutory constitutional changes, and confirming the appointment of new board members with,

Mr Greg Schwietz as President of Serra International.

Greg joined Serra in 1983 in his home city of Omaha, Nebraska. He worked in numerous capacities at the club level for many years until 1999-2000 when he served as club president.



His commitment to the Serra Club of Omaha continues at the club board level as trustee.

Greg and his wife, Mary Lynn, have been married for 45 years and have three grown children. They are currently members of Sacred Heart Parish in Omaha. For many years Greg and Mary Lynn were in TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) retreats in Omaha and served on its national leadership team for over 10 years. Greg retired as president of L&M Construction Chemicals in 2017, a family-owned company which produced and sold protective treatments for concrete, worldwide. Greg has worked in the concrete construction industry since graduating with a business degree from Creighton University in 1974.

During this year of his presidency Greg will encounter many challenges in guiding Serra internationally. He will experience the great friendship from Serrans throughout the world who are likeminded in the work of promoting vocations to the priesthood and consecrated religious life.

The Serra Great Britain Council and members of Serra Great Britain send our prayers and our sincere good wishes to Greg during his presidency.

SERRA AROUND THE WORLD presentation followed the Assembly. Nine Serra nations presented a short video to illustrate their activities including that of our Serra GB President Chris Kelly.

Finally, an appointment in Thailand for the next Convention (June 2023), where the local Serrans are preparing another memorable meeting. More details and a summary of the contents will be published in the Serran magazine convention edition by the end of the summer.

.....Alex

## St John Vianney feast day August 4<sup>th</sup>

On August 4, the Church celebrates the feast day of St. John Vianney, patron of priests.



Jean-Baptiste-Marie Vianney, also known as the Holy Curé de Ars, was born May 8, 1786 in Dardilly, near Lyon, France to a family of farmers. By 1790, the anticlerical Terror phase of the French Revolution forced many loyal priests to hide from the regime in order to carry out the sacraments in their parish. Even though to do so had been declared illegal, the Vianneys traveled to distant farms to attend Masses celebrated on the run. Realizing that such priests risked their lives day by day. The young

Vianney began to look upon them as heroes. He received his First Communion catechetical instruction in a private home from two nuns [whose communities had been dissolved](#) during the Revolution. He made his first communion at the age of 13 in a neighbour's kitchen during the Mass, the windows were covered so that the light of the candles could not be seen from outside.

The Catholic Church was re-established in France in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte, resulting in religious peace throughout the country, culminating in a Concordat. By this time, Vianney was concerned about his future vocation and longed for an education.

He was 20 when his father allowed him to leave the farm to be taught at a "presbytery-school" in the neighboring village of Écully, conducted by the Abbé Balley. The school taught arithmetic, history, geography and Latin. Vianney struggled with school, especially with Latin, since his past education had been interrupted by the French Revolution. Only because of Vianney's deepest desire to be a priest and Balley's patience did he persevere.

He was ordained a priest in 1815 and became curate in Écully. He was then sent to the remote French community of Ars in 1818 to be a parish priest.

Upon his arrival, the priest immediately began praying and working for the conversion of his parishioners. Although he saw himself as unworthy of his mission as pastor, he allowed

himself to be consumed by the love of God as he served the people.

Vianney slowly helped to revive the community's faith through both his prayers and the witness of his lifestyle. He gave powerful homilies on the mercy and love of God, and it is said that even staunch sinners were converted upon hearing him. In addition, he restored his church, formed an orphanage, "La Providence," and cared for the poor.

His reputation as a confessor grew rapidly, and pilgrims travelled from all over France to come to him in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Firmly committed to the conversion of the people, he would spend up to 16 hours a day in the confessional.

Plagued by many trials and besieged by the devil, St. John Vianney remained firm in his faith, and lived a life of devotion to God. Dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament, he spent much time in prayer and practiced much mortification. He lived on little food and sleep, while working without rest in unflinching humility, gentleness, patience and cheerfulness, until he was well into his 70s.

