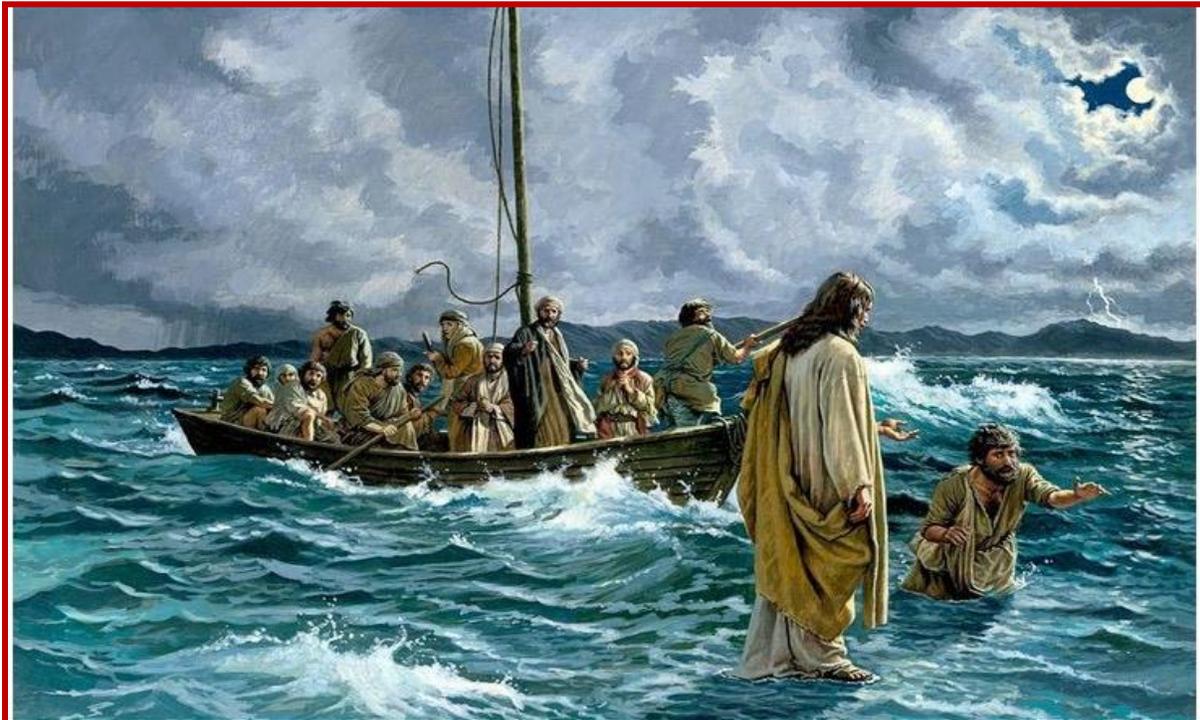




# *Serra GB*

## *focus*

### *August 2020*



***“Then he made the disciples get into the boat”. (Matthew 14:22)***

**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](mailto: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.u](http://www.serragb.org.u)***

## The virus



As we escape from the confines of this virus and the possibility of being recaptured, we give thanks that we are now able to cautiously return to our churches and the celebration of the Eucharist. We much appreciate and rejoice, after the denial of our right to partake of the Body and Blood of our Lord.

We can now celebrate Mass together having been denied that opportunity for many months. We must however understand the importance of protecting the health of our fellow parishioners, our families and the people in our society by following the strict guidelines regarding social distancing and hygiene laid down by our dioceses and respective governments. Do not risk infecting each other and returning to that viral place. The health and safety of the lives around us are sacred to each individual.

I was asked recently by my parish priest about the positives which came from this virus. A difficult question in the circumstances. The past few months have been a time of engaging and enacting a time of prayer through social media and technology for which we are grateful. Technology has proved to be a blessing allowing us to reach out to those in need, to our friends and relatives making it a little easier to exist in that time of lockdown and loneliness. From a Serran perspective our website has seen a surge of activity particularly on the resources page which gives access to prayer. My old parish priest now deceased once said “It takes a great crisis in our lives for people to return to faith, for people return to prayer” That was around the time of 9/11. I know of a few who are now booking online to return to mass. He may well have been right.

We have seen the milk of human kindness and compassion from many people from all walks of life. We will be more vigorous in the way we reach out to those in need. Despite the many sorrows, we can thank our Lord for the graces we have received.

