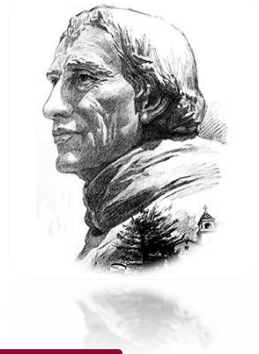




Serra GB

focus

Christmas 2024



*“Behold Our Saviour was born.
The fulfillment of God’s eternal plan”*

*“With every best wish for a Happy and Holy Christmas
and a Good 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.

***Consider joining our Serran apostolate contact the editor Alex Duncan: serra.glasgow@aol.com
Under the patronages of the His Eminence Most Reverend Vincent Cardinal Nichols and
Most Reverend William Nolan Archbishop of Glasgow
For more information visit: <http://www.serragreatbritain.org.uk>***



***Christmas
message from
Chris Kelly
President of
Serra Great
Britain***

As President of Serra Great Britain and member of the Serra International Board I wish to extend to you and your families a Happy and Holy Christmas.

Unfortunately, the conflict in the Holy Land, the birthplace of our Lord is still ongoing. I hoped and prayed that a resolution to the crisis would have been reached.

The conflict in the Holy Land, Ukraine and many other parts of our world threaten our very being. All are suffering, mums and dads and children are suffering when there should be joy in their hearts. We can only continue to pray that peace can be found soon allowing God's people to have some kind of safety and happiness. Please pray for all the people who live in those parts of the world.

The Serra family here in Great Britain remains small but positive about the work we are doing to promote vocations to the priesthood and consecrated religious life. Please pray for an increase in our membership so we can expand our programs and promote vocations more widely.

Finally, we keep in our thoughts and prayers all our priests and religious brothers and sisters. We also pray for those who suffer poverty and strife and those who are troubled in mind and body.

*I wish all a Joyous,
Holy and Happy Christmas
and a good New Year.*

Chris



The House of Christmas

There fared a mother driven forth
Out of an inn to roam;
In the place where she was homeless
All men are at home.
The crazy stable close at hand,
With shaking timber and shifting sand,
Grew a stronger thing to abide and stand
Than the square stones of Rome.

For men are homesick in their homes,
And strangers under the sun,
And they lay on their heads in a foreign land
Whenever the day is done.
Here we have battle and blazing eyes,
And chance and honour and high surprise,
But our homes are under miraculous skies
Where the yule tale was begun.

A Child in a foul stable,
Where the beasts feed and foam;
Only where He was homeless
Are you and I at home;
We have hands that fashion and heads that know,
But our hearts we lost - how long ago!
In a place no chart nor ship can show
Under the sky's dome.

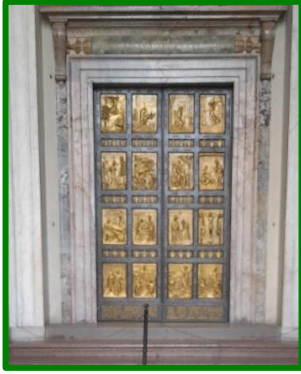
This world is wild as an old wives' tale,
And strange the plain things are,
The earth is enough and the air is enough
For our wonder and our war;
But our rest is as far as the fire-drake swings
And our peace is put in impossible things
Where clashed and thundered unthinkable wings
Round an incredible star.

To an open house in the evening
Home shall men come,
To an older place than Eden
And a taller town than Rome.
To the end of the way of the wandering star,
To the things that cannot be and that are
To the place where
God was homeless
And all men are at home.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874-1936)A man of strong opinions and enormously talented at defending them. Possibly better known for his Father Brown mysteries which are still being read and adapted for television today.

***In Christianity he found the answers to the dilemmas and paradoxes he saw in life.
One of the greatest Catholic apologists.Alex***

The Jubilee Year 2025



The Jubilee year opens on Christmas Eve, 2024, Pope Francis, like Pope John Paul II in 1999, will open the Holy Door to begin the Jubilee Year. It will be an ordinary holy year in accordance with the tradition of the Church to celebrate such a year every 25 years, to give every generation a chance to experience that special time of grace and mercy in their life.

Those Participating in a Holy Year pilgrimage are granted a plenary indulgence; those who are unable to attend in person for good reason are invited to participate spiritually, “offering up the sufferings of their lives, and attending Eucharistic celebrations.”

