

Serra Club of St. Petersburg

On the Internet at: ["http://serraclubstpete.com"](http://serraclubstpete.com)



June/July 2006

"Always go forward, never look back"

Dates to Remember:

- Wednesday, June 14, 6:30 p.m. Annual Installation Dinner and Seminarian Reception. St. Petersburg Yacht Club, 11 Central Avenue, St. Petersburg. Speaker, Fr. Len Plazewski, Diocesan Director of Vocations.
- Wednesday, June 28, 7:00 p.m. Holy Hour. St. Jude's Chapel.
- **NO MONTHLY MEETING IN JULY.** Next regular monthly meeting August 15.
- Wednesday, July 26, 7:00 p.m. Holy Hour. St. Jude's Chapel.

Annual Dinner and Seminarian Reception Set For June 14!

Again this year Serran Mary Mallette has arranged that our annual end-of-the-year dinner be held at the beautiful St Pete Yacht Club at 11 Central Ave. Special invitations have been delivered to all members and many guests, particularly the seminarians who will be in the area. The cost per person is \$35, and those who are able are asked to also sponsor one or more of the seminarians and guests. Spouses are invited. Reservations are being taken by Helen Ezzo, 527-7341.

Diocesan Vocations Director Fr Len Plazewski will be our principal speaker and President Kathy Bolich will present a brief report of the year. Fr Len will also conduct the installation of officers. Our MC will be Serran Larry Ahern.

General Chairman of the event is Mary Mallette assisted by several other Serrans. Jan Davy will prepare the invitations and the table decorations.



Vocations Don't Just Happen: Ask Somebody!

Deacon Alvarez Caps Program Year

Deacon John Alvarez, parish administrator of St Paul's Parish in Tampa, capped an outstanding year of programs for the Serra Club with his talk on May 16. Deacon Alvarez was a successful businessman, working as a university administrator and computer consultant, when he decided to answer the call to the diaconate. He was ordained in 1997 by Bishop Lynch and now works full time in his ministerial vocation. In addition to his administrative duties at St Paul's, Deacon Alvarez is the Director of Prison Ministries, and Formation Director for the Diaconate Program of the diocese.

He spoke movingly of his work in the prisons, which started when he made several visits to a friend who was incarcerated. He described it as a "ministry of presence," just being there to visit the inmates regularly has a huge impact on their lives, he said. He described one experience when a heretofore sullen prisoner seemed to come to life during a prayer service, tearfully praying aloud for the person that he had murdered.

Deacon Alvarez was expansive in his praise for our own VP Programs Jim Prior, who is one of many volunteer prison ministers who regularly visit the jails to bring the love of Christ to the prisoners there. He said that 80% of the inmates have drug or alcohol problems and human contact was an important antidote as they try to deal with their problems.

The deacon also discussed his own journey to the ordained ministry, and his work in aiding in the formation of candidates. He said that the local bishop requires candidates to complete 4 yrs of training in the Lay Pastoral Ministry program, prior to an additional 4 yrs of formation for the diaconate. Of those who start the program only 1 in 4 or 5 are actually ordained. Currently there are about 20 candidates active in the preparation program.



Preordination Prayer Vigil Reception Hosted by Serra

In anticipation of the ordination of two more priests for our diocese, a prayer vigil was held at Christ the King Church in Tampa, on Friday, May 19, followed by a reception hosted and served by our Serra Club for guests and family members of the two ordinands, Joseph Musco and Carlos Rojas.



Fr. Musco



Fr. Rojas

As shown below, some 18 Serrans signed up to help host the event, and they and another 10 or 12 were making contributions of food or money. It was anticipated that close to 100 would attend the reception since the ordinands are blessed with large families. As is our custom the Serra Club also presented each of the two about-to-be-ordained priests with a Book of Blessings as a special remembrance from Serra.



The Serran Hosts

The main event, of course, was the actual ordination conducted by Bishop Lynch which took place at the Cathedral of St Jude at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 20. Many Serrans also attended this beautiful celebration.



No Meeting In July!

As is our custom, there will be no regular monthly meeting in July. It has been a busy year and the club needs some R & R time.. There will, be an executive committee meeting on June 8 for the outgoing slate of officers. There will be an executive meeting in July for the newly installed officers at a time and place to be set by Kathy. We will resume our regular monthly meetings on Aug 15 at St Jude's pastoral center. Your next newsletter will be published in early Aug.



Kathy's Korner

I am looking forward to seeing you at the Seminarian Dinner on June 14th at the Yacht Club. This year we have invited 2 young men from our diocese who have entered the seminary for the Salesian order. You all have met Tom Wilson. He presented a slide show about his trip to World Youth Day at a Serran Meeting last fall. The other young man, Jeff Banks, just graduated from SPCHS. We have invited them along with the diocesan seminarians because they are also answers to our prayers for priests. The Seminarian Dinner like the centerpiece of our year. It is when we shine with the enthusiasm for our mission. Please feel free to invite guests to this event; allow them to see the Serra Club at its best and encourage them to meet their future priests.

This year's installation of officers will be unusual because I be will be serving as your President and as Vice President of Membership. Obviously I will have difficulty doing both positions well. As I stated at the May general meeting, I am counting on all of you to step forward to take on specific tasks that come under the direction of the membership committee. Some of you have already contacted me about doing some of the jobs, and I thank you. I may call upon others of you to help and I hope that you will be able to assist me on an as needed basis. **But I am asking each one of you to consider your friends, and fellow parishioners for membership in the Serra Club.** All of you are members today because some one asked you. Some of you were asked often; so don't hesitate to invite a friend who has turned you down in the past. I hope to increase our membership by 10 members this year. It will take a lot of effort, but I am confident that if all of us are working together to build the membership of our club, we will be successful.

...Kathy



Other Serran Hosts Who Missed Group Photo at Prayer Vigil Reception