Our churches throughout the UK are opening at different stages and the indications are positive. Our parishioners are glad to be back. We are slowly returning to the sacraments which give us our faith and our way of life, the celebration of the Eucharist lying at the centre of our faith is ours once more.

### Rejoice and be glad!



## Being a diocesan or missionary priest.



At ordination, priests are not simply being inducted into a society or graduating from college. They are given the gift of the Holy Spirit, a sacred power that flows from Christ.

Through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, they are ordained as “another Christ” Priests are changed upon ordination who, acting in the person of Christ, enables and gives life to their priestly ministry offering sacrifice, forgiving sins, bless, preach, guide, and leading people to God.

In their ministry, diocesan or missionary they strive to bring Jesus to the people and the people to Jesus. Priests pray with, and for, the people of God. They celebrate Mass, preach the Gospel and offer the sacrifice of the Eucharist. They administer the sacraments, visit the sick, and bury the dead. They are teachers, counsellors, evangelizers and defenders, who stand with the people in good times and bad, from birth to death.

In a way, the ministry of a priest is simple: meeting the spiritual needs of the people they serve. Often in seminary the men will say that they are learning, “to be all things to all people,” and while this can never be completely accomplished, it captures the essence of the diverse forms of ministry. Wherever God’s people are, priests are called to go there, and to guide God’s people home.

A common concern of men considering the priesthood is that they are not holy enough. No priest is perfectly sinless, but because it is Jesus who is the source of what they do, they don’t have to be. God uses His priests to serve His people in a special way, and in so doing the priests themselves will grow closer to Christ as well.



## A Cardinal past

Each year Serra International board members from around the world meet in Rome to engage with the “Pontifical work for vocations” a department under the prefecture of the Congregation for the Clergy and His Eminence, Beniamino Cardinal Stella. Serra International is aggregated to this congregation.



**My reason for writing on this occasion is to pay tribute to Emeritus Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski who was prefect to the Congregation for Education and the “Pontifical work for Vocations” which came under his jurisdiction from 1999 until 2013 when Pope Benedict changed the responsibility to that of the Congregation for the Clergy.**

Emeritus Cardinal Grocholewski died at the age of 80 on 17<sup>th</sup> July, Pope Francis expressing his sorrow and offering his condolences following his death. The cardinal’s funeral took place in St. Peter’s Basilica on 18<sup>th</sup> July. Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, vice dean of the College of Cardinals, offered the Mass, after which Pope Francis presided over the rite of final commendation and farewell.

The Cardinal was professor of Canon Law at the Pontifical Gregorian and Lateran Universities, Rome and also as the author of numerous academic publications,” the late Cardinal devoted himself generously to the service of the Holy See, first as Secretary and Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, made Cardinal in 2001 and then as Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education which he led up until the retirement of Benedict XVI. Pope Francis noted “In these areas he bore witness to priestly zeal, fidelity to the Gospel and to building up the Church” He participated in the conclaves of 2005 and 2013, elected Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis respectively. Cardinal Grocholewski served as the Grand Chancellor of the Pontifical Gregorian University until his death.

From Serra’s point of view and that as a past president of Serra International I remember with gratitude his wisdom and advice during the many meetings we had with him both vocations business and pleasure and indeed with his then director of vocations Mons Francis Bonnici who also acted as interpreter when the Cardinal chose not to speak English.

We shared pleasant conversation over dinner and in particular his 64<sup>th</sup> birthday dinner of 11<sup>th</sup> October 2003, when we presented him with our Serra bell which he joyously rang frequently during that evening.



Being Polish I asked “How many seminarians do you have in Poland” “over 1000” was the short answer my jaws dropping comparing our very much smaller numbers in the UK. I might add that today in the UK we have several young priests from his country.

Cardinal Grocholewski participated in two major Serra events, firstly in the year 2000 when he addressed Pope John Paul II on our behalf in St Peter’s Basilica, the Holy Father who declaring Serra as “The vocations arm of the Church” and then presenting our board to the Holy Father. Again in 2005 as our keynote speaker at our International convention in Bangkok. There were many occasions when we were privileged to be in his company.

With great memories of this man, this Cardinal we offer our sincerest condolences and pray that he be honoured with a place at the side of Our lord.

