

Serra Club of Pittsburgh



NEWS



MAY / JUNE 2009

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, May 15

Luncheon: Rico's @ noon
Speakers: Deacons Mike Zavage and Dan Langa

Saturday, May 16

Leadership Conference, St. Mary of the Assumption, 2510 Middle Road, Glenshaw, PA

Friday, June 19

Luncheon: Rico's @ noon
Speaker: Father Fred Byrne, Director of Vocations, St. Vincent College

Friday, July 17

Holy Hour at St. Thomas More, Bethel Park

Tuesday, August 25

Ordinati Dinner

August 27-29

Serra International Convention in Omaha, Nebraska

Directions to Rico's: From the South, take 279 to McKnight Road, turn left on Babcock Boulevard and take the next left onto Rico's Lane. If further directions are needed call Rico's at 412-931-1989.

Diocesan Appointment

On April 22, Bishop Zubik detailed the changes he will be implementing in the Pastoral Administration of the Diocese. In his announcement, our Chaplain, Father Joseph M. Mele, was named Co-Vicar General of the Diocese. Along with Co-Vicar General Father Robert Guay, they will assume some of the duties of the former Vicar General, Bishop Bradley. Father Mele will continue as our Chaplain as well as his other duties as Director of Spiritual Formation and Director on Post-ordination Formation.†

May and June Luncheon Meetings

The next two meetings will be held at Rico's (North Hills).

On May 15 at noon, we will have the two deacons who will be ordained in June, as our speakers. They will tell us of their calling and their experiences as they look forward to their ordination.

On June 19, Father Fred Byrne, Director of Vocations at St. Vincent College will be our speaker. Father Fred will speak on the programs in place at the college and his views on vocations.†

Officers Nominated for 2009-2011

At our May meeting we will be voting for the Serrans who were nominated for the following positions:

President	Jack Warwick
Vice-President Programs	Charles Muzik
Vice-President Membership	Brian Hardy
Vice-President Communications/Secretary	Ray Golebie
Co-Vice-Presidents Vocations/Parish Relations	Rose Vega and Sharon Capretto
Treasurer	Gregory Falvo
Trustee	Robert Gallo
Trustee	Richard Ponzio
Past-President	John Pillar

The following Pittsburgh Serra Club individuals continue their service to Serra:

District Governor	Joseph Koepfinger
Regional Director	Thomas Politylo †

In Our Prayers

Pray for the repose of their souls:

Joseph McCann
Jane Tierney
Thomas O'Shea, Sr.
Fr. Bruno Asteri
Frank Vanek

Pray for the sick:

Cliff Berschneider
Robert A. Deasy III
Janet Pschirer
George Wasson

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

Board Meetings

The Board of Trustees will meet on the following Wednesdays - May 27 and June 24 - at Immaculate Conception Church in Bloomfield for 11:30 Mass followed by the meeting. †

Spring Leadership Conference

The Leadership Conference will be held May 16 at St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, 2510 Middle Road, Glenshaw, PA. The conference is open to all Serrans as you are all potential officers. An insert with biographies of the scheduled speakers is included in this newsletter.

Tentative Agenda

- 8:30 Registration (coffee, juice, pastries)
- 9:00 Opening Prayer: Pastor, Fr. John Marcucci
- 9:05 Welcome/opening remarks: District Governor, Tom Politylo
- 9:20 State of Serra and District 21 Region 3: Regional Director
- 9:35 Liturgy with Fr. Joseph Mele
- 10:15 New club expansion/forming an extension committee: John Pillar, Esq.
- 10:35 Workshops:
 - Leadership - Presidents and president elects: Joseph L. Koepfinger
 - Programs: Mrs. Mary K. McDonald, Esq.
- 11:30 Membership: Tom Politylo, John Warwick, and Frank Thomas
- 12:00 Lunch (Provided)
- 1:05 Vocations: Fr. Joseph Mele
- 1:35 College Connection DVD: Mr. Frank Thomas
- 1:50 Communication/Newsletters
- 2:15 Overall questions and answers
- 2:30 District council meeting
- 3:00 Closing Prayer †

March Meeting - Accepting a Vocation In Uganda Can Mean Risking One's Life

Accepting God's call to a vocation and the ensuing training for the priesthood in Uganda often meant risking being murdered by rebel soldiers or drowning when an overcrowded boat capsized, Fr. Hilary Andebo said at the March 19 luncheon meeting of the Serra Club.

Traveling some 350 miles from his home in Arua, in northwest Uganda, to a seminary in the capital city of Kampala, Father Andebo had to go through territory controlled by the Lord's Resistant Army (LRA). The LRA, a rebel group that opposes the government in Uganda, has routinely killed or abducted people traveling through an area also heavily populated by wild animals (lions, elephants, etc).

