



Serra GB

focus



September 2023



“The thoughts of many hearts may be laid bare.” (Luke 2:34-35).

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>

The months ahead. “Our Lady of Sorrows”



As Serrans we encourage prayer for vocations at home, in schools and of course in our churches. Prayer takes many forms with celebrations of the Eucharist, Rosaries for Vocations, Stations for Vocations during Lent, Holy hours, Vigils and many more.

In the months of May and October, also known as Marian Months we offer “Rosary for vocations” to the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary who is the mother of Jesus Christ, the Mother of all priests and our Spiritual mother.

No less, in this month of **September**, on 12th September, the Feast of the Most Holy Name of Mary is celebrated to commemorate all the privileges bestowed upon Mother Mary by God and all the graces received through her intercession and mediation.

Our Lady of Sorrows, Her fest day on the 15th of September. The title, given to our Blessed Mother focuses on her intense suffering and grief during the passion and death of our Lord. Traditionally, this suffering was not limited to the passion and death event; rather, it comprised the seven sorrows of Mary, which were foretold by the Priest Simeon who proclaimed to Mary, This child Jesus is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed and you yourself shall be pierced with a sword so that the thoughts of many hearts may be laid bare (Luke 2:34-35).

These seven sorrows of our Blessed Mother, included the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt; the loss and finding of the child Jesus in the Temple; Mary's meeting of Jesus on His way to Calvary; Mary's standing at the foot of the cross when our Lord was crucified; her holding of Jesus when He was taken down from the cross; and then our Lord's burial. In all, the prophesy of Simeon that a sword would pierce our Blessed Mother's heart was fulfilled in these events. For this reason, Mary is sometimes depicted with her heart exposed and with seven swords piercing it. More importantly, each new suffering was received with the courage, love, and trust that echoed her fiat, let it be done unto me according to Thy word, first uttered at the Annunciation.

This Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows grew in popularity in the 12th century, although under various titles. Granted,

some writings would place its roots in the eleventh century, especially among the Benedictine monks. By the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the feast and devotion were widespread throughout the Church.

The feast of the Nativity of Our Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on the 8th of September to commemorate her Immaculate Conception. This is considered as the “dawn of our salvation” as mentioned by Pope Paul VI in the document, *Marialis Cultus* in 1972.

“The day of the Nativity of the Mother of God is a day of universal joy, because through the Mother of God, the entire human race was renewed, and the sorrow of the first mother, Eve, was transformed into joy.”—Saint John Damascene, Father and Doctor of the Church

We honour our Blessed Mother, our Lady of Sorrows, we honour her as the faithful disciple and exemplar of faith. Let us pray as we do in the opening prayer of the Mass for that feast day: Father, as your Son was raised on the cross, His Mother Mary stood by Him, sharing His sufferings. May your Church be united with Christ in His suffering and death and so come to share in His rising to new life. Looking to the example of Mary, may we too unite our sufferings to our Lord, facing them with courage, love, and trust.

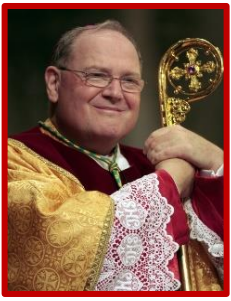
The triumphal month of **October** is dedicated to the Holy Rosary, celebrating the Marian advocacy of "Our Lady of the Rosary." The feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, also celebrated as Our Lady of Victory, established by Pope St Pius V in 1571 to celebrate the miraculous victory of the Christian forces in the Battle of Lepanto on Oct. 7th, 1571. As Serrans we encourage recitation of Rosary for vocations privately, in community, at our Holy hours and Vigils for vocations.

In the month of **November**, The Serrans of Great Britain will recognise by name and pray for all our deceased members at our masses and meetings.

We pray for of our deceased family members, all our priests and religious who have gone before us. Particularly in this last year. 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.