May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



Alex

## Being consecrated to religious life.



Is a direct encounter with the Lord. On this earth we meet him in his Word, in his sacraments and where two or three are gathered in His name. Whatever its charism, a good community will have a good balance of these channels because Jesus is there, Jesus is here.

Lesser priorities are understood and interpreted differently by different religious families; in the light of the graces they receive. Look for the presence of the Lord and listen to the guidance of his Holy Spirit.

Theodora Hawksley, 29, was until recently a postdoctoral researcher in theology at the University of Edinburgh, but she decided to end her career as an academic and begin her training to become a nun.

She joined the Congregation of Jesus and is now living in their house in Willesden, north London, while taking the first steps towards making vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Theodora: "In one sense it is a bit like trying to explain to someone why you are marrying the person you are. You can list their qualities, but in the end, it is a relationship of love. "I don't have to worry now about practical things like making a career for myself. I'm free to go where I'm needed and meet people at the margins of life.

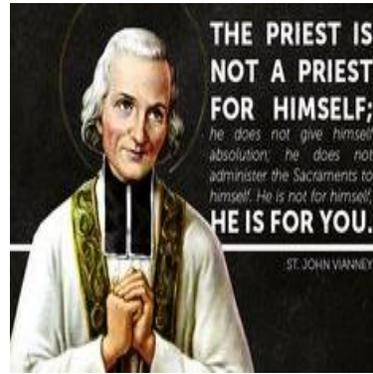
"You are not on your own. It is an unusual life choice, but you are not the only one making it. There are plenty of people asking themselves the same questions." She admitted some of her friends were a "bit bewildered" when she revealed her plans, but most have been very supportive. Most nuns choose to be active religious sisters, who have a ministry outside of the convent, working in a community in areas such as nursing or teaching. Religious sisters are often sent to live in different communities every few years, both in the UK and abroad.



**Today, Theodora's projects focus on peace building, Catholic social teaching, and arts-based approaches to conflict transformation.**

*"Let us choose the way of Jesus. It is a way that demands effort, but the way that brings peace".....Pope Francis*

## St John Vianney feast day 4<sup>th</sup> August



*Saint John Vianney, may your example of dedication to prayer and the sacraments provide an example of holiness to all parish priests so that they may embody for their parishioners the fundamental spiritual truths of our faith.*

Why say prayers for priests? As St. John Vianney, the patron saint of parish priests, said "After God, the priest is everything." He also once referred to the priest as the steward of the good God, and the distributor of His wealth.

### Prayer for Our Holy Father

God, Our Father, we ask You to look with mercy and love on the Supreme Shepherd You have chosen for us. Give him health and strength to guide and govern Your holy people. May he, through word and example, direct, sustain and encourage the people in his care, so that with them he may share everlasting life. Lord Jesus, hear our prayer through the intercession of Saint Junípero Serra. Amen.

### Prayer for our priests

Heavenly Father, grant that our priests be strengthened and healed by the Eucharist they celebrate. May the words they proclaim give them courage and wisdom. We pray that all those whom they seek to serve may see in them the love and care of Jesus our Eternal High Priest, who is Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

Mary, Mother of The Church, look tenderly upon your sons, our priests.

St Joseph, patron of the Universal Church. Pray for us.

### Prayer for those in consecrated life.

Heavenly Father, grant that those who are consecrated to You by the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience may seek to live their baptismal promises more intensely and have the grace to persevere in the commitment to their vocation and serve with open hearts and willing spirits. Mary, Mother of the Church, look tenderly upon your sons and daughters.

St Joseph, patron of the Universal Church, pray for us. Amen.

*Prayers submitted by Gloria Rhodes, Manchester Serra.*

**August is the month of the Blessed Sacrament and dedicated to The Immaculate Heart of Mary.**



We know, as Catholics, that we encounter Jesus whenever we go to Mass and experience the Consecration. When wine and bread are transformed into Body and Blood, and we receive Him, we are transformed. It grants a special grace to handle the trials of Christian living. Consecrated hosts are kept in a sacred container called a ciborium that is housed inside the tabernacle. The tabernacle is what we are to face when we genuflect at Mass. Some parishes have designated times where the prayerful contemplation called Eucharistic Adoration take place. This is a wonderful exercise for our spiritual muscle. Take a devotional, your Bible, or simply a blank notebook with a pen and sit in quiet contemplation and take notes on what comes to you as you sit and pray.

