



Serra GB

focus

June 2019



*He summoned his disciples and picked out twelve of them; he called them 'apostles'
(Luke 6:13)*

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

The Editor

Our new or not so new [web site](#) has been running for two and a half years and the number of hits is increasing by some 20/30 hits with each issue of the **Serra GB focus** which is the main access and attraction to the web site. Equally, our circulation list for distribution of the **Serra GB focus** has increased dramatically by some 400% since February of 2017.

Considering we only distribute to our Serra membership and those interested in our work which is principally the promotion of vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life, I prefer to use the word attract. We are happy with the results. However not to be complacent with our small successes we can always do better and you as our readers and supporters can spread the good news or perhaps, I should say the gospel. Thank you!

When the web site was launched, as Vice President for communications I was asked "What do you want to achieve with the web site?" quite simple, my reply was "To attract more vocations for our church and hopefully to attract more members for Serra to enable us to reach out with our principle objective.

In writing the *focus* it is worth reiterating our objectives and our vision for the future. Our web site states quite clearly our mission namely to promote, encourage and affirm vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life of the Catholic church and to assist our members to appreciate our faith and develop that call to holiness that all Catholics should strive to attain. There is, of course always the need to increase our membership which, like all organisations today is a difficult task, thus the obligatory advertising for membership.

In compiling articles for the *focus*. The above objectives, we hope, reflect our mission. Our vision of course would be to have Serrans throughout all dioceses in Great Britain who could assist the bishops and vocations directors in fulfilling their vocations objectives in their dioceses. That is why we are here!

The bi-monthly editions consider the liturgical seasons of the church and may reflect e.g. the resurrection in relation to our priest's lives around the Easter season or Christmas edition reflecting the priest as an "Alter Christi" when Jesus is brought into this world to start his public ministry. When we come to other months, we may reflect on the importance of priesthood administering the sacraments or just the joy in being priest or religious.

We feature various vocational prayer initiatives such as "Stations for vocations" around the Lenten season or "Rosary for vocations" in the October issue, the later we encourage all year round. "Prayer moves the heart of

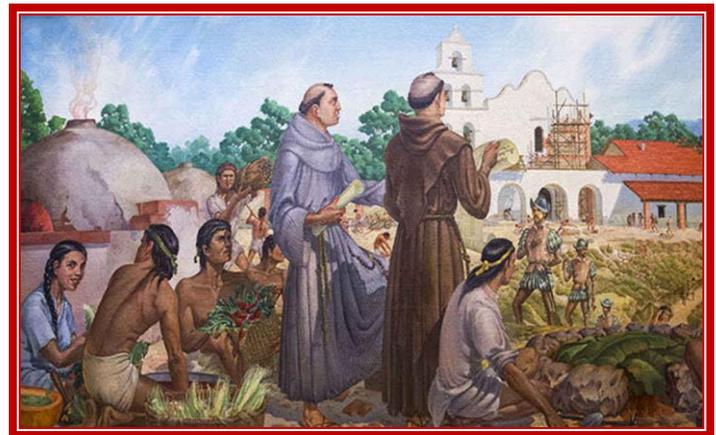
God" St Pope John Paul tells us. Prayer creates vocations. We need more prayer; we need more vocations.

At the Serra day in the Vatican, November 2000 Pope John Paul II acclaimed "*Serrans accept as their responsibility the promotion of vocations to the priesthood and religious life. They possess a deep appreciation of the ministerial priesthood as being essential to the Church. Serrans have been generous in offering their support to those who hear the call to serve Christ in the priesthood*"..... Saint John Paul II

What do we do and Who are we? is answered fully on our website. Our patron St Junipero Serra may require a little more storytelling and that I do in the next article since it is his feast day on July 1st. **Can you offer a mass for vocations through the intercession of St Junipero Serra?**

Junipero Serra; our patron saint, 1713 – 1784 Feast Day 1st July

Serra is named after Father ("Fray") Junipero Serra, the Franciscan missionary from Majorca, Spain, who played a leading part in early missionary work in Mexico and California between 1749 and 1784. After decades of prayer by Serrans and other Catholics, our patron, Father Junípero Serra was beatified in 1988 and canonized by Pope Francis in Washington, DC, on Wednesday, Sept 23rd, 2015.



