

Serra Club of St. Petersburg

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



October 2005

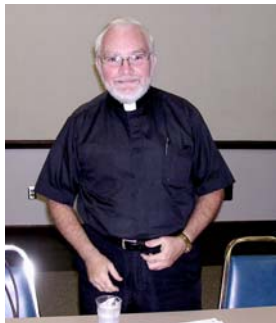
"Always go forward, never look back"

Dates to Remember:

- **Tuesday, October 18, 7:00 p.m. Regular Monthly Meeting, St. Jude's Pastoral Center, Program: Sr Karen Burns.**
- **Wednesday, October 26. 7:00 p.m. Holy Hour St. Jude's Chapel.**
- **Tuesday, November 15, 7:00 p.m. Regular Monthly Meeting, St. Jude's Pastoral Center, Program: Tommy Wilson & Scott Sharlow on World Youth Day 2005.**
- **Wednesday, November 16, 7:00 p.m. Holy Hour St. Jude's Chapel. (Thanksgiving Next Week)**

Fr. Tom Tobin Speaks on Late Vocations

Our September meeting featured another interesting program in Fr Tom Tobin, a priest of St Jude's, who was ordained just this year at the age of 56. Fr Tom traced his original vocational calling to his youth as a student at Bishop Barry High School, now St Pete Catholic. In fact he attended seminary from 1966 to 1971 in Cincinnati and Boston, but dropped out then because of his desire to marry and have a family.



Fr. Tobin

He married in 1972 and followed a career in social work. His wife died suddenly and unexpectedly in 1996. Within months, the interest in the priesthood returned, said Fr Tom, and for the next 5 yrs the process of discernment continued.

He described the various events in his life which seemed to direct him toward the priesthood. He described, for example, an incident where he gave up his seat on a plane so that a couple could sit together, and found himself sitting next to a priest who was involved in priest recruitment. Fr Tom related his experience at Blessed John XXXIII Seminary in Boston, which specializes in late-in-life seminarians. Among the seminarians, he said, were several medical doctors, military retirees, lawyers and other professionals. A notable number of converts were also represented. The drop-out rate, he said, was extremely low.

Fr. Tom Tobin - Continued

Fr. Tom noted that the average age of priests at ordination in the U S was 37, and that matched the age of those in this diocese and so he urged us to encourage older and middle aged men to consider the priesthood as a second career, perhaps one delayed since their youth. He said he believes that the Lord is calling more mature men to His service. Our efforts should not be limited to youth, he said, and, in fact, candidates might even be encouraged in RCIA programs.

Sr. Karen Burns, OSF To Speak In October

Sr Karen Burns, OSF, will be our speaker for the Oct 18 regular monthly meeting. Sr Karen is well known as a leader of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegheny, particularly in connection with St Anthony's Hospital. Sr Karen is a native of Utica, NY. She attended Utica Catholic Academy, and later received BA and MS degrees from St Bonaventure College. She entered the Allegheny Franciscans in 1949 and taught at Christ the King High School in Haddonfield NJ from 1950 to 1962.

Sr Karen spent three years in Bolivia as a teacher at an Indian school and later served in Miami ministering to Cuban refugees who were flooding into the area. From 1970 to 74 she served as Executive Director of the Allegheny Franciscans Mission Society, supervising sisters in South and Central America, as well as southern U.S.

She became Director of the Allegheny Health Foundation in 1983, and later head of the Academy of Hospice Physicians. She headed the St Anthony's Foundation from 1994 to 2004, when she retired. She is now engaged in fund-raising and other activities in support of her community and its mission. We welcome Sr Karen Burns to Serra.

Six New Seminarians Enter Formation

The Lord is good! He has answered our prayers and the efforts of Vocations Office and provided six new seminarians for the coming school year from our diocese. This brings to 18 the number of seminarians now in various stages of formation for the priesthood to serve our diocese. Here are the new men, whose pictures will soon appear on our display board:

**Victor Amorose - Walter " Butch" Dugan - Jonathan Emery
Tim McIntire - Joe Montero - Justin Paskert**

Please remember these men in your prayers, and praise the Lord

Fr. Len Inducted as President of NCDVD

Fr Len Plazewski, vocation director for our own St Petersburg Diocese, was installed as president of the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors at the closing Mass of the group's national convention on Sept 28, The group includes representatives from almost all dioceses in the U S , as well as several in Canada, Great Britain and Australia.