The Blessed Sacrament can teach you plenty. Since the 16th century Catholic piety has assigned entire months to special devotions. The month of August is traditionally dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The physical heart of Mary is venerated (and not adored as the Sacred Heart of Jesus is) because it is united to her person and is the seat of her love (especially for her divine Son), virtue, and inner life. Such devotion is an incentive to a similar love and virtue.

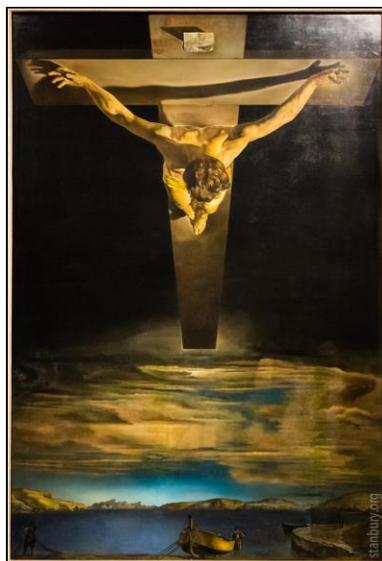
This devotion has received new emphasis in this century from the visions given to Lucy Dos Santos, oldest of the visionaries of Fatima, in her convent in Tuy, in Spain, in 1925 and 1926. In the visions Our Lady asked for the practice of the Five First Saturdays to help make amends for the offences committed against her heart by the blasphemies and ingratitude of men. The practice parallels the devotion of the Nine First Fridays in honour of the Sacred Heart. On October 31, 1942, Pope Pius XII made a solemn Act of Consecration of the Church and the whole world to the Immaculate Heart. Let us remember this devotion year-round, but particularly through the month of August. The entire month falls within the liturgical season of Ordinary Time, which is represented by the liturgical colour green.

This symbol of hope is the colour of the sprouting seed and arouses in the faithful the hope of reaping the eternal harvest of heaven, especially the hope of a glorious resurrection. It is used in the offices and Masses of Ordinary Time. The last portion of the liturgical year represents the time of our pilgrimage to heaven during which we hope for reward.

**The Exaltation of the Cross  
feast day Sept 14<sup>th</sup>**

What are we all about, rejoicing in an instrument of torture? We rejoice that something so terrible should have been transformed into a means of redemption for the whole human race.

We remind ourselves of the fact that Christianity is not an abstract and spiritual religion. It springs from God's direct intervention in the affairs of the world, a real historical, an



event involving real people and, in the end, a real execution on a real cross. We may theorise and theologise all we like; but all our theorising and theology are nothing without the history on which they are based. Take away that history, take away that Cross, and Christianity is nonsense.

*'Christ of St John of the Cross'  
Glasgow Museums Collection.*

**Whatever we do in life.**

Vocation is central to the Christian belief that God has created each person with gifts and talents oriented toward specific purposes and a way of life. In the broadest sense, as stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, (2392)

"Love is the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being (FC 11)

*A reminder that a vocation is always God's choice.  
The truth is each of us has a vocation. Each of us is chosen.  
Each of us is called.*

*A line from the Gospel of Matthew, 'You did not choose me, I chose you'*

*Each of us is called to saintliness, to holiness, to be a follower, to be Christ like. We received this vocation, this calling first in baptism. What's good to remind ourselves often of is, I am baptised, I am chosen, I am called, I am to be Christ like.*

*Not I was baptised. Not I was called. Not I was chosen.*

*I am called to try to do my best to do God's will.*

*Today, believers of all religions are uniting spiritually for a day of prayer, fasting, and works of charity, to implore God to help humanity overcome the coronavirus pandemic..... Fr Joe Mackle*

## **Serra is alive during this Covid 19 period**

What do our members do during this restricted period when we cannot meet to celebrate our club mass or even our chat and banter, our events planning or listening to our speakers?

There are many restrictions, but some members meet on Zoom, Whats app or Skype or even communicate by e mail and messenger or even frequent phone calls.

Recently, I received such a communication from my friend Gerard Humphries of our North Cheshire Serra club who communicates by e mail and Skype with members of his club.

