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Serra Club of Markham & Scarborough

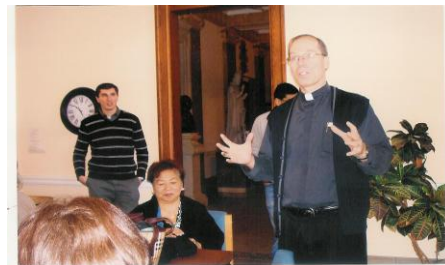
The Serran Tribune



Tour of St. Augustine's Seminary with Altar Servers & Distribution of Seminarian's Welcome Kit: Jan 19th 2013



The members of Serra Club of Markham & Scarborough (SCMS) with SAS Seminarians, altar servers & Rev. Peter Marr, Vice Rector.



Rev. Peter Marr welcoming the Altar Servers and SCMS members

The much awaited "Trip of Altar Servers to St Augustine Seminary " by Altar Servers from St Patrick Church and Precious Blood Parishes, finally was realized on **January 19, 2013**, after several communications with **Vice Rector, Rev. Peter Marr** and our VP Program, Fran Pulumbarit. It was also a great opportunity to present the Welcome Kits for New Seminarians, a project started by the late Bruce Burry of the former Toronto East Serra Club, and adopted by SCMS. Here is an excerpt from Bruce's last speech addressing the Seminarians; *"Our job is to pray and work for an increase in vocations to the Priesthood and*

Consecrated Life. Our job is to pray for your success as you prepare for your calling by Jesus Christ to be his Disciples, in His large vineyard".

It was a challenge organizing the trip to the seminary which was dependent on the schedules of the Altar Servers, availability of the members to accompany them, and the schedule of the Seminarians coordinated by Fr. Peter Marr.



St. Augustine Seminary Chapel

The success of any project depends solely on the team work, cooperation and enthusiasm of its members. We are blessed at the Serra Club of Markham-Scarborough whose members are always willing to do their part joyfully all in the name of Vocations.

Through our concerted efforts and a profound desire to accomplish our goals, we put our brains and muscles to work after considering many suggestions on what will comprise a "Welcome Kit ".



Seminarian's Welcome Kits presented by SCMS members

A few days before our trip to the Seminary, a few dedicated ladies gathered together to put the 14 kits together over lunch coordinated by

Sophie Manalo and Baby Pulumbarit. The contents of a Welcome Kit are: a USB flash drive, \$25.00 cash, 3 pairs of white socks, 1 dozen small tissue pack and 2 books (i.e. Daily Lent meditation and 5 Loaves and 2 Fish).

Note: We ended up making six more Welcome Kits which were distributed after our visit to St. Augustine Seminary on January 19, 2013.



SCMS members— Consuelo, Sophie, Louisa, Carmela, Tony, Felisa & Norma

The Precious Blood group had five Altar Servers and seven Serrans while the St Patrick's group had six Altar Servers, five Serrans with Massimo Buttigieg, our Seminarian from Malta.

We were received warmly by Fr. Peter Marr and the three Seminarists which included Raphael Ma, a parishioner of St Patrick. We learned a lot from the tour of the Seminary and the great explanations of the three Seminarists. The Altar Servers enjoyed and discovered many wonderful things how do the Seminarists work, study, and have fun inside the Seminary. We had a sumptuous lunch after the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at the Seminary Chapel. Fr. Peter Marr then invited all of us at one of the Conference rooms, for the more formal part of our day. That is, a Q & A portion of the meeting.



SCMS members with the SAS Seminarists

The three Seminarists were very accommodating and more than willing to share their vocation stories. They also

answered questions from the Altar Servers and SCMS members.



Rev. Peter Marr presenting the Welcome Kits to the SAS Seminarists

The final part of the program was the Presentation of the Welcome Kits to the 14 seminarists, received by Raphael Ma & Fr. Peter Marr on behalf of the seminarists. The Presentation Speech was delivered by our Charter President Felisa (Baby) Pulumbarit who expressed gratitude to all the staff members of St. Augustine Seminary, especially Rev. Peter Marr, Vice Rector.