The last holy year, the Great Jubilee Year of 2000, which took place under Pope John Paul II, was one of the biggest events in the history of mankind. The Holy Father Francis wants this Jubilee Year 2025 to be lived as a “year of hope,” in times when the world’s wars seem unending and so dangerous to mankind.

The origins of the Catholic tradition of the jubilee year in the Eternal City are very surprising. It was started by the faithful themselves in 1300. Whether they were inspired by Holy Scripture or not, but at the time numerous pilgrims coming from both the West and East of the Christian world insisted that Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) give them a special blessing. “Give us your blessing before we die. We heard from the antichi (“ancient ones”) that every one hundred years every Christian who had visited the tombs of the Blessed Apostle Peter and Paul would have been free as much from guilt as from punishment.”

Around that year of 1300, a Roman man who was more than 100 years old confirmed that he remembered his parents saying that in 1200, the Pope had given a special promise of grace to pilgrims visiting the holy city of Rome. Although Pope Boniface found no document testifying to such an act, he responded positively to the pilgrims’ request, establishing that the pilgrims who came to Rome throughout that year and visited the churches of the Apostles Peter and Paul for 15 days would receive plenary indulgence.

St Peter’s Basilica



I am reminded of my previous visits and experiences of this magnificent St Peter’s Basilica the largest Church in the world, the burial place of St Peter the first pope.

Looking up to the inner dome some 117 mtrs high we read the inscription with letters almost 3 mtrs tall giving visitors a sense of the church's vastness. The letters tell the story “You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church and give you the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven.”

Peter the man of little faith” proclaimed by Jesus “Do not be afraid; from now on it is people you will be catching.”

Directly underneath the dome, standing some 29 mtrs high, is the Baldacchino of St. Peter's Basilica designed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Under this bronze canopy supported by four helical columns is the high altar of the basilica and beneath, the tomb of Saint Peter.

A poem by Pope St John Paul II tells the story.

.....Alex

Marble Floor



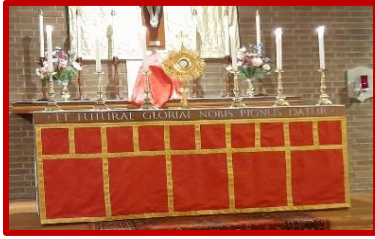
**Our feet meet the earth in this place;
there are so many walls, so many colonnades,
yet we are not lost. If we find
meaning and oneness,
it is the floor that guides us. It joins the spaces
of this great edifice, and joins
the spaces within us,
who walk aware of our weakness and defeat.
Peter, you are the floor, that others
may walk over you (not knowing
where they go). You guide their steps
so that spaces can be one in their eyes,
and from them thought is born.
You want to serve their feet that pass
as rock serves the hooves of sheep.
The rock is a gigantic temple floor,
the cross a pasture.**

The Crypt.



**We must go below the marble floor,
With its generations of footsteps,
And drill through the rock to find the man
Trampled by hooves of sheep.
They knew not whom they trampled – a passing man?
The Man who never will pass?
The crypt speaks: I am bound to the world and besieged;
The world is an army of exhausted soldiers
Who will not pull back.**

.....Karol Wojtyla



From Primary to Senior Secondary to the University Chaplaincy

Attending our vigil was our university chaplain Canon Gerry Conroy, our vocations director Fr Patrick Boyle and our guest speaker Fr Ezra Dauda now resident in our archdiocese and of course our guests from of our city.

Fr Ezra from the northern part of Nigeria gave a very interesting reflection on his journey to priesthood and family background, the parents being more concerned in having grandchildren and additional income to support the family.



However following his ordination to priesthood his parents who he loves dearly and they he, shared in his love and delight in having a priest in the family. Being from the northern part of Nigeria he recalled the Boko Haram atrocities, a terrorist orgaanisation which aims to expel Western influences and create a Salafi-Islamist state in its area of operations, they have killed an estimated 50,000 people and forced many young people to renounce the Catholic faith in favour of their beliefs, displacing more than 2.5 million people since it was established in 2002. Living in that area of christian persecution was of major concern in Ezra's life.



During our vigil which commenced with our vocations mass, the usual two hour service followed with our Rosary for vocation and concluding with Benediction and Night prayer.