When Fr. Andebo began training for the priesthood in 1991 he took a series of journeys from his home to the seminary. Vehicles in which he traveled were escorted in convoy by the Ugandan Army. Convoys traveled only during the hours between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

"Although the vehicles were in a convoy," Fr. Andebo said, "they were

frequently ambushed by rebels. The rebels would kill people, loot the goods, and force surviving passengers to carry the loot. Abductees in captivity who showed signs of planning to escape were brutally killed in front of other abductees to discourage such efforts to escape. Girls and young women were forced to become wives of rebel commanders. Boys and young men would be forced to train with and join the rebel forces.”

Fr. Andebo said he could have avoided traveling on the ground if he had the air fare but “my parents could not afford money for the plane.” At one point, and because of rebel attacks on the road, the Government closed it.

An alternate route, he said, was one he traveled five times but it was also very risky. It involved an hour-long crossing of Lake Albert in a small wooden motor boat that was often dangerously overloaded with from 15 to 30 passengers.

“There were no life jackets,” he said, “and, like most people there, I did not know how to swim. The lake was very rough. If a boat capsized, there were no life guards and no one to direct rescue operations.”

“I can remember very well the argument we used to make in school,” Fr. Andebo said, “about the change in route over the lake. The argument was: it was better to travel through rebel infested territory than over the lake because, if a boat capsized, most people would drown whereas, in a rebel attack, there could be more survivors than those killed.

“Although I did not know how to swim, I had to rely on hope to cross the lake by boat without a life jacket. When the actual time for the journey came, hope always helped and I arrived at home or school safely.”

Fr. Andebo is currently studying for his Master's Degree in Pastoral Ministry at Duquesne University. He resides at Immaculate Conception Parish in Bloomfield.

Editor's Note: In his comments, Fr. Andebo frequently used the word, “hope.” He explained that, for him, hope means feeling and expecting and desiring that something better will eventually happen. He said that in his major seminary training, traveling from his home town to the city was difficult but necessary if he wanted to continue with his seminary education, despite the fact he was risking his life. The word “faith” could be substituted for hope. Following are his words:

“Hope was the virtue that enabled me to continue the risky journeys through these dangerous routes. Hope helps me to have the courage to move on despite difficult situations I find myself in. My hope is two fold: that temporal situations will get better; and that even if they do not get better, the spiritual hope that I have life after is very important.” †

New Member

Please welcome the following new member:

Steven T. Oslica (Anna)
Sacred Heart
131 S. Dallas Ave., Pgh,
PA 15208 / 412-385-0510
Director of Marketing
Pittsburgh Corning,
800 Presque Isle Dr., Pgh,
PA 15239
e-mail:
soslica@hotmail.com. †



Fr. Andebo with Bob Deasy

Quote of the Month

Ah, but a mans reach
should exceed his grasp,

Or whats a heaven for?

— Robert Browning,
English poet (1812-1889)



Serra Club of Pittsburgh
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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 or by phone at (412) 531-3670. Ideas for future articles are welcome.

Editor: Ray Golebie
Newsletter Design:
S. Golebie Visual
Communications Design

IN THIS ISSUE

Two inserts are included with this newsletter.

The first is a page of bios of the speakers for the Spring Leadership Conference. Please see the **Spring Leadership Conference** article on page 2 for more information.

A form for updating membership is also included. Members need to return the form **ONLY** if there are changes to the information in the current Member Yearbook. †

Member News

A former Serran, Frank Vanek passed away on April 5, 2009. Frank was a faithful member during the 80's. He was a member of St. Rita's in Munhall.

Serran George Wason suffered a serious fall at his home over the Easter weekend. He fell from a wall onto his driveway and broke three bones on his face. After three days at Mercy hospital, George is recovering at home. We pray George will be able to return and join us soon.

A note from Bob Deasy:

When I last communicated with you about the progress my son, Bob, was making in his post-bone marrow transplant battle with leukemia, I was happy to report he was doing well, that his cancer had been defeated and I was grateful for your prayerful support. I continue to be thankful for your prayers but I am again pleading that you continue them.

As sometimes happens in bone marrow transplant cases, patients develop what is known as 'Graft Versus Host Disease.' His doctors say that is what has happened to Bob and he is again seriously ill in The Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center in Richmond. I wish I could say that I am confident that he will recover from this setback but I do not have that confidence this time... So I am again asking for your prayerful support in this battle.

Marie and I spent a week with Bob in the hospital and before we departed for home, I took some oil blessed in Medjugore (Marie had obtained it from a nephew), made the sign of the cross with it on Bob's forehead, and asked the Blessed Virgin to intercede on his behalf and return him to good health.

