

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, January 16

Noon Luncheon: Amici

Speaker: Michael Ackerman,  
Seminarian

Topic: Formation

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Friday, February 20

Noon Luncheon - Amici

Continuation of presentations on  
the topic "Formation of a Priest"

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## SERRA CLUB OF PITTSBURGH



# NEWS



JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2009

## Serra Club Christmas Party Event Enjoyed By All

On the evening of December 12, 2008 as we gathered for the Annual Serra Club Christmas Club Party, the weather outside was frightful, but approximately eighty-five stout-hearted Serrans and Guests braved the elements to make it to St. Paul Seminary for the party.

Serrans, seminarians, priests and guests ushered in the holiday season during what was described as 'one of the best Christmas parties yet.' Most Rev. Bishop William Winter, Rev. Joseph Mele, Serra Club Chaplain, and retired priests from St. John Vianney Manor joined the annual gathering to celebrate the Christmas Season in the brightly decorated Seminary dining room.



Msgr. Edward Burns, Rector of the Seminary, welcomed the group on behalf of Bishop David Zubik who was unable to attend the affair because of his commitment to celebrate Mass that evening on behalf of the Catholic Latin Community at St. Paul Cathedral. Msgr. Burns added that he was delighted to "be back home in Pittsburgh" following

his assignment with the National Council of Catholic Bishops.

Tables were laden with snacks that included hot and cold appetizers, shrimp plates, a sandwich ring, fresh fruit, cookies and cakes, salads, chips and dips all of which were consumed with a variety of wines, soft drinks, tea, and coffee. The food and drink was donated by Serrans. Members of the Seminary's kitchen staff did an outstanding job of tending to the needs of guests all evening.

The evening closed with all of the seminarians and priests present singing *Salva Regina* - a hymn traditionally sung by all of the seminarians as part of their evening prayers. Serran Nunzio Galetta photographed the event.

Ms. Terri Binkney handled the invitations and reservations. The Seminary maintenance staff provided by Ms. Mary Ironside, consisted of Ms. Joann Likavee, our kitchen helper, and two parking attendants who worked through the cold and blowing snow to provide first class valet service. All of this made it an enjoyable evening. †

The Serra Club of Pittsburgh NEWS is published bi-monthly for all active members. Newsletters are mailed to members and are available at the luncheons. Articles should be sent to the editor via e-mail at [rjgolebie@verizon.net](mailto:rjgolebie@verizon.net) or by phone at (412) 531-3670. Ideas for future articles are welcome.

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## In Our Prayers

Pray for the repose of their souls:

Joseph McCann  
Jane Tierney  
Thomas O'Shea, Sr.

Pray for the sick:

Cliff Berschneider  
Robert A. Deasy III  
Janet Pschirer

If you know a member in need of our prayers, call Ray Golebie 412-531-3670 to have them added to our prayer list. †

## Birthday Greetings

Special Activities Chair Regina Kelly continues to send birthday greetings to priests, religious and seminarians of the Diocese. The religious appreciate being remembered by Serra. †

## Board Meetings

The Board of Trustees will meet on the following Wednesdays, January 28<sup>th</sup> and February 25<sup>th</sup> at St. Paul Seminary. Board meetings begin at 5:30 PM and are open to all members. †

## November meeting Wrap Up

Our speaker at the November 21<sup>st</sup> luncheon was Msgr. Edward Burns who recently returned from his duties in Washington, D.C. as Executive Director of the Secretariat for Vocations and Priestly Formation for the US Conference of Catholic Bishops. He has been in Washington since 1999.

Msgr. Burns, now Rector of St. Paul Seminary, spoke of a new document soon to be released by the Pope that will strengthen the Seminary Program. Part of Msgr. Burn's duties were to help rewrite the Program on Formation.

In his talk, Msgr. Burns reported the following statistics: average age entering seminary is 37; Number of priests ordained yearly is 500 - 515; 75% of seminarians were altar servers; 65% were lectors or Eucharistic Ministers; and 100% were invited by priests. These statistics show that vocations are right under our noses. Seminarians all speak of having a deep level of hearing God's call. Some do not complete the program but all admit they became better men as they leave.