John Vianney died on August 4, 1859. Over 1,000 people attended his funeral, including the bishop and priests of the diocese, who already viewed his life as a model of priestly holiness.

The Holy Curé of Ars was canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1925. He is the patron of priests. Over 450,000 pilgrims travel to Ars every year in remembrance of his holy life. In 2009, Pope Benedict XVI, commemorating the 150th anniversary of St. John Vianney's death, declared the Year for Priests. The Pope wrote a Letter to Clergy, encouraging all priests to look to the Curé of Ars as an example of dedication to one's priestly calling.

**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.**

.....Pope Francis

### Vocations Statistics for Great Britain

Attached are the latest vocations statistics (2020) for Great Britain provided by Msgr Francis Bonnici of the Pastoral ministry for vocations at the Vatican. The latest statistics show the numbers and trends over the last ten years and numbers are generally declining. The stats include priestly and all religious orders male and female. Why do we need more priests? The obvious answer to provide the sacraments particularly the Eucharist. Without the Eucharist we do not have our faith. Without stating the obvious we can talk, we can have a discussion, within your own club or parish community but we must offer our prayers to Our Lord of the harvest, to provide more labourers for his harvest and encourage others to do the same. ....[The Statistics](#)

# The Immaculate Heart of Mary

## August 22<sup>nd</sup>

We understand that to be like Mary is to think and to keep Jesus in our hearts, and that is a great thing. The alternative, of course, is to think worldly things in our hearts. We also know that Mary suffered greatly during Jesus' passion (that is the sword piercing her soul) so that the thoughts of our own hearts may be revealed. Therefore Mary is known as the Queen of Martyrs, because as Jesus suffered in the body during His Passion, Mary suffered very much in her soul and in her sorrowful heart.

Some people are afraid that being close to Mary will lead them away from Christ. But this is totally false. Mary is so meek and humble that she will always lead you to Christ. Her mission was, and is, to bring Christ into the world: the first time He came, physically; and in His second coming, spiritually. Being close to Mary is the best way to be one with Christ, in the most efficient and loving manner possible.

Importantly we must remember that if we have a strong devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, she, in turn, will have a strong devotion to us! What this means is that she will help guide us away from temptation, sin, the carnal allurements of the world, and the snares of the devil, so as to lead us to her Son. Those evil things that Satan had planned for us had we not become attached to Mary will now not happen to us.

Those evil people the devil had planned for us to meet will now remain unmet. Instead, good and holy people will come our way. She will do all this better and faster than any other method there is out there to find Christ. After all, if your spouse, if your priest, if your friend, or if some stranger at your door can lead you to Christ even though they are all sinful, how much faster can the sin-free Blessed Virgin Mary lead you to Jesus. If one is lost in the world, what better method is there to find your way than to obtain a guide who already knows the way? That guide would be Mary, who knows Jesus, the Way, and the Truth and the Life, better than anyone who ever lived. Her loving Immaculate Heart which loves Christ with an infinite love now starts to take over our sinful hearts with that same love.

It's also important to remember that Mary was, and is, filled with the Holy Spirit, so when Mary is close to you, her spouse, the Holy Spirit, is also close to you. The Holy Spirit loves a soul who is devoted to His spouse. And according to Acts 1:8, you have power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. His great gifts of wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, piety, fortitude, and fear of offending the Lord are now yours for the asking.

## "I can't wait to retire"

**I can't wait to retire. I pity my poor sons, who've got to work till they drop. How often have we heard that or similar from people successful or otherwise who have not yet reached the retiral age who are exhausted, depressed, fed up working or lost interest in their career. Some even hate their career.**

**On the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 1960 Fr George Gillespie, my cousin, was ordained a priest in Rome following what you may consider a normal education with added seminary life both here, at Blairs college in the north of Scotland and then off to Rome to complete his studies.**

**Now 62 years a priest, I wonder how many lives he has touched and brought joy, or comfort to people in distress?**



**How many times has he celebrated the Eucharist for God's people? Possibly 25,000 times. How many children and adults has he brought into our faith through baptism and given them their first Holy Communion? The Joy of bonding couples in Holy Matrimony or gifted the sacraments?**

