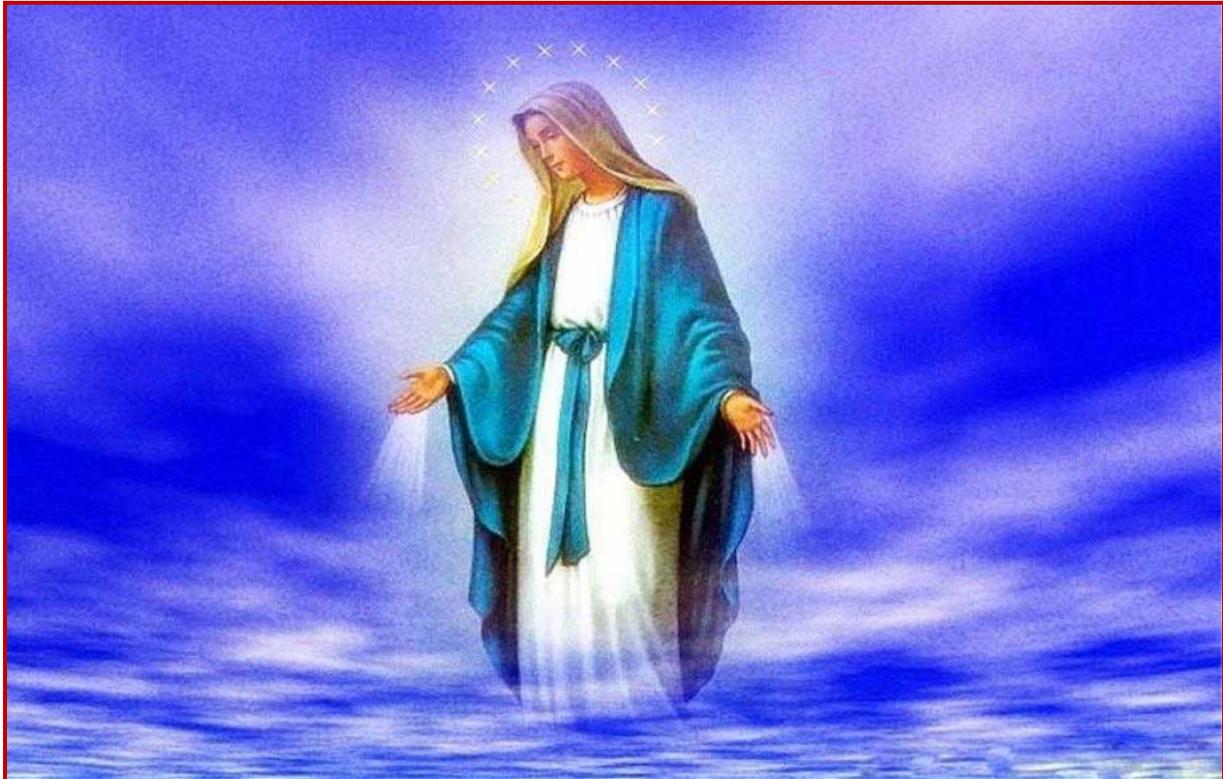




Serra GB

focus

August 2019



“Mary. Mother of vocations. Pray for us.”

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 on our apostolate visit: www.Serragb.org.uk

August the month of Our Lady

If asked to list Marian feast days in August, most Catholics would respond with “the Assumption.” If asked what other Marian feast days are in August, most Catholics would go blank. That is probably because the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a holy day of obligation in most parts of the world, and so our attention is drawn to it because we require to go to Mass that day. But there are other feast days of Mary throughout the month that we don’t want to overlook.

Special days honouring Mary have been part of Catholic Tradition since the end of the first century.

Aug. 2 Our Lady of the Angels

On this day we commemorate the dedication of the church of Portuincula (little portion of land), near Assisi, Italy. During St. Francis’ life, there stood at this place a small ancient church that dated back to the sixth century. St. Francis loved this church because it was there that he recognized his vocation. This was the saint that inspired our St Junipero Serra

Aug. 5 Our Lady of the Snows

This day marks the Dedication of St. Mary Major Basilica in Rome, also known as Our Lady of the Snows.

Aug. 13 Our Lady, Refuge of Sinners

This feast dates back to the time of St. Germanus of Constantinople in the eighth century.

