



Serra GB

focus

September 2026



“A sword will pierce through your own soul” Luke 2:33-35

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 the diaconate and 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 Most Reverend Richard Moth Archbishop of Westminster and
Most Reverend William Nolan Archbishop of Glasgow.*

For more information visit: <http://www.serragreatbritain.org.uk>



The Month of September Our Lady of Sorrows

As Serrans we encourage prayer for vocations, privately, at home, in schools, universities with our young people and of course in our churches. Prayer takes many forms with celebrations of the Eucharist, Stations for Vocations during Lent, Holy hours, Vigils Rosaries for Vocations and many more. Simply, we need to pray for vocations, God listens to our prayers!

This September, the 8th We celebrate the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Occurring exactly nine months after the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

A September birth was chosen because, while the Bible does not record Mary's actual birth date, the September 8 tradition dates back to the 6th century. It was likely chosen because the ancient Eastern Church began its new year in September, symbolizing Mary as the "dawn" that heralded the coming of Jesus.

September, 12th. The Feast of the Most Holy Name of Mary. We celebrate to commemorate all the privileges bestowed upon Mother Mary by God and all the graces received through her intercession and mediation.

September, 15th. Our Lady of Sorrows, honouring her profound grief and immense suffering during the life, passion, and death of her son., Her feast day on the 15th 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).

The Prophecy of Simeon: When the infant Jesus was presented at the Temple, Simeon prophesied that a "sword" would pierce Mary's heart seven times.

The Flight into Egypt: Mary and Joseph had to flee with the child Jesus into Egypt to escape King Herod's massacre of infants.

The Loss of Jesus in the Temple: After a Passover pilgrimage, Mary and Joseph unknowingly lost the 12-year-old Jesus for three agonizing days before finding him in the Temple.

Mary Meets Jesus on the Way to the Cross: Mary encounters her son along the Via Dolorosa as he carries his cross to Calvary.

The Crucifixion of Jesus: Mary witnesses Jesus being nailed to the cross and suffers beneath him during his agony.

Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross: Mary receives the lifeless body of her son into her arms after he is removed from the cross.

The Burial of Jesus: Mary witnesses the placement of Jesus's body into the tomb.

Into October. The Marian month together with May. We celebrate the month of October dedicated to the Holy Rosary and promoted by Pope Leo XIII, centered on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on October 7th. The Rosary, the great tool of our vocations work, celebrating the Marian advocacy of "Our Lady of the Rosary." Also celebrated as Our Lady of Victory, established by Pope St Pius V to celebrate the miraculous victory of the Christian forces over the Ottoman Empire at the Battle of Lepanto on Oct. 7th 1571.

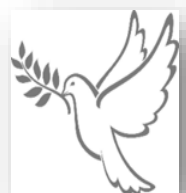
As Serrans we encourage recitation of Rosary for vocations privately, in community, at our Holy hours and Vigils for vocations.

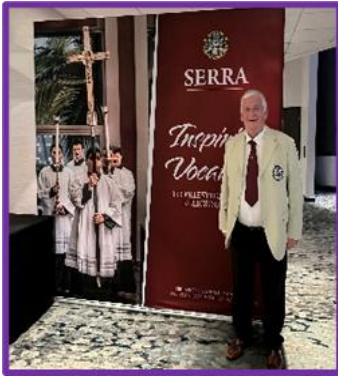
"Mary. Mother of vocations. Pray for us."

And November, The month of the Holy Souls when we pray for the faithful departed who are undergoing purification in Purgatory. We pray for all our faithful departed who have left us, awaiting the joys of heaven.

As Serrans of Great Britain, We will recognise by name all our deceased Serrans, at our masses and meetings, who had spent many years of their lives promoting vocations. We pray for our deceased family members, our priests and religious who have gone before us, marked with the sign of faith.