Altar Servers from St. Patrick's and Precious Blood parishes with Rev. Peter Marr & SAS Seminarists.



Fran & Felisa (Baby) Pulumbarit with Rev. Peter Marr

It was a day spent worthwhile working in the vineyard of the Lord and working towards Vocations; we all went home energized with the Spirit of the Lord, with the intercession of St. Augustine and Blessed Junipero Serra.

In the Eyes of a New Serran: A Report by Florencio Ortiz



Florencio Ortiz with his wife, Josephine in Italy.

As a new member of the Serra Club of Markham and Scarborough, I look back and try to remember how my wife, Josephine, and I ended up joining this organization. The seed must have been planted in November 2012 when we joined ten others on an 18-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Italy. The group was organized by Serrans Fran and Felisa (Baby) Pulumbarit.

In the Holy Land, we, pilgrims grew closer to each other as daily we prayed the rosary, attended mass, read the bible and visited holy sites. It was an emotional experience walking on the same ground as our Lord Jesus, his disciples, followers and the ancient prophets walked in centuries past. In Rome, we enjoyed touring ancient ruins of the Roman Empire. The Coliseum reminded me of early Christian martyrs who bravely shed their blood in its arena for refusing to renounce Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. In the Vatican, we joined thousands of Catholics visiting from all over the world in an audience with Pope Benedict XVI, successor to Peter, our first Pope, who gave us his blessings. It was also in Rome where I personally experienced a healing miracle through prayer.

After the pilgrimage, our group continued to meet in Markham to reminisce, exchange pictures, pray, sing praise songs and share stories together. It was on one of these occasions that I heard Fran and Felisa (Baby) talk about the Serra Club for the first time.

On February 2, 2013, my wife and I were invited to attend a meeting of Serrans at Precious Blood Church in Scarborough. We were received with

genuine warmth and hospitality by Ms. Maria-Luz Manalo, President of Markham and Scarborough Serra Club, and the members who were there. As we enjoyed breakfast, we listened to an inspirational talk by Rev. Tony Pablo. I observed how organized, dedicated and enthusiastic the leaders and members were as they tackled the outstanding issues during the meeting. We decided to join Serra that day.

On March 5, 2013, we joined Serrans from our club and more than 1,700 other people at the annual Ordinandi fundraising dinner hosted by Serra International where we listened to two newly ordained deacons, **Deacon Mr. Joshua Roldan and Deacon Mr. Paul Finn** shared their stories about how each answered God's call to priesthood.



Deacon Mr. Joshua Roldan & Deacon Mr. Paul Finn at the Ordinandi Dinner

On April 19, 2013, we shared a table with **Rev. Leo Llames** for the annual fundraising dinner to support the Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary of the Archdiocese of Toronto. We heard more inspirational stories from seminarians at that event.

The next day, we attended the Annual Serra Conference hosted by the Serra Club of Kitchener/Waterloo. Among all clubs, the Markham/Scarborough club sent the most number of participants.

I listened with interest as Dr. Katherine Bergman, President and Vice-Chancellor of St. Jerome's University, who happens to be a daughter of a Serran, talked about "Faith in Action at St. Jerome's". She told her audience a touching story of how some St. Jerome students befriended a poor Peruvian boy and helped him buy a new prosthetic leg. What a way of putting into action Jesus teaching of loving one another!

Rev. Cornelius O'Mahony talked about "Vatican II – Fifty Years Later". I was impressed at how in-depth his 45 minutes speech was on Vatican II, a process that took several years from inception to completion.

Rev. Wojciech Kuzma, who reminded me of the young Karol Josef Wojtyla, spoke about "Vocation Work – Objectives and Targets".

Rev. Toby Collins, who spoke on the topic "Vocation Culture", showed us an interesting video of his interviews with people of diverse backgrounds on the subject matter.



Rev. Toby Collins while speaking on Vocation Culture to all Serrans.

District Governor Patrick Hearn spoke about the need for Serrans to choose new members wisely and carefully. He asserted that, for new members to stay committed to the organization and its objectives, they should be assigned work, otherwise they get disinterested.