As Serrans we are often asked "Are your prayers for vocations being answered." My personal thoughts are "Yes." We pray for more vocations to support the propagation of our faith particularly in our own dioceses. Are the priests like Ezra, Our Lord's answer to our prayer. Let's pray for more priests for our archdioceses and our country. Lord hear our prayer.Alex



Moria McQueen
President
Serra International
Moria and husband Matthew, originally from Glasgow, were present for our Serra GB conference.

President Mc Queen while in Glasgow gave a presentation at St Alyosius church on a current topic very close to her heart on the subject of legalised Euthanasia here in the UK and the dangers of voting for the bill due at the end of November. This bill which has moral and faith issues not to mention human rights should be rejected. In her capacity as doctor, Moira considered the alternatives of palative care and looked at the safeguards which have been eroded in Canada and indeed the Nethelands. In Canada euthanasia and assisted suicide were legalized in 2016 on the condition that the death of applicants should be "reasonably foreseeable." In 2021, this condition was repealed. with a provision to exclude those with mental illness who were due to expire. Earlier this year, in February lawmakers delayed expanding euthanasia and assisted suicide on the grounds of mental health alone until March 2027. This bill if passed would be a very dangerous move here in the UK!

The Serra GB National AGM Sunday October 6th

Joining our Serra GB members on the Zoom platform was Serra International President Moira Mc Queen.

Our agenda covered many of our national activities from the formation of our new board to our hopes and aspirations for the future of Serra here in Great Britain.

We shared many of our vocational programmes for Schools and Universities to our parish vigils and even our outdoor pursuits. The objective being not only to share but encourage action on our vocations projects throughout our country thus using many forms of prayer to promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life. We also shared ideas for internal club meetings activities namely to grow in faith and indeed knowledge and understanding of our Catholic faith.

Our website and Focus newsletter reach many hundreds if not thousands of God's people at home and abroad and spreading that ever so important need for prayer. Membership is always a problem in this country where prospective membership is often hindered by personal and family pressures. We may be small in numbers but the work we do is massive. Our meeting closed with an address by our Serra International president Moira Mc Queen who encouraged us to continue our good work and concentrate on our membership.

As agreed by our members, our conference next year will therefore take place as on Sunday, 5th October 2025

November the month of the Holy Souls

In the month of November, the Serrans of Great Britain, during our masses and club meetings, recognised individually by name and prayed for all our deceased members. We also prayed for all our priests and religious brothers and sisters who had given their lives in the service of Our Lord.



May our Lord welcome them into His company. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen

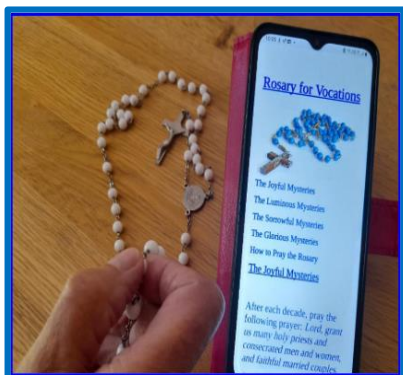
Serra International Rosary for Vocations



On the last Saturday of every month, you are invited to join with representatives from America, Europe, Asia and throughout the Serra world in a recitation of the Rosary for vocation. The Serra International Rosary continues Saturday Sept 28th at 2.00pm GMT continuing on the last Saturdays of every month. Join us free, use Access Code: 314-315-91. at:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/314315981>

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



Pray the Rosary with the intercession after each decade. “Lord grant us many holy priests and consecrated men and women and faithful married couples”.

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.

“Eucharistic Adoration for Vocations?”



In Serra we are strong advocates of “Adoration for Vocations” before the blessed Sacrament during our Holy Hours, or Vocations Vigils. Eucharistic adoration can be a time of silence away from the madding crowd, a time of contemplation, a time to just think and pray for our families, our priests, deacons and those thinking of the vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life.

Does your parish have adoration or Holy Hours for vocations?

It is during these quiet and prayerful 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.

“We must speak to God as a friend speaks to his friend, servant to his master; now asking some favour, acknowledging our faults, and telling him all that concerns us, our thoughts, our fears, our projects, our desires, and in all things seeking his counsel.”

..... St. Ignatius of Loyola

Get Started! You can 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.



The Serran Magazine

For over 60 years we have published our quarterly magazine.