**How much joy has he experienced and given by administering the sacraments with his consecrated hands.**

**Fr George's call by our Lord is a joy which is imperishable, it is a joy which spreads and attracts. It is a great gift to others, there is gladness in the joy of being a priest.**

**Today, Fr George recently entered a care home by his own choice and still celebrates the Eucharist each day and dare I say it keeping the staff and fellow residents amused and still spreading the joy of his chosen vocation.**



**Who would not wish their son to be a priest?**

*..... Alex*

# Consecrated religious life

We often talk of the consecrated religious life but what does it mean to live a consecrated religious life? To consecrate something means to set it aside or devote it to a holy purpose. When a man or woman decides to accept Christ's invitation to leave everything and follow Him in a more radical way, they make vows to live like Jesus in poverty, chastity, and obedience. They participate in a ceremony in which they make this commitment, much like a married couple exchanges their vows on their wedding day. They promise Christ that they will live the rest of their lives dedicated exclusively to Him. These vows help them to live simply, to be more open with God, and to depend totally on Him.

There are countless orders to choose from. Sisters of Charity, Marianist, Vincentian, Franciscan, Dominican, Ignatian, Jesuit to name a few male or female orders working at home or abroad all with the one purpose of helping God's people.

The choice of religious orders such as sisters or brothers or indeed missionary priests would depend on the choice of the person based on their charisms associated with specific activities of service that build up the Body of Christ.



Charisms from the Greek word used for "favour or gratuitous gift." Charisms, or spiritual gifts, are special abilities given to all Christians by the Holy Spirit to give them power both to represent Christ and to be a channel of God's goodness for people enabling them to be powerful channels of God's love.

Whether extraordinary or ordinary, charisms are to be used in charity or service to build up the Church. A charism is always deeply connected with our faith and is an expression of our relationship with God. In this way it differs from a natural or learned ability. A charism, exercised correctly, draws other people to God. For instance, we can take art courses and learn to paint a picture. The ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, however, draws people to God. Stained glass windows in a church do the same.

Many young people struggle with life choices, they want to have a fulfilling life, they equally have strong views on the welfare of the poor and afflicted, those affected by war or subject to man's inhumanities.

The question then arises "Should their life choices be dedicated to working through consecrated religious life? May their life choices be to help others experience God's love of humanity.

# Congratulations

Saturday, June 16th Salford Diocese. The Right Reverend John Arnold, Bishop of Salford ordained 4 men to the permanent diaconate. The first in the Salford Diocese. Among them was John Walsh, a Manchester Serran.



Our members were proud to be present on this very special occasion. Deacon John is pictured above on the right hand of the Bishop. We pray for him and his brother deacons as they begin their new role in the church and ask God to bless him and his fellow deacons. May they enjoy many years in the service of Our Lord. Deo gratias.

.....Gloria Rhodes, Manchester Serra

We extend our congratulations at this time to all the new priests and religious who are to be ordained or making their final profession of vows in these coming months.



Notably we also congratulate Archbishop Arthur Roche. Pope Francis has named Archbishop Arthur Roche, head of the Vatican's liturgy office. He is one of the 16 new cardinal electors to be installed during a consistory at the Vatican on Saturday, August 27th. Archbishop Roche was secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments

from 2012 becoming prefect in May 2021. As Bishop of Leeds, he hosted two of Serra GB conferences in 2009 /10

## A view of the missions in California Richard Rodriguez

He said of the missions impact, "To live here in California is to submit to the names, to the ruins of a Spanish adventure, to live among Spanish. To live here is to become, implicitly, a Catholic, culturally a Catholic"

Follow in the footsteps of the indigenous, Spanish and mestizo in California mission history with books by Christian Clifford! Including "Walking in the Footsteps of St. Junipero Serra"

"I hope you'll watch the 5-minute video about my walk of the California Missions Trail put out by the Knights of Columbus." Thanks for your continued support of my books about California mission history @ Missions1769.com

<https://youtu.be/2I3V9yaQiYs>

## Serra International Rosary for Vocations



On the last Saturday of every month, you are invited to join the world in a recitation of the Rosary for vocation. The Serra International Rosary continues Saturdays, April 30<sup>th</sup>, May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 2.00pm GMT thereafter on the last Saturday of every month.

