



Serra GB

focus

March 2025



During this Lenten period, we contemplate the coming of Easter and the wondrous event which gives us our faith.

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>



Easter message from the President of Serra Great Britain

Last year I started my message talking about climate change and the effect it has had on the planet. The recent storms which affected us all is proof that climate change is alive and well. This is a special Holy Year which can be a year of hope for everyone. The havoc the storms bring also gives us hope as people rally round to help and support each other.

The current situation in the Holy Land is one of hope as a ceasefire and release of hostages will bring an end to the hostilities. We hope and pray that the situation be resolved and peace can once again be achieved, as that part of the world, the region where Our Lord was born and created His church, is very special to us.

We are approaching Easter, a time when we rejoice in the resurrection of Our Lord, a time when spring brings hope of warmer days and brighter futures. A time when our faith is renewed by the magnificence of the Resurrection of Our Lord.

As we rejoice let us pray that the same rejoicing may be experienced by all those who are suffering the ills of society and indeed the natural ills created by ourselves.

As Serrans we encourage and support vocations to the priesthood and religious life to enable us and them to attract others to the joys of our faith.

My Easter Message is a simple one of hope in this special year at this special time in the calendar. The message of the risen Christ is a positive one let embrace it as Serrans and encourage others especially young persons to do so.

**Chris Kelly
President
Serra Great Britain**



Lent, Holy week and the Paschal Mystery

During this period of Lent, in realising our own human frailties we try and put into practice the three basic functions of this lenten period. It is a time of prayer, abstinence, and almsgiving, the three pillars of Lent, when we perhaps consider those less fortunate than ourselves and of course look to our own faults and misgivings. All the penances that we do during Lent must remind us of our own faults and the need to do something to correct those faults. The 40 days of Lent should be filled with reflection, service and prayer as we journey to develop a closer relationship to God.

Holy week We absorb the retelling of the story of Jesus' journey from his triumphal entrance to Jerusalem on that Palm Sunday and follow into Monday when Jesus clears out the temple. Tuesday, Jesus is anointed with oil at Bethany and preaches on the Mount of Olives. Wednesday, Jesus is betrayed by Judas. Thursday, Jesus celebrates the Last Supper, prays in the Garden of Gethsemane, and is arrested. Friday, Jesus is sentenced to death, scourged, beaten, crucified, and dies on the Cross. Saturday, Jesus is buried in the tomb and descends into hell. We may then understand fully that greatest and most significant event of our faith, the Passion, Death, and Resurrection
on that Sunday when, Jesus rises from the dead.

The stark reality is that the resurrection entails the cross. Put simply, "no cross, no crown." Those crosses will remind us in many ways, perhaps through sickness or death of a loved one, financial worries, relationships, loss of a job, and the other trials we may have to face in our own lives. Crosses in our life serve as a reminder that only by bearing them can we really be linked to Christ, who endured that a Good Friday and his death on the cross before the magnificence of His Resurrection.

If we bear our crosses heroically with prayer, eventually they will lead to peace of mind, joy and the salvation in a new life. We must prepare for that new life.

We are reminded of this by observing the activity that takes place on Holy Saturday prior to the Easter Vigil. That Liturgy of light brings the Light of Our Lord into our lives. The Resurrection of our Lord from death to new life gives us our faith.
.....Alex



“Rejoice in the Resurrection of Our Lord and the gift of New Life”



Holy Father's prayer intention February 2025

**‘For vocations
to priesthood, and
religious life’**

Pope Francis releases his prayer intention for the month of February and urges Catholics to pray for young men and women to welcome God's call to the priesthood or religious life.

“Let us pray that the ecclesial community might welcome the desires and doubts of those young people who feel called to live Jesus's mission in life: either through the priestly life, or religious life.”

Pope Francis made that appeal for prayers in The Pope Video, which was released on Tuesday to accompany his prayer intention for February 2025.