Thank you all for your prayers and may God bless you. †

UPDATING MEMBERSHIP BOOKLET 2009-2011

We are preparing the 2009-2011 membership book for printing. Each Serran is asked to check the present membership book to insure the correctness of the information therein. Also be sure to check the year you joined Serra and secondly, the name of your parish. In the event there is a change/error or your year of joining needs to be added or the name of your parish changed, please complete the bottom portion of this notice. **Only return this form if the current information needs to be changed.**

Forms are due by May 29, 2009.

If you receive this newsletter by e-mail send your changes to rjgolebie@verizon.net

YOUR NAME _____

SPOUSE'S NAME _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

PARISH _____

HOME PHONE # _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

BUSINESS PHONE # _____

BUSINESS ADDRESS _____

TITLE/POSITION _____

ARE YOU RETIRED _____

YEAR YOU BECAME A MEMBER _____

DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL YES ___ NO ___

SIGNATURE

Mail the completed form to: Ray Golebie, 1612 Blossom Hill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234

SPRING LEADERSHIP SPEAKERS for SATURDAY MAY 16TH at St. MARY CHURCH 2510 MIDDLE ROAD, GLENSHAW,PA. (10 mi. North of Pittsburgh, Pa.)



Father Joseph Mele is currently the Director of Spiritual Formation at St. Paul Seminary and Director of the Dept. for Post-Ordination Formation for the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Prior to his assignment to St. Paul Seminary in February 2008, Father Mele was in parish ministry for thirty- six years. He also serves as an adjunct faculty member at St. Vincent Seminary in Latrobe. Father Mele holds a Master of Divinity from St. Francis College, Loretto; a Master of Arts in Formative Spirituality from Duquesne University; has done graduate studies in Liturgy at Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana and holds both a Master's and a Doctorate in Communications and Rhetoric from Duquesne University. Father Mele is Chaplain of the Pittsburgh Serra Club and will speak about vocations.



Joseph L. Koepfinger, a member of St. Margaret Mary Parish, has been a Serran for 39 years. He advanced through the chairs and became president of the Pittsburgh club in 1986. Joe accepted the nomination for District Governor elect of our district. He is very active with St. Vincent De Paul Society and helped establish the society in 3 parishes. Joe is a 3rd degree member of St. Francis of Assisi Council 2555 where he served as Grand Knight. He holds BS & MS in EE from University of Pittsburgh. He received a Purple Heart and Bronze Star in WWII. After retirement from Duquesne Light he founded his own consulting firm. Joe will give the leadership portion of the conference.



John Pillar is president of the Pittsburgh Serra Club. He is an attorney at law and his firm is in Mt. Lebanon. He has been a member of Serra for 34 years. John served as the chairman for the successful Serra International Convention when it was held in Pittsburgh. John was the first recipient of the Msgr. Keefer Award. This award is presented to the Serran who demonstrates exceptional commitment to the ideals and mission of the Serra Club. John has served on the St. Paul Seminary Advisory Board. He will address the formation and importance of an extension committee.



John Warwick is past president of the East Allegheny Club of Serra. As a member of the Pittsburgh organization he served as vice president of vocations and treasurer. Currently Jack is president elect and will be installed as president in July. He is a graduate of Duquesne University and is a Certified Public Accountant. Jack spoke at the Spring Leadership Conference last year and will address the process for entering the paperwork for membership in Serra. John has been a Serran since 1990



Mary Kelemen Mc Donald has been a Pittsburgh Serran for 13 years. She has served as VP of Programs and was the 1st female president of the Pittsburgh club. When the Pittsburgh Club hosted the Serra International Convention it was during her tenure. She also provided articles for the Pittsburgh Serra Newsletter. Mary is a partner in her law firm practicing Family Law. She is trained as a mediator and a Collaborative Law Attorney. She is a parishioner at St. Raphael Parish in Morningside. Mary will present the information on programs and their importance in Serra.



Dave Weiland has been a Mon Valley Serran for 25 years. His home parish is Mary, Mother of the Church in Charleroi. He is a member of the Pastoral Council. Dave is a choir member of his parish and a cantor as well. He also shares his talent with the Diocesan Choir. He retired from the Social Security Administration after 32 years. Dave is currently VP of Communications and Programs. He will address communications.



Frank Thomas has been a member of the Beaver Valley Serra Club for more than 26 years. He attended at least 11 International Conventions, serving as delegate to many. Frank served as our district governor and has been a member of the USAC Membership Committee for the past 10 years. Frank was the Chairman from 2003-2007. He recently conducted a survey on what and why individuals don't become or remain as Serrans. Frank will cover the College Connection program with DVD.