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 Convention in Indianapolis 9th to 12th July 2026

***By Chris Kelly
International Trustee for
Serra Great Britain***

The 83rd Serra International Convention took place in Indianapolis, Indiana, a vibrant, cosmopolitan city with a profound American soul. Its roots are deeply rooted in Native American culture, and today it is a major regional transportation hub with routes leading in all directions, with the nickname "The Crossroads of America."



***Chris with Emanuele Costa
and Margo Geddies***

Margo Geddies was duly inaugurated as the new President of Serra International by the convention delegates. Margo started her business career in wealth management with Morgan Stanley more than thirty years ago and achieved the title of Senior Vice President-Wealth Management. She serves on the Advisory Board of St. Mary's Catholic Seminary and the Development Board of the University of St. Thomas. She was President of the Serra Club of Houston and travelled extensively to cultivate new Serra Clubs in other parts of the world, most recently the first Serra club in Germany. When she is not travelling, she enjoys spending family time with her daughter, Ashley, and her son-in-law, Ken, and their two sons, Thomas and Wells.



Our International board members 2026/27

We will keep Margo in our prayers as she takes the helm in guiding Serra in its work internationally..

Standard items were dealt with such as Finance, reports from Committees and SI Foundation. Progress had been made in setting up a Council for Nigeria and a new club formed in Dubai the first in an Arab country and most recently the first Serra club in Germany, formed by our new president Margo. An important item to bring to everyone's attention was that Serra would now include in its mission "To encourage and affirm vocations to the ministry of the permanent diaconate in the Catholic Church." This change was approved by the delegates during the convention.

Internationally renowned figures shared guidance, stories, and insights into opportunities for spiritual growth and learning through presentations and workshops. Speakers of various church ministries from Indianapolis and the state of Indiana related their vocation stories and how Serra can help in promoting vocations.

My contribution on behalf of Serra GB was a "Serra around the world" video presentation.

The Opening Mass was held in St John the Evangelist Church a short walk from the convention hotel.



The final Mass was held on the Saturday evening in St John's followed by our banquet and inaugural speech by our new president Margo concluding the conference.

The last item on my itinerary was the business board meeting on the Sunday morning with new president Margo Geddies in the chair. The timetable was given for meetings for the coming year including convention 2027 which will take place in Rome next year. All in all, a great convention with industrious meetings.

It is a privilege to serve on the Serra International board on behalf of all our Serra GB members.Chris



***Serra International convention Rome.
June 24th - 27th 2027***

The Serra International Foundation celebrates 75 years



Cindy Madigan Bell President SIF

Our Foundation was established in 1951 as Serra International's philanthropic arm. Its purpose then is the same as it is today: to provide financial support to programs that foster vocations to the ministerial priesthood of the Catholic church, to fund programs of formation for men and women in consecrated religious life and advance Serra's mission as the global lay apostolate for vocations in the Catholic Church.

Over the decades Our Foundation has funded promising, fledgling ideas, pilot programs and start-up organizations - and some of them have grown into extraordinary, independent institutions that now do outstanding work for vocations across our Catholic Church.

You may recognize some of their names: CARA, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, NET Ministries, Newman Connections, and FOCUS.

These organizations were once small ideas looking for a partner in those early, uncertain years. Our Foundation was that partner. Today they are flourishing on their own, serving the Church in ways none of us could have fully imagined at the start. That is what good seed money does.

I also want to share two moments when our Foundation stepped outside its usual lane — because the need was simply too great to ignore.

The first was the devastating tsunami that struck Thailand and Southeast Asia. Serra International's president at the time, Chainarong Monthienvichianchai, was himself from Thailand and was hosting our convention in Bangkok. Even though disaster relief is not typically our purpose, our board decided it was right to contribute to seminary repairs.

The second was closer to home: a fire at San Gabriel Mission in California - the very mission founded under the leadership of our own Padre Junipero Serra - started by arson. Again, not our usual work. But we put out a call to Serrans, and they responded generously. When something sacred is threatened, Serra International and our Foundation responds.