A Culture of vocations

Do you know how sad it is when you are talking to a young man about becoming a priest, and we'll start chatting, and you see there is an interest there. He has his wits about him, the know-how, the enthusiasm, the sincerity, and then you'll say to him, "How can I follow through? Can I

give you a call?" And sometimes, it will break your heart, he'll say, "Don't call the house, because mom and dad will be upset if they hear I am thinking about becoming a priest." There is what you might call the negative side of the family. I happen to think there might be a benevolent explanation for that, and that mums and dads deep down only want their kids to be happy, and they think that priests are unhappy. They don't want their sons to be that. So that's why I always say to priests, "We've got to be men of joy, or else what parent is going to want his or her son to be a priest?"

I think that is changing, and we've got a positive influence. When the family beams, when the family encourages, when the family fosters. You often see me write or speak about a "culture of vocations." What I mean by a culture of vocations is that when our young people grow up in a culture that encourages you to do God's will and that affirms one in his desire to be a priest, you are going to get priests. I grew up in such a culture. I said to my teachers in grade school, "I think I want to be a priest," and they beamed and did everything possible to encourage me. My parish priest would. My folks would. My neighbours would. The parish would. As a kid, I must have been 9 or 10 years old — getting a haircut, and the barber said, "Hey shrimp, what do you want to be when you grow up?" I said, "I want to be a priest." And he wasn't even a Catholic, but he said, "Hey, isn't that great?" Now that is the culture of vocations that we need in the Church.

Today I am afraid, we have a culture that discourages vocations. And sometimes families were a part of that. I am always amazed, when I have the ordination of a priest, of how many times that becomes the occasion of bringing a family back to the faith. And sometimes, we have young men ordained who are neo-converts. They may have been raised Catholics in a less than enthusiastic way, drifted from the faith, usually in high school and college, and then maybe embraced the faith in a newfound way in their early 20s, from where came a vocation. The family, in the meantime, is sort of left in the dust, sometimes not opposed to it, but just blasé about it. And very often, when I am getting to know seminarians, they will say, "My family is a little upset about this," or "My family doesn't know what to make of this," or "My family keeps trying to get me to change my mind." But very often the ordination will be an occasion of family unity, the family will come back to the practice of the faith and be radiant in their son's choice; when they see their son happy; when they see good men around him who share his values and a sense of that call. **"That's a miracle there."**

*Extract from a talk by Cardinal Timothy Dolan, New York.
Former episcopal advisor to Sera International*

"Fragments from the Frontier."

You may recall some of our **Serra GB focus** newsletter issues throughout the Covid period, entitled "Fragments from the frontier"



with Sr Joachim at South Herts

The articles, letters, from Sr Joachim, a sister of St. Mother Teresa.

Sr Joachim was a frequent guest speaker. Her mother Helen was a Serran from our South Herts Serra club for many years.



The Mission of Hope

began in 2011, when Sr. Mary Joachim felt God was asking her to serve those no one serves, in places to which no one wishes to go. In 2014, Sr. Joachim travelled to Gode in the Somali region of Ethiopia. Situated in the southwest of the country, 700 km away from the nearest Catholic Church, Gode is a military town where prostitution has taken root. Ethiopia is a place where girls can be sex objects and subject to prostitution becoming mothers at very young ages. The political regime is such that the mission is under constant pressure just to survive. The climate is extreme with very harsh conditions making it very difficult to sustain life. The "Mission of hope" survives and thrives with various projects providing education and work experience giving hope to their residents and prospects for a worthwhile life.

One such project is TAMARA is a project aimed to empower disadvantaged women. The programme teaches women a trade, provides healthcare and childcare services in exchange for leaving prostitution. Additionally, through interaction with others the women regain their sense of being and self-worth. The women's handiwork is sold, and the money earned is placed in bank accounts under each one's name. After two years of working with these women, we have seen more than 40 pass through our doors, some have succeeded to return to Society with their heads held high, taking up self-sustaining work, which supports them and their children. Some have used the space to rethink their lives and return to their hometowns, and to their families and in some way begin again. Others have been too sick to do this and have been accompanied in their illness, ensuring that they will not be alone in the last moment of their lives.