Junipero Serra was the founder of California. He was the ground breaking, indestructible, priest who trekked California's mountains, valleys, deserts, and shores to establish nine of its eventual twenty-one missions. He founded Monterey and San Francisco with a High Mass, Marian procession, and canon shot from the galleons offshore. He established San Diego after a daring desert adventure. California the richest state in North America, a mix of rugged cattle ranching, luxurious orchards and vineyards, distinctive Mission architecture, and a

blending of Mexican and Native American heritage, is the legacy of Fr. Serra and his Franciscan confreres.

The Franciscan city names tell the story: San Francisco, Ventura (Saint Bonaventure), San Luis Obispo, Santa Clara, Our Lady of the Angels (Los Angeles) and on and on....

Fr. Junipero Serra was baptized as Michael Joseph on the island of Majorca, off the coast of Spain. He grew up in a poor but devoutly Catholic family. After joining the Franciscans and moving to Palma. He took the religious name of Junipero after one of Saint Francis of Assisi's first followers. Following his ordination, Fr. Junipero obtained a doctorate in philosophy (Duns Scotus) and taught the Franciscan seminarians. In the Spring of 1749, he boarded a ship, and sailed away from his native island for the very first time never to return. Our saint's life began in earnest in his middle age. His long years of intellectual, spiritual, and ascetic preparation steeled his body, mind, and will for the rigours to come.

Arriving in the port of Veracruz, Fr. Serra and one other Franciscan, among the larger group from Spain that he travelled with, decided to walk to Mexico City rather than go on horseback. Along this first of many treks, he was bitten by either a snake or a spider and developed an open wound that never healed for the rest of his life. It caused him constant pain. Fr. Serra spent the first several years of his missionary life in a mountainous region of central Mexico, among an indigenous population who had never had contact with Christianity. After years of faithful service as a missionary in central Mexico, he finally had his chance to move to California. It was the challenge of California that made Fr. Junipero into St Junipero.

In his mid-fifties, Fr. Serra was the head priest of a large migration of men, women, soldiers, cattle, and provisions whose goal was to settle California. This is when the California missions were founded, the vast farms and cattle ranching enterprises that doubled as lay monasteries, churches, and houses of formation that have left such an enduring mark on California. For the last fifteen years of his life, Saint Junipero Serra travels throughout California, converting the indigenous peoples, baptising and confirming them, working with them, preaching and praying with them and establishing vineyards, farming and other sources of to assist the lives of the people. He exhausts his poor, emaciated, body.

Near the end, he is recognized by all as the indispensable man. And he dies just as the United States is becoming a country on the other side of the continent. He is a priest founder, but not of a religious order. He founds a society, in all of its complexity. His accomplishment will only be appreciated decades later, when Americans come to far off California looking for gold, and are surprised to discover a vast, developed culture far more complex than their own.



The background of Our Serra International logo is the bells of the mission station which ring out calling all to the service of Our Lord.

Saint Junipero Serra, inspire us to follow your example of physical perseverance, doctrinal commitment, and spiritual discipline for the good of vocations for our Church. You were a model priest and missionary. You were a great Franciscan. May we too be great in all that we do.

Alex

[Blessed John Henry Newman,](#)



February 21st, 1801 – 11th August 1890 a theologian and poet, first an Anglican priest and later a Catholic priest and cardinal. He was an important controversial figure in the religious history of England in the 19th century

Great news!!! Pope Francis has recognised the second miracle of Cardinal Newman. His canonisation will probably take place in October making him the first British saint canonised since St John Ogilvie in 1976.

[Defining vocation:](#)

God has created me to do him some definite service. Within the Church 'vocation' is used in various ways so let's clarify those different meanings as they apply to Christian living. Everybody has a vocation and discovering that vocation is a key step on the journey of faith. The fundamental vocation is the call to be baptised or, for somebody baptised as a child, the call to affirm that baptism personally. To be baptised is to accept Christ's call to follow him in a new way of life. This is the way of holiness; it involves loving attention to the needs of others and to Christ, strengthened by the Holy Spirit and living as an active member of the Body of Christ, the Church. As a congress of church leaders put it: **"Holiness is the universal vocation of every person. It is the main road onto which converge all the little paths that are particular vocations."** The root meaning of vocation is calling and the first calling shared by all Christians is holiness as a member of the Church. Once a person takes seriously their personal call to holiness, then the other dimensions of Christian vocation are opened up. Another dimension is the state of life to which Christ calls people. **"There are four basic states of life within the Catholic Church: marriage, consecrated life, priesthood and the single state as a lay person."**

