



# Serra GB

## *focus*

*We wish all our Serrans  
Happy and  
and an exciting and*

*and friends of Serra a very  
Holy Christmas  
peace filled New Year*



*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.*

*Under the patronage of His Eminence Most Reverend Vincent Cardinal Nichols,  
and the Most Reverend Philip Tartaglia, Archbishop of Glasgow.*

*Serra GB Focus is a bi-monthly newsletter focusing on the Serran apostolate*

*From the National President of Serra Great Britain to all Serrans, your families your Chaplains and friends of Serra:*

*May your Christmas this Year prove to be happy and holy and may the New Year be a time of development in your life as a Serran and in the continuing success of your Club. I look forward to witnessing new growth in Britain and in Ireland, in the latter case I commend to your prayers the work of our National Secretary, Alex.*

*May God bless you all.*

*Thank you.*

*Stan Ollieuz*

### **A Christmas Story**

Money was scarce that cold bleak winter, my parents worked with joyful anticipation to give my brother and me a Christmas present we would never forget. They scrimped for months and then spent more than they could probably afford on that train set.

Then the day before Christmas, a wealthy cousin pulled into the driveway. Opening the boot of his car he lifted out a large heavy box. My brother and I could hardly wait to see what it was. On Christmas morning we opened it first. Eagerly we unwrapped an expensive new electric train set. Wow! You had to pull us down off the ceiling. Then we opened the presents from our parents--another train set. Hmmm! and not nearly as extravagant as the one from our cousin.

Guess whose present we played with most? Mom and Dad were hurt. The outlay for our cousin who was wealthy and unmarried was nothing compared to the sacrifice our parents had made. But all we saw was the glamour of this expensive electric train set. We counted our parents' gift as merely a nice accessory.

Our heavenly Father spends many a disappointing Christmas amidst the glittering ornaments and flashing Christmas lights, the hustle and bustle of shopping and wrapping and family get-togethers, parties and presents, trees and turkeys--who really cares about His gift? What gets more attention from us: our Father's gift of life in Jesus Christ or the quickly-wrapped department store gifts from our cousins?

Thank you, Father, for Jesus. Thank you for the abundant life that we, your children, can enjoy now. Thank you for sending us the most expensive gift of all your own life. Thank you!

## **The Serra focus GB**

*As we approach the end of 2018 and compiled some 12 issues of focus since its' inception in 2016 which coincided with the launch of our new web site. I thought it worth sharing our reasons for its distribution.*

*Firstly, we look at the mission of Serra GB which falls into our three main objectives. Briefly without repeating these objectives, we promote vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. We support the vocations of those who have dedicated their lives to the service of our church. Thirdly, we hope to develop our faith in that call to holiness.*

*In each issue of Serra GB focus we hope to support these objectives by telling stories which encourage the idea of vocation or indeed attract vocations.*

*We hope to tell stories of those who have overcome the daily trials and tribulations of life and found a true love of Our Lord and a way of life which gives them great satisfaction and love of their vocation.*

*Thirdly, for the benefit of our members, we hope to enhance the knowledge of our faith by exploring faith related subjects for example in our October issue we asked the question Why is October the month of the Holy Rosary? and in this Christmas issue, we certainly know the nativity story, but what of Jesus and Mary before the public life of Jesus.*

*Finally, we must have that obligatory advertising campaign sharing the work that we do to attract new members to our apostolate, that we may grow with more of God's people to enable us to do more for our Church and the propagation of our faith.*

*Are we successful? Our circulation and our web hits are on the increase. From that point of view, yes! More of God's people are listening and hopefully becoming aware of the need for more vocations. But remember it is Our Lord who does the calling all we can do is help plant the seeds by our prayer and work.*

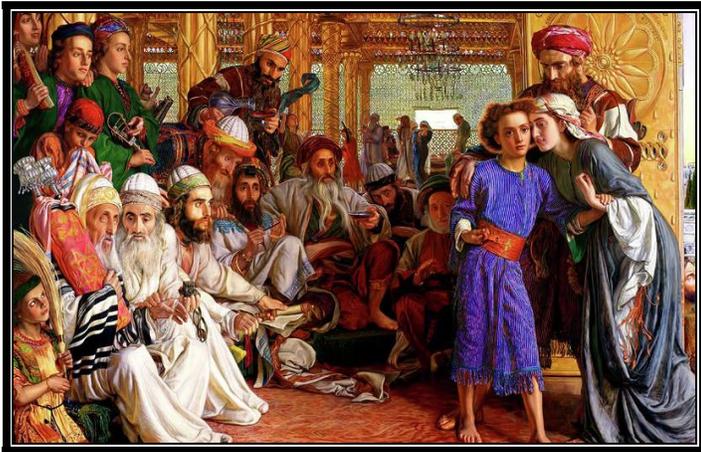
*Should you wish to view back issues of the focus enter serra gb focus followed by the month on your browser.*