Stay up to date with all the Serra news.

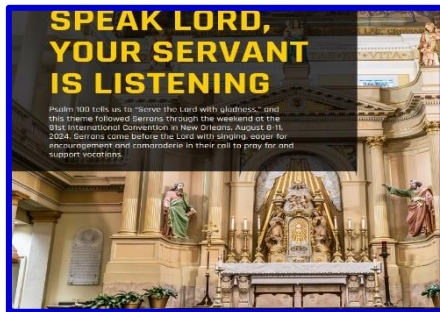
[September issue](#)

The Holy Father's message for World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

Pope Francis in his message for the 61st World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2024 on the theme "*Called to sow seeds of hope and to build peace*" asks us to be pilgrims and builders of peace, that, means to base our lives on the rock of Christ's resurrection, knowing that every effort made in the vocation that we have embraced and seek, will never be in vain.

Read the [Holy Father's message](#) for this World day of prayer for vocations.... [here](#)

Serrans take over New Orleans at the 81st International Convention. See page 16 for the full report.



An opportunity to join us internationally



The Serra Meets programme is now a routine webinar broadcast on the second Saturday of each month throughout 2024/25 with virtual lectures from leading

clergy and experts on the topic of Catholic vocations. 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 a regular Serra meetings, we will open and close with prayer, feature a notable keynote speaker and follow with a short business topic.

Serra Connects

has been introduced to bring Serrans around the world, to share in their own language, and make them feel part of the universal family of Serra Internationally.



We will share news, ideas and content that will help us get to know each other better and help us be united in our mission. We hope that the [Serra Connects here](#): can help achieve these goals by creating a two-way flow of news and ideas: from individual Serra Clubs scattered around the world to the Leadership of Serra International

from BRAZIL

Procession of Corpus Christi On May 30, 2024, Serra Clubs from all over Brazil actively participated in the works related to the Corpus Christi day. From the first hours of the morning, the Serrans started organizing and preparing the colourful carpet and the altar for the celebration of the mass followed by the procession along the decorated streets, in honour of the eucharistic Christ.

It is an important celebration that invites us to deepener faith in the real presence of Christ in the eucharist and to publicly demonstrate our reverence and love for the most holy sacrament. In today's world, where the sacred is often forgotten, the procession of Corpus Christi is a powerful testimony of the catholic faith and a call to live in accordance with the teachings of Christ.



The document: Synod on Synodality 2020/24 eagerly expected since 2021, has now arrived. On Saturday, 26 October, the

members of the Second Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops approved the Final Document. Pope Francis approved its publication. The Final Document is now available. Download the [latest news from the Vatican](#)

It's a Joke

A Lawyer and the Pope died at the same time, both went to heaven. They were met at the Pearly Gate by St. Peter who conducted them to their rooms. The Pope's room was spartan with bare floor, a wooden slatted bed, and a single bulb for light. They came to the Lawyer's room. It was huge with wall to wall carpeting, king sized water bed, indirect lighting, colour TV, stereo, Jacuzzi and fully stocked bar. The Lawyer said, "There must be a mistake. This must be the Pope's room!" St Peter said, "There's no mistake. This is your room. We have lots of Pope's, but you're our very first Lawyer!"

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

District 60

Liverpool

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

email; serra.liverpool@gmail.com tel: 0151 724 6249.

Manchester

Contact email; serramanchester@gmail.com

tel; 01625 477 215

North Cheshire

Contact

email; serra.northcheshire@outlook.com.

tel; 0161 973 3339

South Lancs

For further information on Serra club of South Lancs

email; secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk

or tel: 0151 724 6249

District 62

South Hertfordshire.

We meet 2nd 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 tel; 01923 661692.

District 63

Dunkeld

We meet 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6 pm with Mass at 7pm at The Immaculate Conception, Lochee, Dundee DD2 3AP

email; serra.dunkeld@hotmail.com tel; 01382 322920

Glasgow

We meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays, August to June at 10.00am, Our Lady of Lourdes, thereafter at Millhill, Cardonald and

email; serra.glasgow@aol.com tel; 0141 571 8313.

Paisley

For further information on Serra club of Paisley

email; secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk

or phone: 07754 514318

**Mary. Mother of
vacations. 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 vocations as priests and
religious brothers and sisters.**

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