*“As I said in my first chatter: “These chatters I write for two reasons. First, because some of you are bored stiff. Secondly, because I am somewhat bored, I am self-indulgent as I love remembering some incidents or stories. I love telling stories”.*

*Chatter now in its 16<sup>th</sup> week is partly just a bit of fun for locked-out Serrans, but very often I remind them to pray for vocations. I want them to be ready to resume Club meetings as soon as we are permitted.*

### **Chatter No16.....A True Story**

An eighteen year old boy, who was apparently a practising Catholic went to University. Away from home influence, he (as regrettably many do) stopped practicing. He decided no longer to say he was a Catholic. Part way through his first term he was studying in the library when in walked a Catholic priest.

This priest in a loud voice said: 'Any Catholics in here?' Jim, (not his real name) put his hand up and said he was. He later said that he did it without thinking.

The priest came to Jim and asked him would he help him. Apparently, there was a hospital nearby and a few very disabled patients had, on Sundays, been pushed in wheelchairs to a Church for Mass. This had been done by hospital nurses, but whether they chose to stop it or not, stopped from doing, the patients were no able to get to Sunday Mass.

The priest asked Jim would he be prepared to push a wheelchair, and could he, persuade other students to do likewise. He did so, and so got into the habit of Sunday Mass.

At the end of term, the priest offered Jim and the other helpers a thank-you holiday.

The priest hired a cottage for a week and invited the help. He obviously chatted with the boys and got to know them. Jim continued to attend mass. He is now much older, is married and has several children.

I suggest we pray sometimes for university student and Chaplains.

Elizabeth and I pray regularly for you all. God bless

### **Ancient joke**

Mother to little girl ‘Why do you want to call your Teddy ‘Gladly’? Little girl ‘because it is cross-eyed, and in church they often sing ‘gladly my cross I’d bear’

### **Another ancient joke:**

The husband told his wife that Mr Smith, his boss, was coming to dinner and that he, the boss, was rather conscious that he had lumps on his nose. He was very fond of children so little Janie had to be at the dinner. The wife made a good meal and H and W told little Janie that the boss had lumps on his nose, and that she, Janie, must not stare at him or mention lumps or noses. Boss came. Dinner went well. Janie was perfectly behaved. Mother: “Janie, run a long now, go to bed and I’ll come and tuck you in” Janie went out of the door and H and W felt so relieved. But the door opened and Janie appeared and said ‘ Good night Mr Smith but I..... Mother Run along, Janie, don’t come down again.” (desperate that Janie was going to say something about the nose.) Then when Janie disappeared and Mother turned to Mr Smith and offered him coffee” and says ‘Would you like one or 2 lumps with your nose?’

*Ps now in week 21.....Gerard Humphries, North Cheshire.*

## **Racism or bigotry**

Racism, xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination are problems prevalent in all societies. Every day, each and every one of us can stand up against prejudice and intolerant attitudes, particularly through prayer and being a good person.

Racist behaviour often results in discrimination, with its obvious negative consequences, ranging from simple neglect, or the avoidance of those believed to be different and inferior, to more explicit forms of harassment, exploitation or exclusion.

As people around the world continue to come together to protest and demand an end to racial injustices very often with the injection, by some, of violence, retaliation and thuggery which is intolerable, we pray that racism and bigotry are eliminated from our world.

Serrans in the UK and throughout the world are saddened at the indiscriminate and irrational tearing down of some statues of St Junipero Serra in California. We offer our prayers for everyone in the USA and that those perpetrators will turn to truth through knowledge, reconciliation and peace in these troubled times.

*Father of Mercy, Send forth your life-giving Spirit upon your Church and inspire us all to follow in the footsteps of St Junipero Serra to walk with boldness and courage in the ways of holiness and service. We ask this through Christ , Our Lord. Amen.*

I thought I would share with you the short but powerful video below which reflects injustice not just to people of different colour but could be all who are discriminated.

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_212039213](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_212039213)

## 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, July 25<sup>th</sup>, Aug 29<sup>th</sup>, Sept 26<sup>th</sup>, Oct 31<sup>st</sup> at 2.00pm. GMT thereafter the last Saturday of every month.*

*Join us free, use Access Code: 314-315-91. at:*

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



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.