*My dear friends I thank you for your support through 2018, have a wonderful Christmas and great New Year*

*Alex*

## Jesus, Preparation for the Public Life.

Little is known about the first 30 years of Jesus' life. The gospels are all but silent. One exception is the story of the boy Jesus in the temple for three days teaching the elders with great maturity and wisdom as his distraught parents searched for him ([Luke 2:41-51](#)).



It is believed that he lived in obscurity as a carpenter, the trade of his "father" Joseph. Prior to the beginning of his public life, This event is recorded in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. John the Baptist baptized Jesus around the age of 30 proclaiming baptism as repentance for the forgiveness of sins. While John baptized with water he proclaimed Jesus as one who would baptize "with the Holy Spirit and with fire" ([Luke 3:16](#)). At the baptism of Jesus, the heavens open and the Holy Spirit descends like a dove as a voice proclaims, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" ([Luke 3:22](#)).

During the four years between the death of St. Joseph and the beginning of Christ's public ministry, Mary did not have to work so much and was able to spend more time in prayer. Jesus and Mary usually took only one meal a day, at about six o'clock in the evening. Frequently they ate nothing but bread, although sometimes Mary added fish or fruit or vegetables. She served her Divine Son on her knees.

Often in the privacy of their home Mary would remain prostrate on the ground, adoring her Lord, until He told her to rise, and then with tears of reverence, love and humility she would kiss His feet or hands. She did all the housework for Him with joy and eager zeal, and whenever her Angels would begin her tasks before she did, she would order them to stop, so that she could do the work herself. At such times she would say to them: "My friends, permit me to do this work, since I can thereby gain merits which you, do not need. I know the value of such work which the world despises, and the Lord has given me this knowledge in order that I may

perform it myself and not let it be done by others." At work or in prayer she composed and sang lovely hymns in honour of her Lord.

Once when Mary was almost overcome at the thought of the future ingratitude of men toward their Saviour, Jesus ordered the Angels to console her by singing canticles of praise to God for her. Then Christ gave His Mother a still deeper understanding of the mystery of sin and redemption, and He encouraged her by revealing to her the great number of the predestined Apostles and Saints of the Church.

As the time for His public ministry approached, Jesus and Mary prayed more and more fervently together for the Apostles whom He was soon to call to His service. The Lord also showed His Mother how He was going to conduct His preaching and how she was to co-operate with Him and help Him to found His Church. Sometime after the death of St. Joseph, Jesus and Mary decided to move to an isolated cottage near Capharnaum on the northern shore of the Lake of Galilee. When Jesus began to spend most of His time in prayer and travelling in preparation for His public ministry, some of the inhabitants of Nazareth criticized Him. He therefore accepted this cottage by the lakeside when a man named Levi who lived in Capharnaum offered it to Him, for He would be able to meet there more conveniently with His future disciples. Jesus and Mary made several trips between Nazareth and Capharnaum, transporting their modest belongings on a donkey. Finally, they thoroughly cleaned and then closed their house in Nazareth, although later they stayed there whenever the Saviour preached in Nazareth or its surroundings.

... One day Jesus said to her: "My dearest Mother, the time has come when, in accordance with the will of My Eternal Father, I must begin to prepare the hearts of certain persons to receive the light of My teaching. In this work I want you to follow Me and assist Me. "Henceforth Mary accompanied Him on many of the short trips which He took to the towns and villages of Galilee. Usually she humbly walked behind her Son along the country paths. And she stood silently praying beside Him during conversations with men and women, while He announced: to them the imminent coming of the Messiah, assuring them; that the Promised One was already in the world and in the Land of Israel. Thus, He became acquainted with those whom He knew to be prepared and able to accept the Truth.

The Saviour now spent several months preaching and preparing some of the men and women who were to become His disciples.