Join us free, use Access Code: 314-315-91. at: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/314315981>

A Serran “Rosary for vocations” for your own use can be downloaded [here](#): or our [web site](#): resources page.

*“I invite you to pray the rosary, and to carry it in your hands or in your pockets. The recitation of the rosary is the most beautiful prayer we can offer to the Virgin Mary. It is a contemplation on the stages of the life of Jesus our Saviour, with his Mother Mary. It is a weapon that protects us from evils and temptations.*

*.....Pope Francis*



Pray the Rosary with the intercession after each decade.

Mary. Mother of vocations. Pray for us.  
Finish with Our Serran prayers for vocations:

### Serran prayers for vocations.

O God, Who wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live, grant we beseech You, through the intercession of Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, Saint Joseph, her spouse, Saint Junipero Serra, and all the saints, an increase in labourers for Your Church, fellow labourers with Christ to spend and consume themselves for souls, through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

### Serran Prayer for the Perseverance of Vocations

O 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 hosen ministers and dispensers of His mysteries, may be found faithful in fulfilling the ministry they have received.

## Does your parish have “Adoration for Vocations?”



It is during these quiet times away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life that you can escape and concentrate, with the help of the Holy Spirit, on prayer, which will assist in the solving our daily problems.

You can also browse through our resources page on our website, to help you focus, particularly on your vocation in life or that of religious vocations, during that special time with Our Lord. Download and print off for your own or your parish use. Encourage prayer for all vocations.



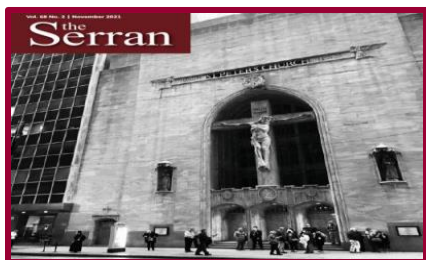
*from the Serra international convention Toronto*

## An opportunity to join us internationally



The Serra Meets programme is now a routine webinar broadcast on the second Saturday of each month throughout 2022 with virtual lectures from leading clergy and experts on the topic of Catholic vocations.

August 13<sup>th</sup> 5.00pm GMT with Mother Clare Matthiass, Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal CFR.” Sept 10<sup>th</sup> has still to be decided. Serra Meets broadcasts can be accessed at [Serra MEETS](#). All past talks are recorded and posted on the Serra International You tube channel, click this [link](#) and make your choice. Patterned after regular Serra meetings, Serra Meets events will open and close with prayer, featuring a notable keynote speaker, followed by a short business topic. Serra Meets is organized and hosted by the US Council of Serra International.



## The Serran Magazine

<https://serrainternational.org/magazine#:~:text=november%202021%20serran%20magazine%20post%20convention.pdf>

### 59th World Day of Prayer for Vocations May 8th, 2022

Pope Francis released his message for the 59th World Day of Prayer for Vocations on the theme 'Called to Build the Human Family,' and encourages each vocation in the Church to give the very best of themselves 'in this great divine plan! Based on the Synod for 2021- 2023, for a Synodal Church, the Holy Father asks us to be called to be protagonists together of the Church's mission, called to be guardians of one another and of creation, called to welcome and respond to God's gaze and be called to build a fraternal world.

The Holy Father concludes by imploring us: Let us pray, brothers and sisters, that the People of God, amid the dramatic events of history, may increasingly respond to this call. Let us implore the light of the Holy Spirit, so that all of us may find our proper place and give the very best of ourselves in this great divine plan!