In her most recent letter of June this year Sr Mary Joachim gives us a taste of her life and an update of life in Gode in Somalia. She has just returned to Somalia, from a trip to Poland where she invited people to consider the Mission of 'First Evangelization'. She spoke at seven Holy Masses in all, and happy to say that "we have four possible volunteers to come to us in Gode two for a year of more!"

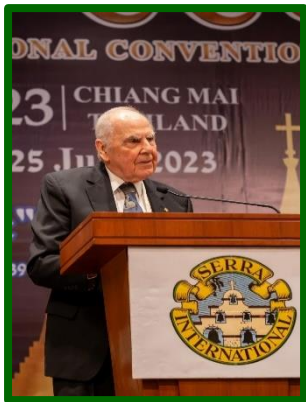
Download Sr Joachim's recent letter from Ethiopia [here](#)

Chiang Mai Convention Recap

Serra's 80th Convention was a huge success for Serra, and a major event for the Church, particularly in Asia! We welcome and applaud Kurt Metyko as the newly elected president of Serra International.



Kurt Metyko receiving the President's Pin from Outgoing President Greg Schwietz.



Newly elected President Kurt Metyko presenting his "Year Ahead" speech at the convention.

In addition to electing a new slate of officers, the delegates approved the Serra International budgets, and amendments to the Serra International Bylaws.

You can watch the video replay of Serra's 80th

International Convention in Chiang Mai by visiting this [playlist](#), featuring 5 Keynote speakers, 3 masses, the global rosary, and an inspiring session of young Serrans. All above were possible with the generous

support of [LiCAS News](#), the Catholic news agency for the Church in Asia.



Join us for Serra's 81st International Convention New Orleans, 8th-11th August'24

The perfect destination for an unforgettable convention! Immerse yourself in the rich Catholic heritage of

the city, explore the beautiful St. Louis Cathedral, stroll the renowned French Quarter, and savor delicious Cajun cuisine while connecting with Serrans from around the world!

Keep up to date[here](#)

Vigils for vocations



You could almost say that our Vigil for vocations has a season. Following Lent and a period dedicated to Stations for vocations and other Lenten programmes. We follow on into Easter and particularly the period around Good Shepherd Sunday when the Holy Father sends his "Message for vocations" to the world. The Serra club of Glasgow, the originator of this form of prayer for vocations has been unailing for some 34 years with the exception of one year out for that Covid period and is joined with our other clubs throughout Great Britain and beyond to support our Holy Father's message for the 60th "World day of prayer for Vocations."

The Vigils and our Holy hours of course continue throughout the year and again around National Vocations week in September time.

The Serra club of Glasgow will hold their next vigil at 7pm on September 8th in the parish of St James the Great in Crookston Glasgow G53 5TE.

Our Vigils usually follow a programme of: Vocations Mass followed by Adoration, silent reflection, Rosary for vocations with our guest speakers focusing on priestly vocations and consecrated religious vocations, concluding with Night prayer and Benediction.



In Glasgow we sincerely thank our Chaplain Fr Ross Campbell for his guidance and support over the past ten years. He has now moved on to pastures new, as Parish priest of two parishes in our West Dunbartonshire deanery. We will keep him in our prayers.

We welcome Fr Patrick Boyle our new Vocations Director. Fr Paddy is well known to Glasgow Serrans having accompanied us on many programmes over the year

Holy Father's 60th World Day of Prayer for "Vocation: Grace and Mission"

The Holy father tells us "Within the Church, all of us are servants, in accordance with the variety of our vocations, charisms and ministries. Our common vocation to give ourselves in love develops and finds concrete expression in the life of lay men and women, devoted to raising a family as a small *domestic church* and working as a leaven of the Gospel to renew the different sectors of society; in the testimony of consecrated women and men who are completely committed to God for the sake of their brothers and sisters as a prophetic sign of the kingdom of God; in ordained ministers – deacons, priests and bishops – placed at the service of preaching, prayer and fostering the communion of the holy People of God. Only in relation with all the others does any vocation in the Church fully disclose its true nature and richness.