*Extract taken from the "Life of Mary" by Raphael Brown*

## The Serra (UK) Foundation

Serra International Great Britain is not a fundraising organization. Its primary methods are prayer and action. However, in order to support and complement these methods, the Serra (UK) Foundation was founded in 1996 as a charitable trust to raise funds and invite and receive contributions in furtherance of the following objectives: -

To promote vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated religious life of the Roman Catholic Church

To advance Christian education, and to carry out such other legally charitable purposes for the relief of poverty or the advancement of education as the trustees shall from time to time by Deed or Deeds executed with their unanimous consent declare.

In its early years the UK Foundation funded the printing of vocations prayer booklets and Serra club promotional material from its relatively limited funds. However, in recent years several very significant legacies have allowed the Foundation to respond to requests to support a wider range of initiatives such as books and funding for discernment groups for the priesthood and consecrated religious life and updating and maintaining the Serra GB website.

Last year a consultation exercise with all GB Serra clubs provided some very valuable and informative ideas on the priorities for the disbursement of these legacies. The detailed results of this consultation were presented and distributed to those at the recent National Conference. The [results](#) and disbursement [ideas](#). The trustees will act to respond to the priorities identified, as always, it is happy to receive requests at any time and from any Serra club for support for any proposal in line with the objectives above.

**Ricky Jackson, president Serra GB foundation**

**Serra (UK) Foundation**  
**Registered Charity No. 1056572.**

**Over the past three issues of *focus* we have looked at the sacraments of initiation and the need to pass on our faith through our priests. In this issue I thought it important to look at the Sacrament of Holy Orders.**



***The Sacrament of Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time: it is the sacrament of apostolic ministry. It includes three degrees: episcopate, presbyterate, and diaconate. In the ecclesial service of the ordained minister, it is Christ himself who is present to his Church as Head of his Body, Shepherd of his flock, high priest of the redemptive sacrifice, Teacher of Truth. This is what the Church means by saying that the priest, by virtue of the sacrament of Holy Orders, acts in persona Christi Capitis.***

***There are those who are called to serve in the Church in a special way, to live as priests or religious. To be a part of the Body of Christ that works with others for the unity of the whole. They are called to lead the Christian Community in proclaiming and being witness to Jesus. They are no better or worse than anyone else. God has called them to proclaim the Good News and bring love to all people.***

***As Serrans we have a share in that responsibility to service. We are asked as members of our lay apostolate to support our priests in their sacred ministries and to affirm vocations to consecrated religious life in the Catholic Church. Belonging to that Royal Priesthood ("You are a royal priesthood a people set apart" Peter 2: 9-10) we are also asked to live the Gospel. To bring Christ to those in need, to those who have no hope in life; we by being one with Christ, must offer them hope. We are all called to be a witness to others of the love we have received through Christ. To Evangelise in the service of transmission of Faith.***

**How important is passing on your Catholic faith and heritage through our priests to your children and grandchildren?**

**We need our bishops, priests and deacons to administer the sacraments that keep us grounded in our faith?**

**Serra needs your help to secure our future seminarians, deacons, priests and sisters.**

**Serra has an amazing 83-year history of worthy vocation programs and activities including many sighted here and our website are quite relevant to our Church across the globe. However, for these and other worthy vocation programs, activities and prayers to continue, we need to continuously work at increasing our membership.**

**Join Serra now! The global lay apostolate for vocations in the Catholic Church.**

**Many of our parish have Eucharistic Adoration at various times and particularly following morning Mass. This has developed into Adoration for vocations with a Rosary for vocations. Our vocations intercessions are also taking a short time are appreciated: [here](#)**

*“Eucharist Adoration” is like a beating heart giving life to the mystical Body of the Church, which is a social organization entirely founded on its spiritual yet tangible bond with Christ.*  
*Pope Benedict XVI*



### **“Rosary for Vocations”**

*On the last Saturday of every month, you are invited to join the world in a recitation of the Rosary for vocations. The Rosary continues; Saturdays; December 29, 2018, and 2019, January 26, February 23, March 30, April 27, May 25, June 29, July 27th at 2.00pm. GMT Join us at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/314315981>  
Use Access Code: 314-315-981*



### **76<sup>th</sup> Serra International Convention**

The Serra International convention at the end of June was an outstanding success with 5 prelates of the church as speakers and concelebrants at our liturgies. Our new Episcopal advisor His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Collins who was with us for the full convention was the keynote speaker expressing the need for more vocations and encouraging our apostolate to carry out the necessary work expanding our membership throughout the world. The Cardinal’s homily [here](#) .

