

Serra Club of St. Petersburg

On the Internet at: "http://serraclubstpete.com"



January 2007

"Always go forward, never look back"

Dates to Remember:

- Tuesday, January 16, 7 p.m. Regular Monthly Meeting. St. Jude Pastoral Center. Program: Fr. Francois Hemelsdael.
- Wednesday, January 24, 7:00 p.m. Holy Hour. St. Jude's Chapel.
- Tuesday thru Thursday, February 13 thru 15, Focus 11 Vocations Fair, Christ the King, Tampa
- Tuesday, February 20, 7 p.m. Regular Monthly Meeting. St. Jude Pastoral Center. Program: Michelle Rego, Music Director, St. Jude.
- Wednesday, February 28, 7:00 p.m. Holy Hour. St. Jude's Chapel.

French Priest to Speak at January Meeting

Fr Francois Hemelsdael, a priest of the Diocese of Lille in northern France, will be our speaker at the Jan 16 meeting. Fr Francois is spending 6 months at St Paul's parish in an effort to improve his command of English, as he prepares for service as a priest of the Apostolic Life Society which provides priests for service in Asian countries. Fr Francois will be assigned permanently to Cambodia when he leaves here in two months.

Our speaker obtained his law degree in the University at Lille, but never practiced law. At age 25 he responded to his vocational calling to the priesthood and entered the Diocesan Seminary in Paris. His preparation included 1 year in Cambodia and another year working in the business field. He was ordained June 25, 2005 at age 33.

Fr Francois will illustrate his talk with a video about the Apostolic Life Society, in addition to discussion his own vocational journey and his anticipated life in Cambodia.

Surely this will be one of the most unique programs we have ever had, and so we urge you to come and bring guests in this first program of the New Year.



Christmas Social Draws 40 Serrans and Guests

As in past years, Serrans, spouses and guests gathered for their annual Christmas social at the home of Norm and Nancy Dusseault on Tuesday evening, Dec 12. Although the date created a conflict for some members, the social drew about 40 people, including Fr Francois Hemelsdael, a visiting French priest who is our speaker for the January meeting. Fr Francois served as our surrogate chaplain in place of our regular chaplain Fr Tom Tobin, who arrived later in the evening.

The evening started with the serving of Bob Iler's famous Sangria on the pool patio, augmented by tasty hors d'oeuvres served by Serrans. The group gathered for prayer and the lighting of the advent Candles followed by dinner consisting of many favorite covered dishes brought by the Serrans. The Dusseault's family room was converted into an ample dining area for the occasion.

Judging from the non-stop sounds of greetings and gaiety the evening was a complete success. Thanks are due to Maureen Ahern and Mary Mallette who took reservations and coordinated the food offerings and to Maureen for decorating the tables. Jan Davy created and sent invitations. And Mark Bolich, Loren Davy and Larry Ahern helped move the furniture. And, oh yes, to the Dusseaults' for offering their home.



Christmas Offering to Migrants Totals \$ 706

Our collection for the migrant workers taken at the Christmas social totaled \$706 for use by Fr Carlos Rojas, a newly ordained priest, who ministers to the migrants at St Clement Parish in Plant City. The envelopes, deposited by Serrans at a shrine honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe, were delivered to St Clement' by Norm Dusseault and he received an acknowledgement from Fr Tom Morgan on Dec 19. The letter read:

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Christmas Offering - Continued

“On behalf of St Clement Catholic Church I would like to thank you for your club’s donation of \$706.00 for our Hispanic Migrant Ministry. I want you to know that your kindness is helping further the Kingdom of God. I pray that Jesus will bless you abundantly.”
S/ Fr Thomas Morgan, VF, Pastor.

In an accompanying handwritten note Fr Rojas wrote: *“Dear Serra Club, Felix Navidad! Merry Christmas! I just wanted to take this opportunity to express my great gratitude for the awesome donation, an expression of love and service to our migrant brothers and sisters. May the spirit of love and giving continue on in our hearts till the day comes in which we give of ourselves in love to our Mighty God. Once again, thank you In Christ.”* S/ Fr Rojas.

Fr Rojas’s plans were to augment the gifts for some 120 migrant children who attended the Dec 23 Posada celebration at St Clement (Another organization was providing gifts for 100 children.) The remainder of the money he planned to use for gift certificates so that the families could purchase gifts for their own families.



Focus 11 On the Horizon

The time is drawing near for our major vocation event of the year, the Focus 11 Vocations Fair, to take place at Christ the King Parish in Tampa on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, Feb 13, 14 and 15.

Focus 11 is a project of the Diocesan Vocations Office, but Serra will provide and serve refreshments and snacks to approximately 1800 students in the 6th and 11th grades at Catholic schools who will attend the day- long event on one of the days. We also staff a Serra booth at the fair and conduct a poster contest for 6th graders and an ad writing contest for 11th graders on a vocation theme. Cash prizes for the top three in each category will be awarded at the fair.

Many volunteers are needed to handle these projects... If you can give some time on one or more of the dates—Feb 13, Feb 14 or Feb 15, from about 9:30 a.m. to early afternoon, please be prepared to volunteer with Vocations VP Denise Reilly at the January meeting.



Seminarian Prayer Calendar

Ready for Distribution

Communications VP’s Bob Tufaner and Norm Dusseault have prepared a new format for the Seminarian Prayer Calendar and we expect it will be ready for distribution to South Pinellas Deanery parishes sometime in February. We will canvass the parishes to see how they would like to receive the calendar for inclusion in their bulletins. The calendars copy can be delivered as inserts, camera-ready copy, or by electronic means.

The new format assigns a prayer date each month to 21 seminarians, 19 diocesan and 2 Salesians. Their names and parishes are featured more prominently than in past years. Parishioners are asked to pray for each by name on the date assigned. The flyer also includes information about Serra and invites participation by those interested.



Kathy’s Korner

On behalf of the Serra Club, I received several cards from our seminarians during the holidays. They all expressed gratitude for our prayers and support for their vocation. In turn, they have all promised to pray for the members of the Serra Club. I also hope that all of you had a wonderful Christmas filled with love, and that the peace that we have experienced during Christmas continues to be felt in your hearts and minds all year long. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for the many thankless tasks that you do to promote the mission of the Serra Club. Each of you makes this club successful in all that we undertake.

So welcome to 2007. Are you ready to get back to work? We have a lot to do in the next few months. Please read the newsletter carefully and mark your calendars for the Focus 11 on February 13th, 14th, 15th. We need 8 to 10 members each day to provide drinks to the students, lunches for the religious, and coordinate the Serra display in the exhibition hall. We need you to encourage your parish school and/or religious educators to participate in Serra Poster and Essay Contest and we will also need members to judge the entries submitted to this contest. This is the busiest season for the Serra Club of St. Petersburg, and I hope that you will be able to help make it one of the best.

Happy New Year

...Kathy