The Holy father concludes with his prayer that Saint Paul VI composed for the first World Day of Vocations, 11 April 1964

"O Jesus, divine Shepherd of souls, you called the apostles and made them fishers of men. Continue to draw to yourself ardent and generous souls from among the young, in order to make them your followers and your ministers. Give them a share in your thirst for the redemption of all... Open before them the horizons of the entire world... By responding to your call, may they prolong your mission here on earth, build up your Mystical Body which is the Church, and be 'the salt of the earth' and 'the light of the world'.

The Holy [Father's message](#)

The Serra GB National AGM



**Our annual Serra GB council meeting
Sunday 1st October 2023, 10.30 am.**

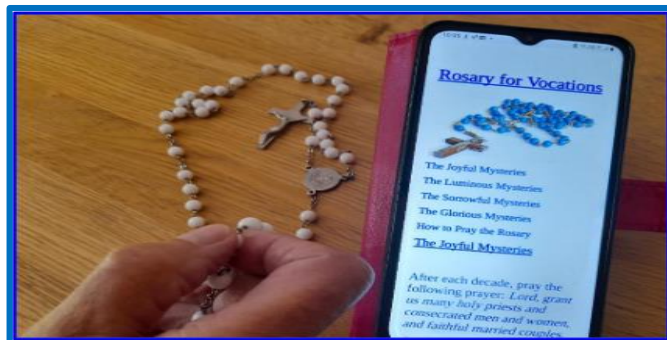
at

St Teresa's Church, Wilmslow SK9 1LD

**Commencing with celebration of Eucharist
followed by our gathering in their social
facility hosted by our National chaplain.**

Fr Anthony Cogliolo,

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

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, Sept30th at 2.00pm GMT continuing throughout 2023 on the last Saturdays of every month. Join us free, use Access Code: 314-315-91. at: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/314315981>

“Eucharistic Adoration for Vocations?”



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, 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

"Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God." But when we pray, do we speak from the height of our pride and will, or "out of the depths" of a humble and contrite heart? He who humbles himself will be exalted; humility is the foundation of prayer, only when we humbly acknowledge that "we do not know how to pray as we ought," are we ready to receive freely the gift of prayer. "Man is a beggar before God."

(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2559)

Get Started!

God is waiting for you. He will lead you to the path for which you were created.

He has the best plan for your life! "Do not be afraid. Do not be satisfied with mediocrity. Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

Pope St. John Paul II

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.

An opportunity to join us internationally



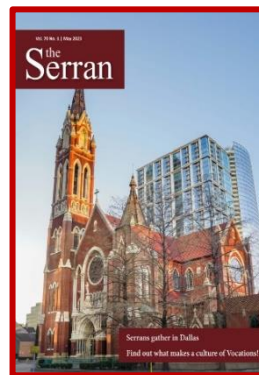
The Serra Meets programme is now a routine webinar broadcast on the second Saturday of each month throughout 2023 with virtual lectures from leading clergy and experts on the topic of Catholic vocations.

Our next Meets, Sept 9th, Oct 14th, Nov 11th 2023, at 5.00pm GMT. 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, 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

81st Serra International Convention

Will take place in New Orleans USA

The Serra International Convention of 2019 which was cancelled due to the Covid Pandemic returns, 8th-11th August 2024 to New Orleans, USA. The Home of Country Music! Make plan now to join Serrans from around the world. More information [here](#)



The New Serran Magazine

This issue features coverage of the highly anticipated new volume of The Serran now available to read online! [HERE](#) In this volume, we discuss what makes a culture of vocations, and a new cultural outreach, Check out 10 things you might not know about Serra.

It's a Joke

A woman's husband had been slipping in and out of a coma for several months, yet she stayed by his bedside every single day.

When he came to, he asked her to come nearer.

As she sat by him, he said, "You know what?"

You have been with me all through the bad times.

When I got fired, you were there to support me. When my business failed, you were there.

When I had a car accident, you were at the hospital by my side.

When we lost the house, you gave me support.

When my health started failing, you were still by my side... You know what?"

"What dear?" she asked gently.

"I think you bring me bad luck."

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 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.**