Drawing on his own vocational experience, the Pope recalled that at 17 years old he had other plans for his life that didn't include becoming a priest.

“But one day, I went into the church...and God was there, waiting for me!” he said.

The Holy Father recalled that God calls many young people to serve His people through a vocation to the priesthood or religious life.

“God still calls young people even today, sometimes in ways we can't imagine,” he said. “Sometimes we don't hear because we're too busy with our own things, our own plans, even with our own things in the Church.”

Yet, added Pope Francis, the Holy Spirit reveals God's plan for our lives by speaking to the heart of young people.

The task of Catholics, he added, is to accompany their spiritual journey, so that they will be willing and able to welcome the call to a religious vocation.

“Let's trust young people!” concluded Pope Francis.

“And, above all, let's trust God for He calls everyone!”

Accompanying young people on their vocational journey

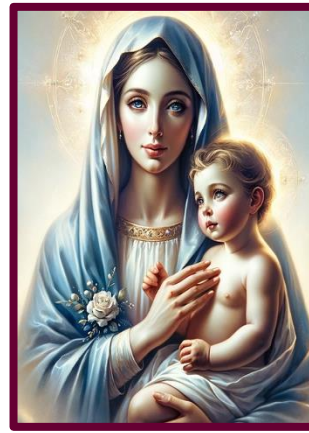
The Pope [Video](#), released depicts scenes from the early life of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, now Pope Francis, along with images from the daily lives of young people today.

The effect, according to a press release, is to tie the youth of the future Pope to contemporary young people, whom God calls to a priestly or religious vocation in a similar way.

..... Devin Watkins VNA

As we reflect on the Holy Father's February intentions
Let us also pray for a his recovery to good health.

"Heavenly Father, in your infinite mercy, look upon Our Holy Father, and grant him your healing touch, bringing comfort and strength in his time of need. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen."



Mothering Sunday

*Mother's day
Sunday 30th March
2025*

*“Women make the
world beautiful, they
protect it and keep it
alive. They bring the
grace of renewal, the
embrace of inclusion and the courage to give
of oneself”
....Pope Francis*

Mother's day will be celebrated on Sunday 30th March.
Here we have the liturgical explanation for the Mothering tradition, and some suggestions to honour mothers.

It is St. Paul's words in the Mass of Laetare Sunday that gives Mothering Sunday its name. He speaks of "that Jerusalem which is above . . . which is our mother," On this day, everyone paid a solemn visit to his mother church, and left an offering there at the altar.

The introit, communion and tract of the Mass speak of the heavenly Jerusalem where Christians will raise their songs of joy. Heaven, the heavenly Jerusalem, has so often been likened to and represented as a garden full of flowers, that on this day the Church used to bless the loveliest of flowers, the rose.

The word "mothering" came to have other associations; it became a feast day for the mothers of families. All the children who were away from home went back on that day to visit their mothers, taking with them a present of money, a gift, or something to eat, A mothering cake was often a special gift. Exactly what this was made of seems uncertain but was highly ornamented and adorned. In return, the mother seems to have provided for the visitors a dish of *furmety*, a sort of rice pudding, only made with grains of wheat instead of rice. There are relics of the observance of Mothering Sunday still left, but there is no reason why it should not be more widely noted and given as much attention as is the mother's birthday.

*There are many mothers who have given
their children to the priesthood and religious
life and service to our church here and
throughout the world.*

..... Thank you all.

The Annual National Vigil for Vocations May 8th -9th



Throughout Great Britain and internationally we have many vigils for vocations being held at various times throughout the year. This annual vigil which takes place around Good Shepherd Sunday, Vocations Sunday 11th May, was importantly developed to coincide with the Holy Father's message for priestly and religious.

Traditionally our Vigil for Vocations take place in Great Britain and indeed the Serra world on the Thursday or Friday nights preceeding that date giving some 48 hours of continuous prayer in parishes throughout the planet.

