



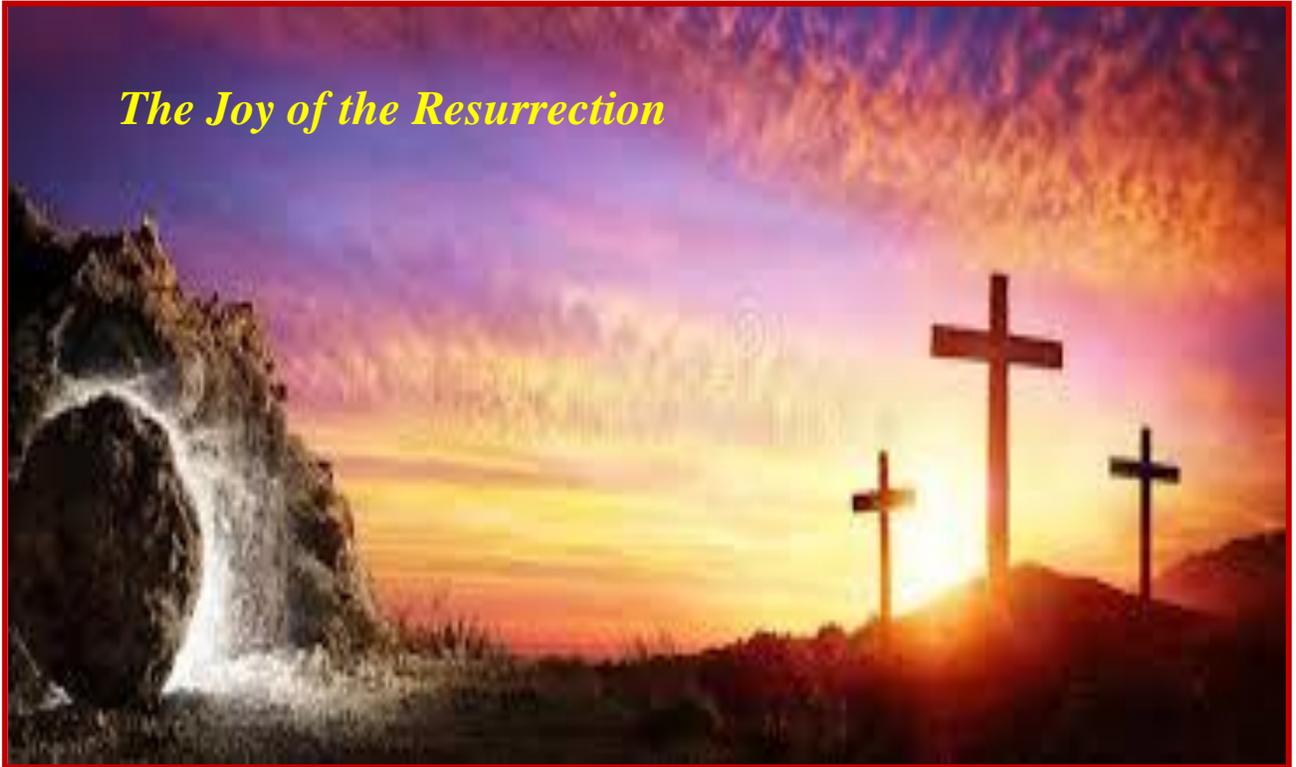
Serra GB

focus

Easter 2020



The Joy of the Resurrection



“Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.”

John 20:21

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 patronage of the His Eminence Most Reverend Vincent Cardinal Nichols and
Most Reverend Philip Tartaglia, Archbishop of Glasgow
For more information visit: www.serragb.org.uk*

Coronavirus

Each edition of the **Serra GB focus** highlights the events of our liturgical calendar and in April this year we reflect on Easter. However, this year we are blighted by the Covid-19 pandemic which is altering our everyday lives. Many questions arise and regarding our health we are guided by our NHS

As Catholics we are encountering many changes and restrictions in the way we celebrate our liturgical services. St Peter's basilica and the Vatican are pretty much on close down and the hundred of thousands who would participate in our Triduum services will have to join via the media options, online or television broadcasts. That is the reality of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our local churches are now closed for the celebration of the Eucharist until further notice but will remain open for individual prayer. These are the restrictions which impact devotion to our faith.