The closing liturgy, held at historic Sacred Heart Church in downtown Tampa, was celebrated by Bishop Robert Lynch, assisted by Bishop Blase Cupich of Rapid City, SD, and several priests of the diocese. It was also attended by a delegation from the Serra Club, including Jim Prior, Kathy Bolich, Lee Boudart, Denise Reilly, and Jorge and Elena Miyares. Music was supplied by St Joseph's Choir from Bradenton.

The 6 day convention of NCDVD was held at the Waterside Marriott in Tampa, and was attended by more than 225 delegates. Fr Len was general chairman of the event. Several Serrans participated as greeters at the registration desk.

New Members

As shown below, President Kathy Bolich officially induct our newest and youngest member at the last meeting. Kirsten Hunt, age 17, has been participating, unofficially, in Serra activities helping her mother, Gwen, and grandfather Bob Tufaner, for some months. And so she has made it official. She's now a Serran in her own right, lowering our average age by a bunch.



And also at the last meeting we welcomed the first visit, and completed application, of Gene Murphy, a parishioner of Holy Cross parish, who has been attending our Holy Hours, and decided it was time he became a full-fledged member. A hearty welcome to Gene. Our Membership Committee is still planning for a separate membership event sometime this fall. Stay tuned.

It's SOS Time!

We are gathering "Snacks for Seminarians" again, so bring in your goodies at the Oct 18 meeting. There are currently 18 seminarians, and we'd like to remember each of them with a package of goodies so bring along a good supply of individual packages of candies, nuts, raisins, etc. and our committee will assemble them and send the along with our prayers.

At Work!

Conrad – Nancy and Co-VP Norm



**Serra Club Communications Committee
(Minus Co-VP Bob Tufaner-Guess Who Took The Pic!)**

Kathy's Korner

Last month our diocese hosted the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors (NCDVD) in Tampa. Many of you were able to volunteer to assist with the reception desk September 23rd thru the 24th. I hope that you enjoyed watching, hearing, and visiting with the men and women on the forefront of the vocation drive for the Church.

On September 28th 5 of your fellow Serrans accompanied me to the closing Mass of the Conference at Sacred Heart Church in Tampa. It was a spectacular high Mass that was concelebrated by 6 Bishops of the USCCB Committee on Vocations (5 Roman Catholic Bishops and 1 Orthodox Catholic Bishop). It was attended by a large number of the Priests, Deacons, Brothers, Sisters and Lay people (representing Serra, the Knights of Columbus, The D-VET, and various vocation offices). During the mass, our own Fr. Len Plazewski was sworn in as the new president of the NCDVD. Bishop Lynch presided over the mass and delivered the homily. He compared the American Catholic Church's plan to develop vocations to the priesthood with the beginnings of the parish of Sacred Heart Church. The Bishop explained that when the first settlers came to Tampa it was a rugged land of scrubs, pine and palms. When they built the church and began the first parish, they did not envision the beautiful and dynamic church that currently stands in the center of our bustling city. Rather they laid the foundations that allowed the parish to grow into what we know today. Similarly, the American Catholic Church cannot accurately envision what the needs for the future will be; however we can build a foundation that will provide the structure needed for future vocations programs.

The US council of Bishops has designated October 30, 2005 as Priesthood Sunday. It is a time to honor our priests and is "a very real opportunity to show support to our priests and to priesthood in general". Take this time to notify your parish vocation enrichment team of the date. Contact me or go to www.priestsunday.com for a copy of the planning guide that is full of ideas to celebrate the priests we have in our midst.

Our Serra Club remains in the center of the promotion, and affirmation of vocations in our diocese. You can be proud of the work that we do. Thank you for your dedication and generosity.

...Kathy