But I also want to highlight a few others. Our National seminaries here in the United States and abroad. Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology, near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, serves approximately 28 dioceses and religious orders. We recently contributed a grant toward their English and Culture Studies program — a program that prepares international priests - and religious to serve effectively in the United States. That is an investment that ripples outward into every parish those priests will one day serve.

One of my personal favorites from recent years is our Foundation grant to Saints Peter and Paul Seminary in Nigeria. What made this grant special was not just the money—it was how it came together. Our Foundation awarded Saints Peter and Paul a \$5,000 grant and challenged the Serra Clubs in Nigeria to raise an additional \$2,000 from its members. Our SIF board member Cecilia Akindele helped organize the effort from within her community in Nigeria. Together - the Foundation and Serra members in Nigeria found a way to support their seminary and their future. Many priests from Nigeria are now serving worldwide. Others from Africa, South America and Asia have benefited from our grants to support vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

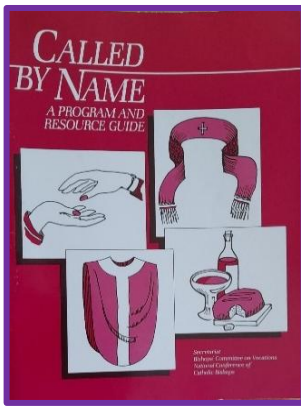
Lastly, I want to share something we are still working toward and I am hopeful. We have been in conversation with the Seminary of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Father Bernard Poggi and his development director Atallah Kasis who first reached out to us a year or two ago. The war and some other complications have created obstacles. But we remain in dialogue, and we are optimistic that their application will come before our board for review. Supporting the formation of priests in the Holy Land - in Jerusalem - feels like a profound expression of Serra's mission. We are not there yet, but we are hoping and praying.

Those are just a few of the many accomplishments of our Foundation over the last Seventy-five years and we continue donating to worthy causes.

Every Serran who has donated to our Foundation has helped plant seeds in faith that have helped to grow programs that foster and support vocations, from Nigeria, to Wisconsin, and Jerusalem. Africa to Asia or wherever the next promising idea appears or needs to help others answer God's call.

That story tells me something important: even where structures don't yet exist, relationships can make things happen. If you are in an area where giving to outside organizations is difficult, please reach out. Let's talk. We may be able to find a way to work together on a project in your community.

Your generosity makes vocations possible. There are many different ways you can give to our Foundation that can help make a difference today and support those answering God's call in communities across the globe for years to come.



Diocese of Nottingham launches new "Called by Name" vocation drive.

The event showed the first fruits of the campaign, after those 37, whose names were submitted received a personal invitation from Bishop Patrick McKinney, to meet him, accompanied by Father Neil Peoples, Nottingham Diocese's Vocations Director.

Father Neil Peoples spent the first minutes of the afternoon reassuring a room of nervous young men that he was "not that scary." Years ago, he was one of them. He had thought about priesthood as a boy, then let it go. Then a bishop collared him with a question he couldn't shake: "Have you not thought about priesthood?" He couldn't laugh it off, he says, I needed to take this a bit more seriously. On Corpus Christi Sunday, he stood beside Bishop McKinney in the Cathedral Hall, in front of 37 young men. Not one of them had put himself forward. Each had been noticed by someone in his own parish or chaplaincy, and invited.

That is the idea behind the *"Called by Name"* programme. The programme asks the people and parishes who know them to say so. "So each one of you is here this afternoon," the Bishop told them, "because someone in your parish thought of you." For several of the men, that was the strange and moving part. A young man from Loughborough "being noticed motivates me to be more involved in the life of the church." The man from Grantham was the plainest. "I don't know if this is what I'm meant to do," he said, "but there's only one way to find out."

That 'finding out' is Fr Peoples' work. "The pace is theirs, usually a monthly conversation, in person or over Zoom." What he wants a young man to see is "not Walt Disney version of priesthood but the real thing." Asked what he saw when the men arrived, his answer was simple. "You see hope "People that are willing to see what could be." Religion & Belief." The Bishop was very clear about why the afternoon mattered. "Priests do not grow on trees, they do not come out of the clouds. They come from parishes." The turnout had moved him. "This is far more than I thought might come."