The Vigils, which started in Glasgow some 36 years ago were all night affairs and concluded in the early hours with morning prayer on the nearby hills overlooking our city and singing the hymn "I see the sunrise." Today I think I am a little too old for that sacrifice. The evenings are now only of two hours duration are considered by many attendees particularly first time attenders as a great experience which seem to pass too quickly.

We follow a programme, based on the Holy Father's message for vocations for Vocations Sunday with Eucharistic celebration, Adoration, silent reflection, Rosary for vocations, with guest speakers focusing on priestly and consecrated religious vocations, concluding with Night prayer and Benediction.



Should you wish to have a vigil in your area contact your nearest Serra club for details.

The Holy father's message for the 62nd "World day of prayer for vocations" will appear on our [website](#) when released, usually in time for Good Shepherd Sunday (Vocations Sunday) 11th May 2025.



Serra International Foundation

Serra International founded in 1935 is not a fund raising organization, however by 1951 it became obvious that having a formal method of giving financial aid to programs that foster and promote vocations to the ministerial priesthood of the Catholic Church and give financial aid to programs of formation for men and women of consecrated religious life became necessary.

Such a charitable foundation was formed in 1951 to promote and assist vocations to seminaries and religious houses. This would conform to our main purposes of being.

The board of trustees headed by a president who holds office for 3 years and the usual secretary and financial treasurer for the same period. All being approved by the board of Serra International



Our board members with retiring president Judy Schumaker and new President Cindy Madigan Bell

Today 74 years since its formation the SI Foundation has been successful in attracting donations from many parts of the world. Each year the board of trustees receive many applications for grants, from the Americas, Africa, India, the Far East and indeed from our own European shores. They are then assessed by the trustees of the foundation for conformity and validity and if successful will receive funds to assist that particular vocations projects.



We are very grateful for the grant given to us to promote the vocation to the religious life here in Kenya. Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Holy Family

Who are we?

Glasgow Serra have recently produced a new leaflet which would be available to each Serra Club throughout Great Britain with their own Serra Club Identity.

The purpose is to give more information about Serra and attract both prayer and people to support our mission in promoting vocations to the Priesthood and Consecrated religious life.

What is SERRA International?

The Vatican officially recognises Serra International as THE GLOBAL LAY APOSTOLATE FOR VOCATIONS in the Catholic Church.

OUR MISSION IS THREE-FOLD

- Promote and support vocations to the ministerial priesthood of the Catholic Church as a particular vocation of service and support points in their sacred ministry.
- Encourage and promote vocations to the consecrated life in the church
- Assist members to recognise and respond, each in his own life, to God's call to holiness in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

Founded in Seattle in 1935

Over 600 SERRA CLUBS have been chartered in 30 COUNTRIES around the world.

Serra's global lay vocation apostolate is made strong by over **12,000 MEMBERS**. Members of Serra are lay Catholics men and women of all ages and backgrounds who ensure the future of our Church by creating a "culture of vocations."

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", please read on, or contact serra.glasgow@aol.com

GLASGOW SERRA
FOSTERING AND PROMOTING VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD AND CONSECRATED RELIGIOUS LIFE

where faith becomes action
serragb.org.uk

What is a "CULTURE OF VOCATIONS" ?

A culture of vocations is an attitude and social environment which uplifts and promotes vocations to the Catholic priesthood and religious life.

A culture of vocations aims to enforce the idea that while the priesthood and religious life are holy and mysterious callings from God, they are as valuable, vibrant and celebrated lifestyle choices as any other career or profession.

SERRA PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS
Oh 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, St Joseph, her spouse, St Junipero Serra and all the Saints, an increase of 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.
Amen.