The convention placed great emphasis on the need to increase our membership so that we may continue to assist our bishops in their efforts to provide priestly and consecrated vocations for our Catholic church and fulfil our mission as Serrans. After a long weekend of fellowship, fun, information, inspiration, and spiritual rejuvenation, hundreds of Serrans returned home with renewed vigor for their vocations mission. **Next year's convention will be in Mexico City, June 19-23, 2019.**

### **Serra GB Conferences**

Serra members from around the UK meet every year in the Autumn and share our liturgies and social events, renewing our friendships and inspiring to return to our clubs with renewed vigour. The 2018 event again gave us that opportunity to appreciate our apostolate and hear from our keynote speaker Sr Moira Meeghan a facilitator of the Irenaeus Project in Liverpool. Sr Moira related her talks very much to the mission of Serra. Sr Moira’s extremely interesting presentations can be recaptured by ctrl clicking the links below

[“The call of the Gospel,](#)  
[Standing on the shoulders of those who came before us. The awareness of vocations](#)  
[Journey of Prayer into the Future”](#)

**At our conference of 2017, Fr Eamonn O’Brien of the Cultural exchange with China (CEC) gave us an insight to our faith in the republic of China. In support of his mission he has asked us to advertise his Mass of thanksgiving in London, details: [here](#)**

**Planning by District 63 is underway for the 2019 National conference. Watch this space, it looks exciting!**

*The Serran Schools Vocations events with serrans, teachers, religious, priests, missionaries, sisters and brothers*

*Students at St Ninians vocations Mass*



*Presenting their orders and witnessing their vocation.*

*Franciscans, prayerfully planting the seeds of vocation*



*Sisters of The Gospel of Life*



*Students at Turnbull High*



*We are Serrans "This is what we do"*



*Our Seminarians, Raphael, Why me?*



## From Rome

15<sup>th</sup> Ordinary General Assembly October 2018

*Young people, faith and vocational discernment"*



### **The Final Document**

Speaking at a press briefing Oct. 15, Paolo Ruffini, who serves as Prefect of the Vatican's Dicastery for Communications, said what exactly the format of the final document will be is also still being determined. Discussions are ongoing on whether the document will be accompanied by a separate message to young people, or include a message within it, as was discussed last week in some of the small working groups, Ruffini said. He noted that efforts were being made to draft a "new document" based on the synod discussions – both in the general congregations and small groups – rather than just retooling the working document, called an *Instrumentum laboris*, for use as the final report. This followed requests to this effect from several of the working groups last week.

Ruffini indicated that the final draft could take a less comprehensive approach – as it has done following previous synodal sessions – with the pope being presented with individual paragraphs of numbered propositions passed by a vote of the bishops. Rather than producing a document to be read for its own sake, these propositions would be intended to help inform the writing of the pope's traditional post-synodal apostolic exhortation.

If this is indeed the format the final document takes following the Synod on youth, questions remain as to whether any propositions which do not pass with the needed 2/3 majority will be made public.

**We hope to bring you the final report, particularly on the vocational discernment, when issued by the Vatican.**

*Holy Father's prayer intention for December 2018*

*That people, who are involved in the service and transmission of faith, may find, in their dialogue with culture, a language suited to the conditions of the present time.*

## Contact information for the clubs of Serra GB

### 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.e

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

#### **Manchester**

We meet 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays of the month 2pm at Our Lady's Parish Centre, Davyhulme Rd, Manchester. M41 7DS  
email; [serramanchester@gmail.com](mailto:serramanchester@gmail.com) tel; 0161 928 2029

#### **North Cheshire**

We meet 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of month 7.30pm at Christ Church, Heald Green, Cheadle, Cheshire. SK83Dye  
email; [serra.northcheshire@outlook.com](mailto:serra.northcheshire@outlook.com) tel; 0161 442 3876

#### **South Lancs**

We meet 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of month 7pm at *Sons of Divine Providence*, Lane Roby Mill, Up Holland, Lancashire, WN8 0QR.

email; [serra.southlancs@gmail.com](mailto:serra.southlancs@gmail.com) tel; 01695 622598

### District 62

#### **South Herefordshire.**

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> Fridays, August to June at 7.30pm Millhill, Cardonald and University of Glasgow Chaplaincy (as programmed)

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

#### **Paisley**

We meet 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays at 7.30pm Sept to June. in the Diocesan Centre, Cathedral Precinct, Ingle Street, Paisley, PA11HR.

email; [serra.paisley@ntlworld.com](mailto:serra.paisley@ntlworld.com) tel; 01505 321005

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