What can we do? Well firstly we can help by action and prayer to take care of our elderly, our families, friends and our next door neighbour which is the basic Christian thing to do. I am sure many people of faith be they Christian, Jewish, Muslim or other will turn to prayer and look to their God for help.

As Catholics we should be praying for those who are charged by their vocation to assist us to recover, our doctors, nurses, health care personnel and emergency services who are under extreme pressure to deliver that care.

Importantly, we look to our Bishops, priests, religious who by their vocation are called to be shepherds to God's people. The Good Shepherd is often depicted as the one who leaves his flock to find the stray lamb that has wandered off into danger. That is what our Holy Father, our bishops and priests and those consecrated to God are called to do.

Many of our Serra members and readers, are daily mass goers and find themselves isolated due to self-confinement, social distancing and church closures, from being present for the celebration of the Eucharist. We can as a way of inviting Jesus into your heart and soul when unable to receive the actual sacrament to focus on Spiritual Communion which is part of our Catholic tradition. Spiritual communion was defined by St Thomas Aquinas as "an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Holy Sacrament and a loving embrace as though we had already received Him". The following prayer might be useful in making a spiritual communion:

The following Reading, the Intercessions, Spiritual Communion prayer, the Holy Father's prayer and other prayers for those helpers give us the opportunity to focus and pray for those for all who are affected by this crisis.

Reading from the holy gospel according to St Matthew 8:14-17

When Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: 'He took our illnesses and bore our diseases'.

Intercessions

For our Holy Father our Bishops and priests who by their ordination are entrusted to care for Our Lord's flock. *Lord hear us.*

For our religious men and women who by tradition care for those in need. *Lord hear us.*

We ask you to bring good health to those suffering from this virus. *Lord hear us.*

For ourselves, that we can be generous in our aid to those affected by this virus. *Lord Hear us.*

For health care workers and emergency services who give of themselves for our care *Lord hear us.*

For your own special intentions. *Lord Hear us.*

Through the intercession of Our Lady. *Hail Mary.*

Spiritual Communion

"My Jesus, I believe that thou art present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love thee above all things, and I desire to receive thee in my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive thee sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace thee as if thou wert already there, and unite myself wholly to thee. Never permit me to be separated from thee. Amen."



The Holy Father has composed this prayer to “Our Lady, Health of the Sick”, to implore her protection

The Holy Father’s prayer

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick. At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus’ pain, with steadfast faith.

You, Salvation of the People, know what we need. We are certain that you will provide, so that as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father’s will and to do what Jesus tells us:

He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen. We seek refuge under your protection,

O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test – and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Our Lady, health of the sick, pray for us.

General Prayer for Health

Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ in quiet, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

Prayer for those in Authority

Loving God, in Christ Jesus, the servant of all, you call us to the service of others. Grant to those who govern the community the skill to recognise its urgent needs and the strength to pursue the common good. Endow us all with patience and courage, that we may care for the suffering, feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and sustain the needy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for Health Staff

Wondrous God, author of life, you fashioned us in your likeness and breathed into us the life which is your own. Be with those whose special care is the health of mind and body. Fill their hearts with awe for the life which is your gift and sustain them daily in your service, that their hands may bring to others the comfort of your healing touch. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

I pray that you stay safe and well Alex

*Easter Message from Mary O'Hara
president of Serra GB*

I am conscious of the present and difficult circumstances we are facing at this time. The coronavirus is affecting our lives much more than we could ever have imagined. There is great concern regarding the health of all but especially our more senior members of Serra, our family and friends.

As we approach Easter, perhaps we can look beyond this crisis and appreciate the changes that spring and Easter bring. It is wonderful, after the bleak days of winter to



notice and be uplifted by new life appearing? First snowdrops and crocuses, now daffodils adorning the roadside verges and tulips about to burst into flower.

It is reminiscent of Easter, where after the bleakness of our Lord's passion - His scourging at the pillar, His having to carry His cross through the crowds to Calvary and then His crucifixion and death on Good Friday - we can rejoice in the wonder of His glorious Resurrection.