Read the Holy father's message [here](#)

### Serra GB Council meetings

Following on from our last Council and AGM of 3<sup>rd</sup> October '21, our Serra Great Britain council, met together on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2021 shared our progress following the problems created by the pandemic and the associated lockdown regulations. Again, membership was the focus of our meeting. Now that our churches were functioning normally, we noted that many of our external programmes were once again on our club agendas. See our [website](#) for further details.

Our next Serra GB council meeting will be our AGM of 2022 on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October. at St Teresa's Church hosted by our National chaplain Fr Anthony Cogliolo Commencing with celebration of the Eucharist at 10.30 am

### It's a Joke

A young boy enters a barber shop and the barber whispers to his customer, "This is the dumbest kid in the world. Watch while I prove it to you." The barber puts a ten pound note in one hand and two pound coin in the other, then calls the boy over and asks, "Which do you want, son?" The boy takes the two pound coin and leaves. "What did I tell you?" said the barber. "That kid never learns!"

Later, when the customer leaves, he sees the same young boy coming out of a café with an ice cream. "Hey, son! Can I ask you a question? Why did you take the two pound coin instead of the ten pound note?"

The boy licked his cone and replied:

"Because the day I take the ten pound note the game is over!"

And finally just to fill the page and I hope no blondes will take offence.

A blonde woman was speeding down the road in her little red sports car and was pulled over by a woman police officer, who was also a blonde.

The blonde cop asked to see the blonde driver's license. She dug through her purse and was getting progressively more agitated.

'What does it look like?' she finally asked. The policewoman replied, 'It's square and it has your picture on it.'

The driver finally found a square mirror in her purse, looked at it and handed it to the policewoman. 'Here it is,' she said.

The blonde officer looked at the mirror, then handed it back saying, "OK, you can go. I didn't realize you were a cop..."

**Serra clubs of Serra Great Britain**  
**You can contact us by email or**  
**telephone for information.**

**District 60**

**Liverpool**

We meet at 6.30pm 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at the Cenacle Convent, Tithebarn Grove, Lance Lane, Liverpool L15 6TW.

email; [serra.liverpool@gmail.com](mailto:serra.liverpool@gmail.com) tel: 0151 724 6249

**Manchester**

Contact email; [serramanchester@gmail.com](mailto:serramanchester@gmail.com)

tel; 01625 477 215

**North Cheshire**

Contact

email; [serra.northcheshire@outlook.com](mailto:serra.northcheshire@outlook.com).

tel; 0161 973 3339

**South Lancs**

For further information on Serra club of South Lancs

email; [secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk](mailto:secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk)

or tel: 0151 724 6249

**District 62**

**South Hertfordshire.**

We meet 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month (except August)

7.30pm at Our Lady and St. Michael's Church, Crown

Rise, Garston, Herts WD25 0NE

email; [serrasouthherts.co.uk](mailto:serrasouthherts.co.uk) tel; 01923 661692

**District 63**

**Dunkeld**

We meet last Tuesday of the month at 6 pm with Mass at 7pm at St Joseph's convent, Lawside Rd, Dundee DD36XY.

email; [serra.dunkeld@hotmail.com](mailto:serra.dunkeld@hotmail.com) tel; 01382 322920

**Glasgow**

We meet 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays, August to June at 10.00am

Our Lady of Lourdes, Cardonald and University of Glasgow Chaplaincy (as programmed)

email; [serra.glasgow@aol.com](mailto:serra.glasgow@aol.com) tel; 0141 571 8313

**Paisley**

For further information on Serra club of Paisley

email; [secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk](mailto:secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk)

or phone: 07754 514318

**Mary. Mother of vocations. Pray for us.**  
**St Junipero Serra. Pray for us.**



**Are you interested in supporting  
and fostering**

# **VOCATIONS**

**To the priesthood and  
consecrated religious life?**



**Do you want to enhance your  
own**

# **SPIRITUAL LIFE**

**in the company of others?**

**Do you see the need for**

# **PRAYER**

**for an increase in priestly  
vocations?**

**If the answer is Yes! Contact  
your nearest Serra club**

**Send us Oh Lord many active lay  
people to support us in our  
prayer and work for more priests  
and religious.**





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