Gathered in the Cathedral Hall the young men had stopped being strangers. They were swapping phone numbers, comparing parishes, laughing at the stories of how they'd each ended up

there. None of the 37 has committed to anything, and that's the point. *Called by Name* asks nothing of them but a willingness to wonder, and to be open to whatever the Lord might be calling them to. "You've got nothing to lose, it's been very 'no pressure, relaxed.'" said the man from Grantham." Or, as Bishop McKinney put it to anyone considering this question, "Give the Lord a chance."

"Called by Name".

Find out more:- [Here](#) or on our Serra SPARKs link:- [Here](#)



Serra GB National AGM Sunday 4th October 2026

Our annual Serra GB. Our meetings, normally held at a central location for our members from north and south of the border, this year will be held using the zoom platform thus eliminating the costs of travel and accommodation.

Following on from last year we can report that our membership in some areas had fallen but had increased with new members in the north and south of the country. Importantly our vocations activities, considering our small numbers seemed steady and in some areas had increased. We continue to be active in our parishes being aware of national changes. And, of course our school and university events. Communications via this newsletter and our website showed an increase in the number of people enjoying our resources pages using our various vocations programmes within their homes and parishes.

Vigils for Vocations October, we meet our University of Glasgow Chaplaincy and Students

We have many vigils for vocations being held at various times and venues throughout the year. The vigils which take place around Vocations Sunday are extended throughout the year in parishes, schools and universities.

This particular University Chaplaincy vigil coincides with the beginning of term early October when students have just started their new term of studies and prayerfully invite our Lord to guide them in their chosen career paths. Vigils usually following a programme of Eucharistic celebration followed by Adoration, silent reflection, Rosary for vocations, with guest speakers focusing on their priestly and consecrated religious vocations, concluding with Night prayer and Benediction.

At our Masses for Vocations. We Pray for all who are discerning a vocation, particularly priestly and religious vocations.



Photo: Archbishop William Nolan, with priests and deacons of the Archdiocese of Glasgow.

"Lord, grant us many holy priests and consecrated men and women and faithful married couples."



**Pope Leo XIV has appointed
Fr Stephen Wang as the
new Bishop of
Arundel and Brighton**

We send our sincere congratulations to the Bishop elect and assure him of our prayers. Fr Wang has been a keynote speaker and lecturer at past conferences of Serra Great Britain. On hearing of his appointment, Bishop-elect Stephen Wang, said: "This appointment has come as a huge surprise. I feel a mixture of gratitude and trepidation; an excitement and curiosity about all that lies ahead; and above all, a sense of peace. I'm grateful to Pope Leo for calling me and putting his trust in me, and to Archbishop Moth for all his care for the Diocese over these years.

"I will need lots of prayers and support. I hope that even with all my weaknesses I can be a loving shepherd, a spiritual father, and a brother as well. I know that if we put the love of Jesus and Mary at the centre of everything we do, and always seek to love and serve one another, then we cannot go wrong. Jesus will guide us through his Holy Spirit, lead us to the Father, and help us to lead others along the same path."

Fr Wang has spent the last five years as Rector of the Venerable English College, one of two English and Welsh seminaries in Rome training men for the priesthood.

The Episcopal mass of ordination will take place Monday, October 19, 2026, at 12:00 noon at the Cathedral Church of Our Lady and St Philip Howard in Arundel.



**August 14th feast day
Saint Maximilian Kolbe
A Polish Franciscan Friar.**

In 1930, Fr Kolbe travelled to Japan, where he spent several years serving as a missionary. He founded a monastery on the outskirts of Nagasaki which, shielded by a

mountain, survived the atomic blast. However as a result he became increasingly ill and returned to Poland in 1936.