With Prayer we will also be able to rejoice and overcome our difficulties which will pass. I wish all Serrans and friends of Serra a sense of renewal and strength of faith this Holy Season. Happy Easter!Mary

The Joy of the Resurrection

As we lead up to Easter, we realise the importance of the celebrations we experience during that final Holy week in Our Lord's earthly existence. We have our last supper where Our Lord instituted the priesthood as his implement of furthering His teachings, and love for humanity and then the brutal humiliation, degradation and excruciating painful death in His final crucifixion.

On that following morning through our Easter Vigil liturgy we celebrate and believe the most awesome of events in history without which we would not have our faith, His resurrection. This is not fiction, not glorified imagination, Hollywood, or just a story but fact, fact as recorded down through history by witnesses and the telling of this greatest story through our evangelists. Christ died for us to relieve us of our sins.

We can then understand one of our evangelists' John's telling of this awesome event and the Acts of the apostles proclaiming the Risen Lord at work in the community.

“The apostles were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again: ‘Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I am sending you.’” John 20:21

It was perhaps only natural that John's Gospel should highlight the joy that accompanied this first appearance between Our Lord and his apostles.

Their joy, however, was something more than the spontaneous relief of a reunion with one thought to be dead. The joy experienced was rooted in the prayer offered by Jesus on the night before he died.

"I have made your name known to them, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and so that I may be in them."

This was no passing joy. It was the enduring realisation that the resurrection imparts to every believer. Christ is Risen! The power of His resurrection gathers our loneliness into communion with the Father and Son, a love that existed before the foundation of the world. This is the ultimate joy of the resurrection, to know that Christ abides in us as he does in the Father.

John's Gospel provides an account of the appearance of Jesus to the eleven in the upper room and a second account one week later (eight days in Hebrew). Jesus brings the gift of peace and the gift of the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus, who has died for sinners, ensures the gift of forgiveness for all those who will seek it, the forgiveness available to us through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Jesus like the Father at the dawn of creation, breathed new life into His Apostles. *"He breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit.' This was a Spirit that looked outwards rather than inwards. 'As the Father has sent me, so am I sending you.'*" The first fruits of this Spirit are always peace and reconciliation. *"For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven."* In the case of the Apostles these words clearly carried a sacramental meaning. It would be in the name of Christ that they would proclaim absolution to burdened souls. We should not ignore the significance of these words for ourselves. We also have received the Spirit of the Risen Lord, making us, with the Apostles, channels of his peace and reconciliation.

Thomas, who refused to believe unless he could see the wounds left by the Crucifixion, could place his hand into Christ's wounded side, represents faith's dilemma. We want to believe, but all too frequently we want to believe on our own terms. We want to remain in control of any commitment that we might make. Faith, of its very nature, is based on a trust that surrenders itself to the object of its trust.

We do not make a contract with God so as to remain in control. We surrender ourselves and our fears to him. We allow him in truth, not merely in name, to be the Lord of our lives. It was for this reason that the exchange with Thomas concluded with the words: ***"You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe."***

The Acts of the Apostles describes the power of the Risen Lord at work in the community. We are told that the whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the Apostles, to prayer and to the breaking of bread. We

deceive ourselves if we claim to be alive in the Risen Lord without all three.

Only when we are one with Christ in prayer, in his teaching and the celebration of the Eucharist are we truly one with our Risen Lord.

Whatever our calling in life, be it consecrated religious, married, single, your vocation, your choice in life is to be lived as a proclamation of the Christ who dwells within us through the

"Joy of the Resurrection"Alex

A great late vocations story with a lot of twists along the highway of life.



Tony Cureton is 63 years old, father of two young women he raised alone. He is a grandfather. He nursed until her death a woman he calls "my beloved in Christ," and still wears the ring she would have given him on their wedding day. He has been a Girl Scout leader, a cop, a teacher and a monk. Now, he is a new priest of the Roman Catholic Church, a latecomer to a vocation that young men are spurning. He lives with his frail mother in

the former convent of Our Lady of the Lake parish in Prudenville, on the shores of Houghton Lake. There are the only black faces he's seen in this town of 1,700 people, which swells each summer with holiday makers. But oh! is he welcomed. "Fervour," says Gary Miesel, a lay leader of the parish council. "That's the word for him."