This year, 76 parishes have asked for Seminarians to visit and speak to their congregations. †

## Memorial Mass is a Special Tradition

Through the kindness of Father John A. Sweeney, Pastor, we were again privileged to hold our Memorial Mass and Luncheon at his beautiful Church, St. Bonaventure, Glenshaw, PA on November 7, 2008.

Father Joseph M. Mele was the celebrant of the Mass. During his homily, he praised members of the Pittsburgh Serra Club for remembering the approximately 140 members who have died since the Club's inception in 1943, especially Joseph J. McCann who died in August of this year. Fr. Mele was assisted in the mass by Jack Warwick, server, Tom Politylo, lector, and James Finn, minister of the cup. Ray and Emma Golebie were the Gift Bearers. Ms. Shari Whitico, the church organist, provided the music.

At the Mass, following Communion, Fr. Mele and John Pillar inducted five new members into the Club.

Approximately sixty members and guests including ten widows of Serrans attended the Mass and Luncheon. President John Pillar welcomed the group, especially the widows, after lunch presented each widow with a red rose, a tradition with the club. The lunch was delicious, prepared by the caterer, Audrey Burgeon, assisted by Norman McDonald, husband of Serran Mary Kay, who has graciously volunteered his services for the past seven years. †

## The Serra Scholarship Trust Fund

One of the Pittsburgh Serra Club's early members, Peter Mills, established a Scholarship Trust Fund with gifts totaling \$20,000. It was, he said, something that "offers one of the best and surely the most lasting means of fulfilling the

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first objective of our Club, the promotion of vocations to the priesthood. Because of this trust, our efforts will continue long after we are gone.”

The Club encourages Memorial Gifts to the Trust Fund at the time of death of a relative or friend. Memorial Gift cards, are available from the Club secretary. Each year, Serra member Elise Bennett sends a request to all Serrans for donations to the Trust Fund and we thank her for her fine effort.

As of the last fiscal year end, June 30, 2008, the Serra Scholarship Trust Fund, held and administered by the Diocese of Pittsburgh, had a principal balance of \$393,036. The income generated by this fund is used by the Diocese for tuition, room and board and vocation programs related to the education of men to the priesthood. The fund generated income of \$22,652 in the last fiscal year.

It has been the practice, when the Club’s annual donations reach the amount of \$10,000, a check for this amount is given to the Bishop at our annual Ordinati Dinner. This amount is then added to the Fund’s principal held and invested by the Diocese.

As of December 31, 2008, our annual donations now total \$5680. If you haven’t responded to the Club’s annual appeal and wish to do so, please make your tax deductible donation with a check payable to the Serra Scholarship Trust Fund, and mail it to the Serra Club of Pittsburgh, 2900 Noblestown Road, Pittsburgh PA 15205. **Let’s try to reach the \$10,000 goal by the next Ordinati Dinner in August 2009. †**

## Nominations for Officers 2009-10

The terms of the current office holders of the Pittsburgh Serra Club will expire in June of 2009. In addition, the terms of Trustees Gus Marasco, Clark Martin and Mary McDonald will expire in June. In accordance with the Club’s Bylaws, the Board has designated a nominating committee that will be nominating members to the various offices of the Club. If any member of the Pittsburgh Serra Club is interested in being an officer or Trustee, please contact John Pillar by telephone or e-mail (see 2007-2009 Yearbook). Even if you have just joined the Club, you may certainly accept a position as an officer or Trustee at this time. Please give the idea of serving the Pittsburgh Serra Club as an officer or Trustee serious consideration. †

## Message from Serra International

The USA Council of Serra International Executive Committee encourages Serrans throughout the USA to pray for ALL Serrans around the world who need healing.