During the German occupation of Poland in 1939, he remained at his monastery of Niepokalanów publishing a number of anti-Nazi German publications. In 1941, he was arrested and sent to Auschwitz, where in terrible circumstances he continued to work as a priest and offer solace to fellow inmates. At the end of July 1941 a prisoner successfully escaped and in reprisal the Nazi guards selected 10 people to be starved to death in punishment, Maximilian Kolbe volunteered to die in place of a stranger who had a wife and family. He died in Auschwitz August 14th 1941.

He was canonised as a martyr, Oct 10th 1982 by Pope John Paul II. The stranger, Franciszek Gajowniczek was present at St Maximilian Kolbe's canonisation.



**Holy Father's
Vocations
Message 2026:
"The Interior Discovery
of God's Gift"**

For the 63rd World Day of Prayer for Vocations on Sunday April 26th, 2026, Pope Leo XIV released a message titled "The Interior Discovery of God's Gift," calling vocations an "adventure of love and happiness". He urged the faithful to nourish their calling through prayer, silence, and daily relationships with God, emphasizing that vocations are not impositions but gifts.

Key elements of the Holy Father's message: Interior Life & Prayer: Gift to be Nurtured: Call to Action and Youth & Courage. The Holy Father's [Pope Leo XIV](https://www.popeleoxiv.com) message. and on our website www.Serragreatbritain.org.uk

**Holy Father's prayer intentions 2026
September**

For the care of water

Let us pray for a just and sustainable management of water, a vital resource, so that everyone may have equal access to it.

October

For mental health ministry

Let us pray that the mental health ministry be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma and discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.

November

For the proper use of wealth

Let us pray for the proper use of wealth, that not succumbing to the temptation of selfishness, it may always be put at the service the common good and solidarity of those who have less.

December 2026

For single-parent families

Let us pray for families experiencing the absence of a mother or father, that they may find support and accompaniment in the Church, and strength in the Faith during difficult times.



**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 26th at 2.00pm GMT continuing through 2026 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?

“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, and in all things seeking his counsel.”

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 and those thinking of the vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life.

“Does your parish have adoration or Holy Hours for vocations?”

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.St. Ignatius of Loyola



A Serran “Rosary for vocations”

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

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

Serra Connects

We hope you enjoy this edition’s pilgrimage with Serra across the globe. Simply click the link choose your preferred language below and read

Great Britain entry
“The Interior Discovery of God’s Gift “



Edition 9 July 2026



The Serran Magazine April 2026

The Holy Father Pope Leo XIV’s special prayer intention for April 2026 was for priests in crisis. In this issue, we offer signs to watch for when clergy struggle, and practical ways to support their mental and physical well-being

[April 2026 issue.](#)

An opportunity to join us internationally



The Serra Meets programme is now a routine webinar broadcast on the second Saturday of each month throughout 2026 with virtual

lectures from leading clergy and experts on the topic of Catholic vocations. recorded and posted on the Serra International YouTube channel, click this. [link](#) and make your choice. Serra Meets broadcasts accessible at [Serra MEETS](#). **Our next Meets, Sept 12th, Oct 10th, Nov 14th, at 5.00pm GMT.**

It's only a joke

During an impassioned sermon about death and final judgement, the priest said forcefully, "Each member of this church is going to die and face judgement." Glancing down at the front pew, he noticed a man with a big smile on his face. The priest repeated his point louder. "Each member of this church is going to die and face judgement!" The man nodded and smiled even more. This really got the priest wound up. He pounded the pulpit emphatically when he came to the ultimatum: "Each member of this church is going to die and face judgement!!!" Though everyone else in the congregation was looking somber, the man in front continued to smile. Finally, the priest stepped off the pulpit, stood in front of the man and shouted, "I said each member of this church is going to die!" The man laughed louder from ear to ear. After the service was over, the priest made a beeline for the man. "I don't get it," the priest said in frustration. "Whenever I said, 'Each member of this church is going to die,' your smile got bigger. "You started to laugh. Why?" "I'm not a member of this church," the man replied.



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 2nd Tuesday of the month. Holy Hour 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, diaconate
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 an
increase in vocations as priests,
deacons and religious.”***

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