SERRA'S 9 Missions in California

Mission San Diego de Alcalá (1769)
Mission San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo (1770)
Mission San Antonio de Padua (1771)
Mission San Gabriel Arcángel (1771)
Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa (1772)
Mission San Francisco de Asís (1776)
Mission San Juan Capistrano (1776)
Mission Santa Clara de Asís (1777)
Mission San Buenaventura (1782)

Our Patron SAINT JUNIPERO SERRA

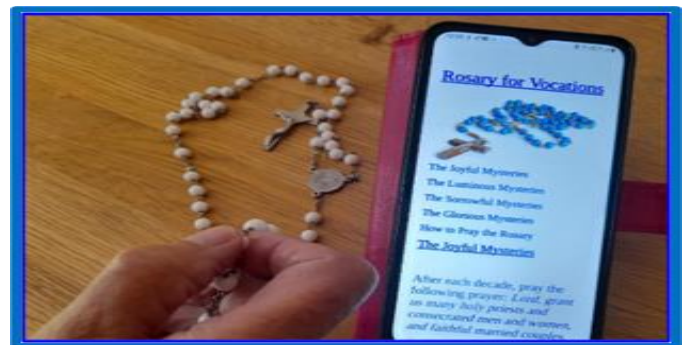
Serra clubs take their name from Saint Junipero Serra, the 18th-century Spanish Franciscan Missionary to Mexico and California. Called by Pope Francis "the Great Evangeliser of the West", our patron founded 9 missions along the West Coast that grew into many of California's greatest cities.

Like Saint Serra, the Serrans of today put faith into action. Called by God to encourage a culture of vocations that supports the birth and maturation of priests and religious who make possible the Sacraments and works of mercy that define our faith. Serrans ultimately work to ensure the future of the Church.

During our Lenten period we concentrate our prayer on Stations of the Cross with our **"Stations for Vocations"** which we would encourage as an addition in all our parishes.



Moving into May the month of Our Lady we return to our Serran "Rosary for vocations"
Download [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.

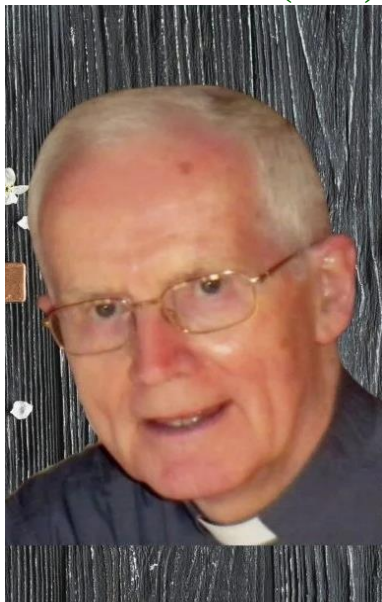
Serran Prayer for the Perseverance of Vocations

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.

The Serra GB National Conference and AGM

As agreed by our members, our Serra GB National conference for 2025 will take place on Sunday 5th October 2025 via the zoom platform. This way of holding our conference eliminates the need for long distance travel. More detail will follow in due course.

Fr William (Bill) Tollan MHM



It is with great sadness that we announce the death of a very dear friend to Serra and priest Fr Bill Tollan, who, with failing health passed away in Herbert House, Freshfield, Liverpool in the early hours of Sunday, the 5th Jan 2025, on the Feast of the Epiphany.

For some 12 years from 1970 Fr Bill was in Cameroon teaching in Sasse College. he was then transferred to Bishop Rogan College which had just started the A-level programmes. He was appointed as the parish priest of the Cathedral parish of Soppo and chaplain to the Sisters of St. Therese and a member of the Bishop's Council.

Fr Bill was the moving force behind the Charismatic Renewal in Buea and Bamenda Dioceses and the organizing secretary to the Kumba Catholic Convention held in the late '70's. In 1982 he returned to Scotland as rector of St. Joseph's College, Lochwinnoch and bursar for the British Region. He oversaw the transfer from Lochwinnoch to Cardonald in Glasgow in 1985. In 1988, he was one of the delegates to the General Chapter and was elected to the Society's General Council holding the portfolio for Finance and Latin America. December 2001, he was elected Society Representative in Cameroon. December 2007, he was appointed to Cardonald to help with Mission Appeals, animation and the editing of the St. Joseph's Advocate magazine.