Ordained at 60, Father Tony is perhaps emblematic of the future of the Catholic priesthood. He comes to it with plenty of mistakes and lessons under his belt. He brings to it the enthusiasm of a newcomer and the wisdom of a mature man torn, patched and remade, like a child's favourite stuffed animal.

"I've learned one thing," he tells anyone who asks. "It's a lot more work being a priest than a single parent. This family is a lot bigger."

Although he dreamed of being a priest as a boy, Tony Cureton says he spent most of his life running from a real relationship with Jesus.

His parents divorced when he was 3. His mother enrolled him at 6 in a Catholic school in Indianapolis, upon a friend's advice, and he took to the priests as surrogate fathers. They paid special attention to him, he says, because with ADHD (only recently diagnosed) he was curious and thoughtful, but fidgety and distractible.

Raised a Southern Baptist, his mother converted to Catholicism, telling her son, "I know you'll come home from school with questions."

Businessmen in the parish paid to send him to a high school seminary in the Catskill Mountains of New York. Five years

later, he said, “the world got hold of me and I got hold of the world.”

He dropped out of the seminary and worked for a time as a cop in Ft. Wayne, delivering a baby boy in the back of a cop car, and using his gun just once, to kill a dog about to attack his partner.

At 22 he married his pregnant girlfriend. It was a marriage that lasted just three years. He took full custody of his two young daughters and moved to California to start a new life near his grandmother and in a state where, at the time, college tuition was free.

Working full-time, parenting full-time and studying full-time cast him at times into despair, but during one funk he realized a comforting truth he repeats to himself even today: “Life is a school.”

Always a thinker “sleep is a necessary evil” Tony cast about for a spiritual grounding, studying metaphysics and even working with a guru.

Dropping in and out of school, he finally got a bachelor’s degree in psychology and began teaching in Los Angeles public schools, mostly fourth- and fifth years

He loved that work, he says now, “because it’s easiest to see Jesus in the eyes of a child.”

During a train trip around the U.S., he returned to the Catskills and the seminary of his youth. “The chapel drew me like a magnet,” he recalls. On his knees at the altar, he wept with a sense of homecoming and felt an overwhelming urge he can only describe as a longing for “more,” for a way to serve God, again.



Fr Tony at his ordination to the priesthood

Annual Vigil for Vocations

Postponed

The Vigil for Vocations was established by Glasgow Serra in Scotland in 1989 and adopted as an external program for Vocations promotion by the Board of Serra International in 2000. Since that time the Vigil has extended into Countries and Continents from Africa, America North and South, Asia, Australia and Europe. In that time, we have seen expansion not only in countries but also in the number of parishes participating. An estimate from a survey in 2002 indicated approximately 2000 parishes worldwide, a great achievement! In the subsequent years we know this number

has increased. In the years ahead Serra would hope that every club and country where Serra exists encourages more and more parishes to enjoy this form of Vocations promotion.

For the last 28 years the Vigil has become a method of bringing importance to the Holy Father’s message delivered on Good Shepherd Sunday, Vocations Sunday, which occurs on the fourth Sunday of Easter. This year The Holy father’s theme “Led by the spirit for Mission” emphasises the need for the whole community to be involved in prayer to ask the Lord to send workers to His harvest.

Each year members of local Serra clubs meet with their chaplains, vocation directors, and vocations and youth commissions to prepare suitable programs and support initiatives for the vigils. Hosting the vigils has principally been at the parish level but involvement in the Serra club, with seminaries, religious orders, deaneries, dioceses, schools, colleges and universities increases the awareness and participation in the event.

The vigils are normally held on the Thursday or Friday night prior to Good Shepherd Sunday thus laying emphasis and creating more awareness of the need to provide more labourers for the Lord’s harvest. The time span of the vigil will vary from venue to venue but is normally from 7pm until 10 or 11pm, but in some more energetic parishes extends throughout the night until early morning. The content of the program also varies with simple liturgies and silent prayer to a more highly active program with speakers and a variety of vocational promotion events throughout the night. The common factor in all the Vigils is the beginning with the celebration of the Eucharist. Since November 2004 “Adoration for Vocations” instigated by John Paul II during the Year of the Eucharist is playing a more important part of the Vigil with one hour being dedicated to prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

It must be remembered that the growing importance of this event in the Serran calendar must always reflect The Holy Fathers intentions and be treated with the reverence and dignity of a liturgical service. The ultimate reason being to promote awareness and need for increased vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. The message and sense of awareness must reach the home, the school, the parish, and the workplace. We must make aware that divine call; our Lord will do the rest.