Aug. 15 The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

As far back as the fifth century, the Church in Jerusalem celebrated a feast of Mary on Aug. 15, which became known in the Eastern Church as “the day on which Holy Mary expired.” In the seventh century it was introduced to the Western Church as the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Aug. 22 Queenship of Mary

Pope Pius XII decreed and instituted the feast of the Queenship of Mary on Oct. 11, 1954, in his encyclical, *Ad Caeli Reginam* (“To the Queen of Heaven”).

For a fuller explanation of these feast days click [here](#):

Consider, Praying the Rosary with the intercession after each decade. Mary. Mother of vocations. Pray for us.

Prayer for vocations.

O loving Father, we gather in your holy presence with Mary at our side asking you to give us the courage and strength to constantly say, “Yes” as Mary did to follow in your footsteps. May we be as open to your call and invitation as Mary was when she said “I am the Lord’s servant, let it be done to me according to His will.”

Special feature from Mexico



Once again, our 2019 Serra International convention was a great success having taken place in Mexico City, delegates were treated to typical Mexican hospitality and joined in celebrations of the eucharist among other family members of the Serra community together with speakers of international renown

Serrans from across the world were honoured and indeed privileged to visit the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, as a special highlight of our convention program, most outside the Americas were not familiar with our Lady of Gaudalupe. A special feature in this issue of Focus GB tells the story.

Congratulations!

Dr. Ruben Gallegos, President, Serra International 2019. Dr. Ruben Gallegos worked in the agricultural fields of Texas, California, and Colorado. He joined the Serra Club of Brownsville, Texas, in 1993 and served as Club President, District Governor, Regional Director, Board Member of Serra's National Council for the United States and Serra International. Keeping him in our prayers, we wish him a successful year.

Our Man in Mexico



At each Serra International Convention, Councils from around the world have the opportunity to make a presentation of their work and status in that country. This

year Chris Kelly an executive of the Serra Great Britain Council gave a report on the work we do.

Serra in Great Britain is one of the smaller councils in the Serra world having only three districts North of England, South of England and Scotland.

Chris pointed out that certainly we could do with more members but considering our smaller numbers we are highly active.

That said, our eight Serra clubs throughout Great Britain, have vibrant programmes some with guest speakers speaking on topics which are relevant to our call to holiness and others which are biblical studies on church documents or aspects of the liturgy which give us that understanding and knowledge to further our development of faith or call to holiness.

Our external programmes are many and varied all designed to encourage God's people to praying and attracting our laity towards that divine call to priesthood or consecrated life.

They include our; Schools vocations events, giving senior students the opportunity to discuss and discern religious vocations.

Our Vigils for vocations at the time of the Holy Father's message for vocations (started in Scotland in 1989 and never missed since) specifically held around the time of the Holy Father's message for Vocations Sunday and frequently held during the year now almost a monthly event throughout our districts.

Vocations themed "Eucharistic celebrations" in parishes, schools and universities. We use the Sparks resources, Adoration for vocations with Rosaries for vocations particularly after morning masses and of course the monthly SI Rosary call. 31 clubs, Holy Hours with "Eucharistic Adoration for Vocations" promoted by St John Paul in 2004 with Archbishop Chaput's intercessions. All of the above programmes designed to create a culture of vocations.

Our new focus newsletter which started only two and a half years ago in conjunction with our new web site has increased in circulation by some 400%. Our web site <http://www.serragreatbritain.org.uk> according to Google analytics shows a steady increase in hits each month usually coinciding with the distribution of the bi-monthly edition of focus.

We may be small but highly active and God willing highly effective in our apostolic mission.....Chris

Serrans, honoured and privileged to visit the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe during our international convention in Mexico City.

Here in Great Britain and throughout Europe we will be very familiar with our Lady of Lourdes or Fatima and indeed others in our country. However, in the Americas

we hear of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of the Americas who has an immense devotion by almost half the world population of Catholics from those countries of the American continent.

It started in 1531 with a convert to Christianity, a poor Aztec native man by the name of Juan Diego. Juan was 57 years old.



While walking through the Tepayac hills in central

Mexico going to to mass on a cold December morning,

Juan encountered a beautiful lady encircled by radiant light. Speaking in his native language the lady identified herself.

"My dear little son, I love you. I desire you to know

who I am. I am the ever-virgin Mary, Mother of the

true God who gives life and maintains its existence. He

created all things. He is in all places. He is Lord of Heaven

and Earth. I desire a church in this place where your people may experience my compassion. All those who

sincerely ask my help in their work and in their sorrows will know my Mother's Heart in this place. Here I will see

their tears; I will console them, and they will be at peace. Juan was instructed to go to Tenochtitlan and tell the

Bishop all that you have seen and heard."