On the 1st of November 2010, he was appointed Rector at Cardonald and during that time became a close friend and confidant to Glasgow Serrans. He celebrated the Eucharist with us and was a frequent speaker on religious art, one of his favourite topics.

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'" Matthew 25:21. RIP FR Bill

**The Most Reverend Malcolm Mc Mahon,
Archbishop of Liverpool
will join our Liverpool members at the
Cenacle, Tithebarn Grove, Lance Lane,
Liverpool L15 6TW
Thursday 1st May at 6-30 pm**

We will celebrate our annual Mass for all deceased Serrans and to mark the 68th anniversary of the founding of the Liverpool Club. The Mass will be followed by a buffet supper. Invitation is open to all Serrans throughout Great Britain.

"Eucharistic Adoration for Vocations"

In Serra we are strong advocates of Adoration 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 and those thinking of a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life.

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, now acknowledging our faults, and communicating to him all that concerns us, our thoughts, our fears, our projects, our desires, and in all things seeking his counsel. "...St. Ignatius of Loyola

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.

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 March 29th 2025



at 2.00pm GMT continuing into 2025 on the last Saturdays of every month. Join us free, use Access Code: 314-315-91. at: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/314315981>

Join us for the 82nd Serra International Convention in Kansas City, Kansas



"Chosen to Serve!"

Our Serra Convention is a profound opportunity for spiritual growth and learning. Engage with well-known speakers who will inspire with their deep wisdom and insights. From practical workshops to inspiring keynote addresses, you'll enhance your faith and be equipped with the tools to strengthen your efforts to foster and promote vocations ! [Register here](#)



The Synod on Synodality 2020/24 eagerly expected since 2021 has now been released. On Saturday afternoon, 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 approving its publication.

The Final Document of the XVI assembly, together with the accompanying Note of the Holy Father Francis, is also available in, English translation.

We recall that the purpose of the Synod was not to produce documents, but to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands.

An opportunity to join us internationally



The Serra Meets programme is now a routine webinar on the 3rd Monday of each month with virtual lectures from leading clergy and experts on the topic of Catholic vocations.

Our next Meets, March 17th features Cardinal Collins of Toronto with his Lenten reflections. Join him at [Serra Meets](#) 7pm Central time or 1am GMT. You can join all our past speakers which are recorded and posted on the Serra International You tube channel, click this [link](#) and make your choice. Patterned after a 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 hosted by the US Council of Serra International



The New Serran Magazine

This New issue features the state of Serra and the vision for a dynamic future in vocations promotion with articles from throughout the Serran world online! [HERE](#)

Serra Connects Message from SI leadership

February 2025 –
Jubilee Year of Hope!
[HERE](#)



It's a Joke

There was this man at a bar, just staring at his drink. He stays like that for a half hour. Then a big guy, a trouble maker steps next to him, takes the drink from the man, and just drinks it all down. The poor man starts crying. The truck driver says, "Come on man, I was just joking. Here, I'll buy you another drink. I just can't stand to see a man cry." "No, it's not that," the man replies, wiping his tears, "This day is the worst of my life. First, I oversleep and I got in late to my office. My outraged boss fires me. When I leave the building to go to my car, I find out it was stolen. The police say they can do nothing. I get a cab to go home, and when I get out, I remember I left my wallet. The cab driver just drives away. I go inside my house where I find my wife in bed with the gardener. I leave my home, come to this bar, and just when I was about to put an end to my life, you show up and drink my poison."

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

District 60

Liverpool

We meet at 6.30pm 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 last 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

University of Glasgow Chaplaincy (as programmed)

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 vocations. Pray for us.
St Junipero Serra. Pray for us.



Are you Interested in
supporting and fostering
VOCATIONS



To the priesthood and
consecrated 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
and religious 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.”

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