In the Holy Father’s address of this year we finally turn to Mary to intercede and open hearts to the Lord’s call, help us through with that same joy in setting out, like her, to proclaim him to the whole world.

Postponed to a later date

This year in 2020 our vigils will take place on the Thursday or Friday night prior to the Holy father’s message for vocations on Good Shepherd Sunday, Vocations Sunday 3rd May

57th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, Sunday May 3rd, 2020.

The Holy Father's message for 2020 is not yet available

Dear friends, it is not always easy to discern our vocation and to steer our life in the right direction. For this reason, there needs to be a renewed commitment on the part of the whole Church – priests, religious, pastoral workers and educators, to provide young people with opportunities for listening and discernment. There is a need for a youth ministry and a vocational promotion that can open the way to discovering God's plan, above all through prayer, meditation on God's word, eucharistic adoration and spiritual accompaniment.

GO NOW TO THE WORLD ENCOURAGED AND ACCOMPANIED BAPTIZED AND SENT

Now go into the world.
Have courage and trust!
You were baptized with the water of Life
and fortified with the Saviour's Christm.

Act in your daily life,
because there is your life and your mission.
Perhaps it is inconspicuous and small,
but precious before God and for men.

Dare to go into the unknown
when he calls you, then go!
Until the end of creation and beyond.
Where you will be useful, stop.

Jesus himself sent you.
Be on the way in his Name.
Come on, go, don't be afraid.
Trust in Him because He trusts you.

May his blessing come before you and be with you!
Receive it in the Name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Go and bring peace. Amen.

"I often think that prayer—the unum necessarium—is the one aspect of vocations work which we tend to forget or to undervalue." Pope Benedict



May the month of Our lady

This Catholic custom of dedicating the month of May to the Blessed Virgin arose at the end of the 13th century. In this way, the Church was able to Christianise the secular feasts which were to take place at that time. In the 16th century, books appeared and fostered this devotion.



The month of May is the "month which the piety of the faithful has especially dedicated to Our Blessed Lady," and it is the occasion for a "moving tribute of faith and love which Catholics in every part of the world pay tribute to the Queen of Heaven. During this month Christians, both in church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts an especially fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration. In this month, too, the benefits of God's mercy come down to us from her throne in greater abundance"

(Paul VI: Encyclical on the [Month of May](#)).

The Rosary

Also called the Psalter of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Rosary is one of the most excellent prayers to the Mother of God. Thus, "the Roman Pontiffs have repeatedly exhorted the faithful to the frequent recitation of this biblically inspired prayer which is centered on contemplation of the salvific events of Christ's life, and their close association with the Virgin Mother."

"Rosary for Vocations"

On the last Saturday of every month, you are invited to join the world in a recitation of the Rosary for vocations.

The Serra International Rosary continues in 2020; on Saturdays, Mar 28th, April 25th, May 30th, and from New Orleans, June 27th, at 2.00pm. GMT thereafter the last Saturday of every month. Join us free at :

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

Use Access Code: 314-315-91. Just follow the link.



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

Consider, Praying the Rosary with the intercession after each decade.

Mary. Mother of vocations. Pray for us.

and finish with: Our Serran prayers for vocations [here](#)



Thank you! Fr Ross Campbell, chaplain to Glasgow Serra.

Great quote: I'm very fond of the rosary. It has great meaning in my life. I've become known as "The Rosary Dispenser" because I leave rosaries wherever I go. All the vehicles that everyone in my family drives have a blessed rosary on the rearview mirror. Our tour bus has one as well. I wouldn't leave home without it

Martin Sheen

A sense of humour is a gift from God. Laughter unites us. Funny things help us get through the difficulties of life. Without humour this would be a lot harder.

John Prays to win the lottery

Like so many of us, John was having to do some fancy footwork to make ends meet. Tax time was coming up. His kids were in college. He had a mountain of bills. His wife had a root canal scheduled for next week. Oh, and the mortgage!