**Finish with: Our Serran prayers for vocations**

## The Holy Father’s message for 2020 on the theme Words of Vocation



On 4 August last year, the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of the Curé of Ars, [I chose to write a letter to all those priests](#) who daily devote their lives to the service of God’s people in response to the Lord’s call. I chose four words – *pain, gratitude, encouragement and praise* The Holy father’s letter [here](#)

**“The harvest is abundant but the labourers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out labourers for his harvest”**

*Matthew 9:37-38*

## Of what use is Adoration?

To the modern mind, Adoration does not seem particularly useful, unless it is understood as some form of mindfulness. It comes as no surprise that the world might value the charitable deeds of missionaries, such as St Teresa of Calcutta, Without prayer we are not open to the Father’s love, and without divine love our charitable deeds are wrought in vain. Mother Teresa understood this clearly: all her charitable deeds flowed from and were grounded upon the Adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. What does one do during Adoration?

Adoration requires silence, requires attentiveness. In Adoration we attend to the Lord, Adoration needs receptivity. In our silence and attentiveness, we receive from God. We are stripped of the illusion that we can do God any favours. He longs to lavish Himself on us. He thirsts to be thirsted for; He longs to be longed for. He will guide us and teach us, but only if we let Him. In Adoration we receive from God the truth about God and about ourselves. The Curé d’Ars said that during Adoration, “I look at Him. And He looks at me.” It is about two people in love with each other – a creature and its God. The deeper our hunger, the more He gives us; indeed, He gives us this hunger for Him. Get to church, and let Heaven fall on you...



### 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.

### It’s just a Joke

Late one night a burglar broke into a house and while he was sneaking around he heard a voice say, "Jesús is watching you." He looked around and saw nothing. He kept on creeping and again heard, "Jesús is watching you." In a dark corner, he saw a cage with a parrot inside. The burglar asked the parrot, "Was it you who said Jesús is watching me" The parrot replied, "Yes." Relieved, the burglar asked, "What is your name?" The parrot said, "Clarence." The burglar said, "That's a stupid name for a parrot. What idiot named you Clarence?" The parrot answered, "The same idiot that named the rottweiler Jesús."

**Lord, Give me a sense of humour,  
Give me the grace to see a joke,  
To get some humour out of life,  
and pass it on to other folk.**

## The Serra GB Conference 2020

at The Lancashire Manor Hotel, Wigan has been and rescheduled at the same venue for October 2021  
Our programme of planned speakers have agreed to be with us October 2021. Bishop Mark Davies of the Diocese of Shrewsbury being our principal guest.

### The Lancashire Manor Hotel



## Serra International Convention

After careful consideration, our international convention 2020 was cancelled with the expectation that next International Convention 2021 will take place in Toronto, returning to New Orleans in 2022

This decision was not taken lightly, and we continue to monitor and work to ensure that Serra continues to fulfil its mission.



[https://www.serrainternational.org/sites/default/files/July%202020%20serran%20mag%2072\\_0.pdf](https://www.serrainternational.org/sites/default/files/July%202020%20serran%20mag%2072_0.pdf)

Do you have a friend that is interested in the work of Serra? Consider forwarding our email, our 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.

## Serra needs your help. Contact us!

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 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at the Cenacle Convent, Tithebarn Grove, Lance Lane, Liverpool L15 6TW.

email; [serra.liverpool@gmail.com](mailto:serra.liverpool@gmail.com) tel: 0151 724 6249

#### **Manchester**

We meet 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays of the month 2pm at Our Lady's Parish Centre, Davyhulme Rd, Manchester. M41 7DS  
email; [serramanchester@gmail.com](mailto:serramanchester@gmail.com) tel; 01625 477215

#### **North Cheshire**

We meet 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of month 2.00 pm at Christ Church, Heald Green, Cheadle, Cheshire. SK83Dye  
email; [serra.northcheshire@outlook.com](mailto:serra.northcheshire@outlook.com) tel; 01625477215 3876

#### **South Lancs**

For further information on Serra club of South Lancs email; [secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk](mailto:secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk)  
or phone: 0151 724 6249

### District 62

#### **South Hertfordshire.**

We meet 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto: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](mailto:serra.dunkeld@hotmail.com) tel; 01382 322920

#### **Glasgow**

We meet 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays, August to June at 7.30pm Millhill, Cardonald and University of Glasgow Chaplaincy (as programmed)  
email; [serra.glasgow@aol.com](mailto:serra.glasgow@aol.com) tel; 0141 571 8313

#### **Paisley**

For further information on Serra club of Paisley  
email; [secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk](mailto:secretary@serragreatbritain.org.uk)  
or phone: 01505 321005

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