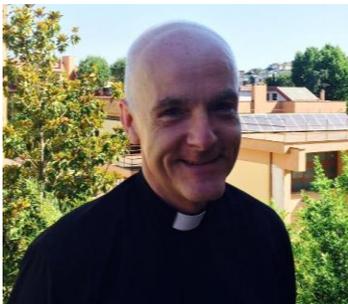
Each of these is demanding and people need help to discern which of these Christ is calling them to. The final dimension of Christian vocation is the work that people do, whether that work is being a farm worker, a chief executive or a home maker.

Vocation as applied to certain jobs is still in common use but for the Christian, any work that conforms to the law of God can be vocational not just work in the public sector of education or health: a married woman working in a factory or a layman committed to celibacy who works in the media. The work is vocational if it is carried out as an expression of the person's quest for holiness and in a way that is compatible with their state of life. So, an individual vocation is the integration of these dimensions in the life of one person. Over time, the different elements can vary; so, for example, a married person may spend some years a widow or widower. The factor that unites all these dimensions into a whole is love: **"Many people mistake our work for our vocation. Our vocation is the love of Jesus."**..... *Blessed John Henry Newman*

Vigil for Vocations

May 9th – 10th

Our Vigils for Vocations took place at various parishes throughout Great Britain and indeed internationally on the Thursday or Friday in preparation for the Holy Father's vocations message on Good Shepherd Sunday, May 12th



On May 10th, Recently ordained Fr Andrew Mc Gowan was the principal celebrant together with Parish Priest Fr Martin Kane and Fr Jim Dean at the 30th annual "Vigil for vocations" at St James the Great church in Glasgow, Scotland.



The parish of St James the Great was the founding of, what became a national and international event on the Serra calendar. The vigil was developed to coincide with the Holy Father's message for Vocations

Sunday which takes place each year on Good Shepherd Sunday the fourth Sunday of Easter.

Part of the vigil programme includes a speaker, telling the story of his or her vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life in the hope of encouraging others to respond to Our Lord's call to provide 'more labourers for his harvest'

Fr Andrew reflected on his call to serve entitled

'Every step of the way'

At 53 years old, some may have found it difficult going back to the grind of examinations but Fr Andrew said he 'always enjoyed studies and learning.'

He added: "You have to be intelligent enough to take the strain of university life and then use that intelligence to apply yourself.

"Ultimately though if you are called by God He will be there every step of the way with you and you can then use those gifts to evangelise the world."

When asked if he had to find confidence to go back to a vocational life or if it is never too late to become a priest, Fr Andrew said: "It was God's choice, in my opinion. He is the God of surprises, and He surprises us in ways we cannot imagine.

"If we reflect on the Christmas story we see the God of surprises everywhere. Whether it be in Mary the Mother of God or in St Joseph, God surprises us and then accompanies us on the journey.

Fr Andrew believes we all have a calling to make the world a better place.

He said: "If someone hears that call don't dismiss it, God will be there to guide you, God will accompany you.

"Whether it is a call to the priesthood or another vocation we all have a duty to make the world a better, richer place, to fulfil different tasks, and if we seek out Our Lord and Our Lady, they can lead us to God.

"I know I wouldn't be a priest today without God's grace entering in my life."

In seeking a vocation, he added that people should 'strive for holiness.'

"The main advice I would give anyone looking for a vocation towards the priesthood is to really strive for holiness and it is by doing that you will find God's voice within the noise of normal life. "There is no one size fits all approach for discerning a vocation but a strong prayer life and following the commandments will help you become a purer person."

Fr Andrew concluded by asking for our prayers in support of his priestly vocation.



The Vigil concluded with "Adoration for vocations" Night prayer and Benediction.

56th World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2019

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

The purpose of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations is to publicly celebrate vocations to ordained ministry and religious life in all its forms. Many parishes and religious institutes including Serra commemorate this day with prayer for vocations and vocation promotion events. “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](#)

The Rosary



“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, June 23rd from Mexico City, July 27th, August 31st, September 28th etc at 2.00pm. GMT Join us free at: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/314315981> Use Access Code: 314-315-91

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.