He went to church, made the Sign of the Cross, knelt before the altar, and prayed.

"Lord, I'm having a rough time with money right now. Please let me win the lottery."

That week the numbers were drawn. John did not win. The jackpot went up.

He went back to church, knelt, made the Sign of the Cross, clasped his hands together, and said, "Lord, I could really, really use your help. Please let me win the lottery."

That week, the numbers were drawn, and John still came up empty-handed. The jackpot went up again.

For a third time, he went back to church, knelt, made the Sign of the Cross, clasped his hands together, squeezed his eyes shut, and prayed. "Lord, the creditors are on my tail. I'm desperate. Please, PLEASE let me win the lottery."

That week, the numbers were drawn, and for a third time, John did not win. The jackpot went up into the hundreds of millions.

John stomped into church, knelt, made the Sign of the Cross, clasped his hands together, squeezed his eyes shut, gritted his teeth together, and sighed. "What the heck, Lord?"

A booming voice came down from the sunlit dome of the Church. **"John. BUY A TICKET."**

Does your parish have "Adoration for Vocations"



Browse through the [resources page](#) on our website, to help you focus on vocations during that special time with Our Lord. Download and print off for your own or your parish use.

Encourage prayer for vocations. Let us pray

for all men and women who are contemplating their future work and lives. May they consider Our Lord's call in their lives.



"Out of the darkness of my life, so much frustrated, I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: The Blessed Sacrament ... There you will find romance, glory, honour, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves upon earth."

----- *J.R.R. Tolkien*

The Serra GB Conference 2020

Join us 9th-11th October

at The Lancashire Manor Hotel, Wigan

The venue is confirmed and Bishop Mark Davies of the Diocese of Shrewsbury will join, speak to us and celebrate Mass for us on the Saturday.

Preparations are well underway. Watch this space!



The Lancashire Manor Hotel

If you have a friend that is interested in the work of Serra, consider forwarding our email newsletter or invite him or her to visit our website. Better still extend an invitation to join you as a guest at one of our club meetings listed below.

Serra needs your help. Contact us!

SERRA'S 78TH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
New Orleans, LA, USA
Thursday, June 25, - June 28, 2020



IMAGINE MEETING IN A CITY WHERE CULTURES COLLIDE IN A BRILLIANT EXPLOSION OF FLAVOURS, EMOTIONS AND SOUNDS. IT IS NEARLY 300 YEARS IN THE MAKING IT IS THE PERFECT DESTINATION

New Orleans is the birthplace of jazz, home to Creole cuisine and rich with history and unmatched southern hospitality. Our hotel, the Westin New Orleans, sits atop the luxe restaurants and shops at Canal Place, overlooking the mighty Mississippi River and is walking distance to the famous French Quarter and Bourbon Street.

New Orleans is truly a place like no other. Just as Serra enjoys a rich international membership, find diversity in New Orleans' unique blend of French, Spanish, Caribbean and African cultural influences. With more than 1,400 restaurants, the city offers one of the most inconceivable – and incredibly diverse – concentrations of incomparable dining and unforgettable cuisine in the world. The city's restaurants, attractions, tours, accommodations and event venues are within walking distance of each other, it's easy to get around the "Big Easy"

Come enjoy the charm of New Orleans, all while attending Serra's 78th International Convention in the Crescent City, Sportsman's Paradise...the Big Easy.

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Due to the current Coronavirus crisis some clubs of Serra Great Britain are not meeting.

You can still contact us by e mail 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

We meet 1st Tuesdays of the month 2pm at Our Lady's Parish Centre, Davyhulme Rd, Manchester. M41 7DS

email; serramanchester@gmail.com tel; 01625 477215

North Cheshire

We meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays of month 2.00 pm at Christ Church, Heald Green, Cheadle, Cheshire. SK83Dye

email; serra.northcheshire@outlook.com tel; 01625477215 3876

South Lancs

For further information on Serra club of South Lancs email; secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk

or phone: 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 St Joseph's convent, Lawside Rd, Dundee DD36XY.

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

Glasgow

We meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays, August to June at 7.30pm 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: 01505 321005

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