“All USA Council of Serra International members are urged to take part in the effort to canonize Blessed Junipero Serra. We are aware that one more miracle is needed to submit to the Church body *(Continued on next page)*

“ Because of this trust, our efforts will continue long after we are gone. ”

### Quote of the Month

New friends are silver,  
but old friends are gold.  
— Unknown

## Membership

At the Memorial Mass, the following were inducted into the Pittsburgh Serra Club:

### **Nancy Ackerman**

St. Scholastica and St. Edwards  
203 Brilliant Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15215  
412-638-9017

Secretary, St. Bonaventure Parish  
2001 Mt. Royal Blvd.  
Glenshaw, PA 15116-2099  
412-486-2606  
[pensfan2002@hotmail.com](mailto:pensfan2002@hotmail.com)

### **Herman Dieckmann (Kay)**

Our Lady of Grace Parish  
1608 Cook School Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15241  
412-567-0036  
Vice President, Merrill Lynch  
180 Fort Couch Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15241  
412-854-7745  
[Herman\\_dieckmann@ml.com](mailto:Herman_dieckmann@ml.com)

### **Brian T. Hardy**

St. John & Paul Parish  
419 Fortiview Road  
Glenshaw, PA 15116  
412-486-1341  
CPA Partner Medwig & Co.  
401 Wood Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
412-562-9117  
[brian@hardycpa.com](mailto:brian@hardycpa.com)

### **John Russell (Marilyn)**

St. Bernard Parish  
855 N. Meadowcroft Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15216  
412-523-0208  
Consultant at Meridien Group  
223 4th Avenue, Suite 1700  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
[johnrussell@verizon.net](mailto:johnrussell@verizon.net)

### **Henry A. VanWassen**

St. Raphael Parish  
5700 Bunkerhill Street, Apt 807  
Pittsburgh, PA  
(Retired) 412-363-5245  
[havanwassen@verizon.net](mailto:havanwassen@verizon.net)

Call Membership Chair Connie Silvaggio at 412-366-3333 with any questions concerning a new member. †

*Serra International continued from page 3.* examining Father Serra's cause for canonization. Perhaps someone you may remember to pray for will be that miracle cure. One way to do so is to pray the Father Serra Novena for the healing of ailing Serrans. One may find the Serra Novena on the home page of the USA Council of Serra International's web site, [www.serraus.org](http://www.serraus.org). Look at the right hand column toward the bottom entry. Pray the novena and any other devotions for sick Serrans as often as possible."

We appreciate your thoughtful consideration to join us in this prayer.

Sincerely,

The USA Council of Serra International. †

## Member News

Tom Politylo's term as District Governor will end on June 30th. We are proud to announce another Pittsburgh Serra Club member, Joseph Koepfinger, will become the next District Governor. Joe has been a Serran since 1974 and served as President of the Pittsburgh Club from July of 1986 to June of 1987.

Tom is continuing his service to Serra as he becomes Regional Director on July 1, 2009. Tom has been a Serran since 2000 and served as President from July of 2001 to June 30th of 2003.

Sorry to report the death of one of our Serran widows. A funeral Mass for Jane Tierney was held at St. Winifred Church. Her husband, Walter, was President of the Pittsburgh Club in 1956-1957. Please remember Jane in your prayers.

On November 22nd, Thomas O'Shea, Sr., father of Serran Tom O'Shea died at the age of 87. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated by Father John O'Shea at Ss. Simon and Jude. Please remember Tom in your prayers.

Bob Deasy's son, Robert Deasy III, is awaiting a bone marrow transplant. Serran Bob is having trouble with his arthritic hip. He has had a few falls due to that condition. Please pray for Bob and his son.

Nunzio Galletta's wife, Ann, was in the hospital for back surgery. The operation was successful and she is recuperating at home.

The e-mail address for Dr. Roger Vega is incorrect in the Membership Booklet. Please change it to the following: [vegamd1@comcast.net](mailto:vegamd1@comcast.net). †

## Serra Websites

For easy access, put the following websites in your "Favorites" folder:

Serra Club of Pittsburgh: <http://serraclub.catholicweb.com>

District Governor: <http://Mysite.verizon.net/tjpbsp/>

The Serra Club site will carry past newsletters for your reference. The main page will list all current activities of the club. †

# Memories of the Christmas Party

“ Serrans, seminarians, priests and guests ushered in the holiday season during what was described as ‘one of the best Christmas parties yet.’ ”



Photos:  
1 - Seminarians  
2 - name, name  
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