Liverpool

Thursday 6th June

On Thursday June 6th the Most Reverend Malcolm McMahon, OP, Archbishop of Liverpool, will celebrate Mass for deceased Serrans in the Cenacle Chapel, Lance Lane, Liverpool L15 6TW at 6-30 pm. This will be followed by a buffet and social evening. All are welcome.

An evening with Serra

It was a special evening for South Herts Serra Club when Sr. Mary Joachim attended in March. Sr. Mary Joachim, who had been a sister in the congregation of Mother Teresa, running The Mission of Hope in Ethiopia. Sr Joachim gave a most absorbing and engaging talk on her missionary work and the difficulties and dangers she faces in that area.



Sr Joachim was born in Watford in 1959 and her mother Helen was a member of the Serra club in the 80’s. She was baptised at Holy Rood RC Church and attended Holy Rood RC Primary School followed by

St Michael's Catholic High School. During her teens in Our Lady & St Michael's parish, she participated in many parish activities and became a member of the Legion of Mary, visiting patients in Leavesden Hospital. The parish priest at the time, Fr Gerard Mulvaney, played a very important figure in the development of her vocation and in 1980 she joined the Missionaries of Charity – later the Congregation of Mother Theresa.

Her vocation saw her spend some 19 years in Eastern Europe and whilst in Poland was appointed Provincial Superior. Having spent six years in this appointment, she felt the need to return to carry out God's work amongst those in need and she carried out her mission in India and the Philippines where she looked after psychiatric patients living on the streets. With her ever desire to help those most in need, she felt God was asking her "to serve those no one serves, in places to which no one wishes to go".

With this calling, in 2011 she was sent to the Somali region in Ethiopia at the invitation of the local Bishop. There she met and worked together with a Missionary priest who had lived in Gode for six years and who had requested assistance in vain from various religious congregations. To assist her work Sr Joachim established the charity of The Mission of Hope. Situated in South East Ethiopia and 700km away from the nearest Catholic Church, Gode is a military town. She works with women and mothers who have been affected by HIV, illness, prostitution, war and conflicts and a lack of resources such as clean water.



In 2015, Sr Joachim started to work with these women and their children offering them opportunity to leave the world of prostitution and begin the road to recover their dignity by joining Project Tamara. This project enables the women to have their health issues dealt with and are invited to learn a skill and to have their children looked after while the mothers are in training. If you would like to share in the Mission through prayer, donations or as volunteer missionaries please contact; trustees.missionofhope@gmail.com

The 77th Serra International Convention June 19-23, 2019



One of the world's largest cities, and the most populous in North America, Mexico City offers a wide variety of attractions, activities and experiences for all visitors to its vast expanse, with great ethnic, architectural, topographical and ecological diversity. It presents a glimpse of the long and rich history of the Mexican capital, from pre-Hispanic times and the colonial era to contemporary life in a city that never ceases to surprise. [presentation](#) :

Our venue will be **The Hilton Mexico City Reforma Hotel**, modern, beautiful and offering first class services.

Mexico City is home to over 100 art galleries, dozens of theatres and concert halls, and more than 150 museums -- the largest metropolitan concentration of museums in the world! These feature important works and exhibits representing Mexican history and culture; major artists from all over the world take their place alongside these. We invite you to visit Our Lady at her shrine at the **Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe**, just over 5 miles away from the hotel. As a special highlight of our convention program, buses will take all convention attendees to Mass at the basilica on Friday, June 21. If art and history are not really your thing, enjoy shopping or dining in exclusive areas. The opportunities for safe and exciting adventure are endless in Mexico City. The Serrans of Mexico welcome you most warmly to this enchanting part of the world! Full details [here](#) .

Feast day of St Junipero Serra 1st July

The article on page 2 tells one of the stories of St Junipero Serra the patron saint of California.

Serra GB Conference 2019

4th (feast day of St Francis) - 6th October

Our conference will be held at the Lancashire Manor Hotel, Wigan. As our programme develops we can now introduce Fr Eamonn Mulcahey C.S.Sp. who will be our keynote speaker and presenter.



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.



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.**



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