Juan responded to Our Lady's request going immediately to the Bishop's house and requesting to meet with the Bishop. The Bishop Juan Zumarraga reluctantly received this native peasant saying that he would consider the lady's request and suggested that he may call him again.

Juan returned to hill where he first met Our Lady and found Her there waiting for him. Juan felt unworthy and asked that she send someone else, she responded:

"My little son, there are many I could send. But you are the one I have chosen." She then told him to return the

next day to the bishop and repeat the request. On Sunday, after again waiting for hours, Juan met with the bishop

who, on re-hearing his story, asked him to ask the Lady to provide a sign as a proof of who she was. Juan again

returned to the hill and told Mary, who was again waiting for him there, of the bishop's request. Mary responded:

"My little son, am I not your Mother? Do not fear. The Bishop shall have his sign. Come back to this place

tomorrow. Only peace, my little son."

Unfortunately, Juan was not able to return to the hill the next day. His uncle had become mortally ill and Juan

stayed with him to care for him. After two days, with his uncle near death, Juan left his side to find a priest. Juan

had to pass Tepayac Hill to get to the priest. As he was passing, he found Mary waiting for him. She spoke:

"Do not be distressed, my littlest son. Am I not here with you who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Your uncle will not die at this time. There is no reason for you to engage a priest, for his health is restored at this moment. He is quite well. Go to the top of the hill and cut the flowers that are growing there. Bring them then to me."

While it was freezing on the hillside, Juan obeyed Mary's instructions and went to the top of the hill where he found a full bloom of Castilian roses. Removing his tilma, a poncho-like cape made of cactus fibre, he cut the roses and carried them back to Mary. She rearranged the roses and told him:

"My little son, this is the sign I am sending to the Bishop. Tell him that with this sign I request his greatest efforts to complete the church I desire in this place. Show these flowers to no one else but the Bishop. You are my trusted ambassador. This time the Bishop will believe all you tell him."

At the Bishop's house Juan once again came before the bishop and several of his advisors. He told the bishop his story and opened the tilma letting the flowers fall out. But it wasn't the beautiful roses that caused the bishop and his advisors to fall to their knees; for there, on the tilma, was a picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary precisely as Juan had described her.

The next day, after showing the tilma at the Cathedral, Juan took the bishop to the spot where he first met Mary. He then returned to his village where he met his uncle who was completely cured. His uncle told him he had met a young woman, surrounded by a soft light, who told him that she had just sent his nephew to Tenochtitlan with a picture of herself. She told his uncle: "Call me and call my image Santa Maria de Guadalupe".

Within six years of this apparition, six million Aztecs had converted to Catholicism. The tilma shows Mary as the God-bearer - she is pregnant with her Divine Son. Since the time the tilma was first impressed with a picture of the Mother of God, it has been subject to a variety of environmental hazards including smoke from fires and candles, water from floods and torrential downpours and, in 1921, a bomb which was planted by anti-clerical forces on an altar under it. There was also a cast-iron cross next to the tilma and when the bomb exploded, the cross was twisted out of shape, the marble altar rail was heavily damaged and the tilma, despite the damage that occurred to a large part of the altar structure was untouched.

In 1977, the tilma was examined using infrared photography and digital enhancement techniques. Unlike any painting, the tilma shows no sketching or any sign of outline drawn to permit an artist to produce a painting. Further, the very method used to create the image is still

unknown. The image is inexplicable in its longevity and method of production. It can be seen today in the basilica built to house up to ten thousand worshipers. It is, by far, the most popular religious pilgrimage site in the Western Hemisphere. Juan Diego was beatified in 1990 and canonized in 2002.



The eyes of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe are one of the great enigmas of science, according to a Peruvian engineer José Tonsmann, who has extensively studied this "mystery." The reflection transmitted through the eyes of the Virgin of Guadalupe is thought to be the scene in which Juan Diego brought the flowers given him by Our Lady as a sign to the Bishop on December 9, 1531.

Reflecting on the Rosary to Our Blessed Lady.

