

Serra Club of St. Petersburg

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September 2009

"Always go forward, never look back"



Dates to Remember:

- Tuesday, Sept 15 7:00 PM, Regular Monthly Meeting, St. Jude Pastoral Center, Program: Fr. Ralph Intranuovo, SCJ
- Wednesday, Sept 23 7:00 PM, Holy Hour for Vocations, St. Jude Chapel
- Tuesday, Oct 20 7:00 PM, Regular Monthly Meeting, St. Jude Pastoral Center, Speaker: Stanton Cadow, St. Vincent De Paul Seminary, Boynton Beach, FL
- Wednesday, Oct 28 7:00 PM, Holy Hour for Vocations, St. Jude Chapel

Capuchin Priest is our August Speaker

Fr. Gregory Reisert, OFM Cap, a Capuchin priest was the lead speaker for the new Serra year on Tuesday, August 18. Fr. Reisert, who is currently administrator of the Capuchin Guest House in Seminole, outlined his extensive priestly career, marked by significant and highly responsible assignments. Born in Brooklyn NY, he entered the Capuchin Order in 1955 and was ordained in 1964 for the NY-NE Province where has served in parish assignments for a number of years.

He later served a Vicar Provincial and Provincial for his Province for a number of years, and this led to his appointment as Executive Director of the Conference of Major Superiors (Men). The latter assignment, he described, as most interesting because it took him into contact with several Vatican officials, and gave him an insight into how they viewed American religious life. In fact he had the opportunity to influence and shape the relationship between American religious orders and the Vatican.

Fr. Reisert also related his experience on the staff of St. Luke's Institute in Washington DC. The Institute was a treatment center for priests and religious with fallen religious lives, frequently involving addictions, depression, or other burdens. Here, he said, he experienced true "grace in action," as many were led to take control of their lives and resume their vocational journeys.

Fr. Reisert also discussed the vocational status of his order. His NY-NE Province currently has 27 men in formation. Worldwide there are about 700 novices in formation, mostly in India, the Philippines, South America and Africa.

He cited as one attraction for vocational aspirants was the habit, the uniform which sets them apart and witnesses to the world their commitment to Christ.

Fr Reisert closed by encouraging Serrans to continue their good work in fostering vocations, calling our work and our prayers the "flame under the pot," in vocations ministry.

September Speaker is Fr. Ralph Intranuovo, SCJ

Vocations VP Jim Prior has lined up another outstanding priest to present our program on September 15. He is Fr. Ralph Intranuovo, a member of the Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart.

Fr. Ralph is a native of Brooklyn NY, one of 10 children of Italian immigrant parents. His was a delayed vocation, first professing vows in his order at age 42 and being ordained at age 46 in 1983. Previously he had served in the US Army for two years and as a plant repairman for ATT, and as a teacher.

His priestly ministry has largely been among Hispanics in Texas where he served for 25 years. He was involved in parish, hospital and campus ministry and was a military chaplain.

He is a licensed professional counselor and holds a Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral/Psychotherapy. Recently retired, he resides at the SCJ home in Pinellas Park and does occasional ministry for parishes in the diocese.

Grants Made to Support Vocations

During the past month two grants were made from the Dr. William F. Mallette Seminary Fund and for the first time, a grant was made to a young woman seeking to enter a religious order.

The Serra Board of Directors made a grant to diocesan seminarian Felipe Gonzalez at St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami to bring him up to date on unpaid expenses from last year. This grant was recommended by Vocational Director Fr. Len Plazewski.

A second grant was made to a young Tampa woman, Rachel Talley, who has been accepted as a postulant by the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The grant was used to reduce educational debts incurred by Miss Talley from Notre Dame University, which she attended last year, as well as entry costs to the Dominican Order. With the help of our grant and help from her parish and others Miss Talley has succeeded in taking care of these obligations. This grant represents a departure from the practice of making grants only to male seminarians from the fund, but the board felt that the grant was in the spirit of the purpose of the fund.

Bank Failure Affects Serra Club Funds

The failure of the First State Bank has had an impact on the Serra Club's funds which are held there. Specifically we have five Certificates of Deposit at the bank, laddered for various terms, and totaling about \$83,000. These funds are being held in trust for use by the Dr. William F. Mallette Seminary Fund.

Trustee Norm Dusseault, who is acting treasurer during the summer absence of Bob Scott, assured the members at the August meeting that the funds were totally insured by the FDIC, and in fact are among the assets taken over by Sterns Bank of Minnesota. The only effect on our funds is that the interest will be reduced to the rates being paid by Sterns Bank.

These rates are comparable with rates now being offered by most local banks. Also we are free to withdraw the funds at any time without penalty in order to invest them elsewhere if we find a better alternative. We will review our options and report on any action taken at a later date.

Meet our Seminarians

Victor Amarose is a native of Clearwater, where his mom, dad brother and sister still reside. He is a lifelong parishioner at Light of Christ Parish. He attended local public schools, and graduated from Clearwater High in 2003.

He attended the University of Central Florida (UCF) in Orlando for two years and entered St. John Vianney College Seminary in 2005, where he graduated in 2007 as valedictorian of his class. He is a musically talented young man, playing the bass guitar, electric guitar, piano as well as other instruments.

He has been active in youth, music and campus ministry programs. Victor is currently in Second Theology at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach.

Kathy's Korner

During the Holy Hour in August, the gospel reading told the story of Jesus' command to Peter, James and Andrew to "...Put their boat out to deep water and to lower their nets..." They obeyed Him and caught so many fish that their nets were bursting. Father Len reflected on the exhaustion of the future apostles as well as their lack of appreciation of the efficacy of their obedience. They just did as they were asked, and they were amazed at the result.

I am reporting this to you because that night Father Len also told us that our diocese has sent 32 young men to the seminaries this year!!! Hurray!!! Our prayers for an increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, like the obedience of the apostles, have yielded a wonderfully large "catch". In addition to the seminarians, we are aware of at least one young woman, Rachel Tolley, who has responded to God's call and will be entering the Dominican Order this fall.

All the other Serra Clubs in the USA council meet 2 times a month, but we consider the Holy Hour to be the 2nd meeting of the month for the St. Petersburg Chapter. Father Len recognizes that our prayers during the Diocesan Holy Hour are a powerful tool in calling young men to the priesthood, so we forgo a formal meeting in an effort to increase the attendance of Serrans at the Holy Hour. I implore you to plan to attend the Holy Hour on the 4th Wednesday of every month from 7 to 8 PM at the Chapel of Our Lady, Cathedral of St. Jude. Let us pray that "God will grant what he has commanded us to ask."