"The Rosary is a prayer that always accompanies me; it is also the prayer of the ordinary people and the saints... it is a prayer from my heart... "I would like to emphasize the beauty of a simple contemplative prayer, accessible to all, great and small, the educated and those with little education. It is the prayer of the Holy Rosary. In the Rosary we turn to the Virgin Mary so that she may guide us to an ever-closer union with her Son... to have his sentiments and to behave like him. "The Rosary is an effective means for opening ourselves to God, for it helps us to overcome egotism and to bring peace to hearts, in the family, in society and in the world." *Pope Francis*

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

"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 Rosary continues; on Saturdays, July 27th, August 31st, Sept 28th, Oct 26th, Nov 30th, Dec 28th at 2.00pm. GMT then 2020 each month ending.

Join us free at:

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

Use Access Code: 314-315-91

56th World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2019

Although past it is worth reminding us of the Holy Father's thoughts for vocations.

*"The courage to take a risk for God's promise"
Focusing on the fruitful experience of the Synod devoted to young people last October*

"And yet, there can be no greater joy than to risk one's life for the Lord! I would like to say this especially to you, the young. Do not be deaf to the Lord's call. If he calls you to follow this path, do not pull your oars into the boat, but trust him. Do not yield to fear, which paralyzes us before the great heights to which the Lord points us. Always remember that to those who leave their nets and boat behind, and follow him, the Lord promises the joy of a new life that can fill our hearts and enliven our journey"
The Holy Father's message : [here](#)



Glasgow Serra meet twice monthly at the Mill Hill Missionaries in Glasgow. Our last meeting in June was cancelled for very good reason. On that night, a particularly splendid occasion, we were invited to join with two of our priests.

Fr Bill Tollan (left) and Fr Hugh O'Donnell celebrated the sixtieth and fiftieth anniversaries of their ordination respectively.

Over many years the Mill Hill Missionaries have hosted our meetings providing us with Mass, refreshment and indeed Fr Bill has given us talks on many subjects.

Fr Bernard Fox provincial, whose image appears on our latest exhibition poster gave the homily reflecting on the many achievements of our two Glasgow born missionaries, their lives in Africa, the building of seminaries and indeed training priests of the society. We congratulate them and wish them continued good health to continue on the path which each of them had set out with such joy.

"persevere to the end along the way of love".



**Glasgow Serra exhibition banner which can be reproduced for all Serra GB clubs
courtesy Serra UK foundation**

Serra needs your help!

You, by joining Serra can assist in a more formal way of attracting vocations.

You can join us at our masses for vocations.

You can be involved in the many events we promote to assist our bishops and vocations directors.

You can further develop your faith by being involved in discussions and listening to talks on faith subjects.

You can become a friend of those who are likeminded in the propagation of our faith.

You, most importantly, can join us in prayer for vocations. Contact us through our [website](#) or listings at the end of this newsletter.

Don't just sit there, You can join us.

Serra GB National conference 2019
4th (feast day of St Francis) - 6th October

"SERRA AND VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT"

Fr Eamonn Mulcahy C.S.Sp. will be our keynote speaker and lead presenter guiding us through the apostolic exhortation "Christus Vivit" written in response to the Fifteenth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, on young people, faith and vocational discernment.



Fr. Eamonn is a Spiritan Father also known as the Holy Ghost Fathers. Originally from Manchester, Fr Eamonn was ordained in 1980 and has extensive missionary experience, working with young adults, teaching theology and giving

retreats. From 2006-2013 Fr. Eamonn lectured in Systematic Theology at Tangaza University College, Nairobi, Kenya and was heavily involved in education projects in the infamous slum of Kibera. Fr Eamonn is currently a Parish Priest in Manchester and was recently appointed Episcopal Vicar for Religious in his home diocese of Salford. Fr. Eamonn gives weekly lectures at the Inter-Diocesan Seminary at Oscott College

The Serra GB conference is an opportunity to learn more about our faith from speakers sharing their experiences either religious or lay persons especially those which demonstrate Christian principles. It is a time to enjoy our speakers, liturgical celebrations with our friends and renew friendships.

Booking forms are now available from your local Serra Clubs!



Join us at The Lancashire Manor Hotel, Wigan.

Contact information for the clubs of
Serra Great Britain

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.e

mail; 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; 0161 928 2029

North Cheshire

We meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays of month 7.30pm at Christ Church, Heald Green, Cheadle, Cheshire. SK83Dye email; serra.northcheshire@outlook.com tel; 0161 442 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 Fridays, 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.



////////////////////