During mass, I was mesmerized as Patrick did the biblical readings. I also enjoyed singing some hymns in Latin during same mass. The organizers decided wisely to make each participant pick a number for his dinner table at the banquet. I ended up sharing table number 4 with participants from other clubs. Over dinner, I struck a conversation with some to get to know them. Al Smith of Kitchener/Waterloo gave us some interesting information about his Catholic radio program at 98.5 FM. Ms. Brown of Oakville shared her experiences as instructor of catechism to young school children.

I commend the Waterloo/Kitchener Serrans for holding a well-organized conference. The highly qualified

speakers talked about important topics relevant to us Serrans. It was a good learning experience to know about the Waterloo/Kitchener club's activities and projects.

We returned back to Markham the same night physically tired but spiritually nourished. I turned on my computer as soon as I got home and read one interesting email titled "God Winks". It was sent by Dino Scoli, a Serran. I just met him for the first time at the conference.

With two months under my belt as a member of Serra, my impression of the organization is quite positive. In this short period of time, I attended two monthly meetings, joined other Serrans in two fundraising dinners and attended the Annual Serra Conference. The support, encouragement and guidance given to us by our club leaders and members, has only strengthened my commitment to share our time, energy and resources to help our organization achieve its purposes and objectives.

As a new Serran, I feel humbled and blessed. May God's grace be with all of us and the Markham/Scarborough Serra Club.

What have I been missing?

Stay in touch: if you haven't been able to attend our recent meetings, this section will highlight some memorable meeting moments. We'd like to see you come back & see what's new & exciting and at the same time get you inspired!

We had an amazing meeting to begin the Year of **2013**. What a blessing to have **Rev. Russell Asch** as our guest speaker at our **January 5th meeting!**

At the age of 25, Fr. Russell converted to Roman Catholicism and lived the life of a monk for a month in a monastery. He entered the St. Augustine Seminary in 2004 and was ordained in 2011.



Rev. Russell Asch accepting his gift from SCMS member, Kay Booker.

Fr. Russell shared his vocation story talking about his multi-faith background as Anglican from his mother side and Jewish from his father side. He spoke of the Sacramental Christianity, the elements of compromise. As a product of separated parents not divorced, it is usually the children who suffered most. Family should be the model of the community and commitment to the faith is allowing God to take things away from us by not looking for heaven on earth but looking for heaven in our hearts. He also explained the meaning of marriage annulment in the Catholic faith.

Then, at our **February 2nd meeting** held at Precious Blood Parish Library, we had **Rev. Tony Pablo**, past chaplain of Sunnybrook Hospital and currently Chaplain of Etobicoke General Hospital, as our guest speaker.



Rev. Tony Pablo, leading the Serra prayer.

Fr. Tony highlighted and summarized the importance of prayer, i.e., lifting up of hearts and minds in a relationship with God; communicating with God and making God present in us. Through different forms of prayers - adoration, petition, praise, contrition and thanksgiving, we can make connections with our fellowmen. Fr. Tony thanked all Serrans as individuals and groups praying for vocations. He also talked about how his vocation started; when he was only 13 years old, as an altar server, he was asked by his parish priest to go with him to visit a parishioner so the

priest can anoint the sick. At that time, he felt the calling so he informed the priest that he wanted to be like him. He did not think about it for a long time, until the priest visited his parents and mentioned of his interest. Both his parents and he were surprised because he never thought his request would be taken seriously. So, at a young age, he entered the Minor Seminary and dedicated his priestly vocation to taking care of the sick. Fr. Tony also stressed the importance of every vocation and reminded that each one of us has a vocation.

During the month of March, or **March 2nd meeting** to be exact, held again at Precious Blood Parish Library, we had an inspiring event, where our guest speaker was **Rev. Carlos Martins, CC** with Companion of the Cross. Even though he was raised in a Catholic family, he did not go to church; he was only a Catholic by name only.

As an adult, aside from being an atheist, he became an intellectual one as well. It was during his university years that he encountered very committed Catholics that led him to sign up for a “vacation retreat” which turned out to be a retreat with Eucharistic adoration.

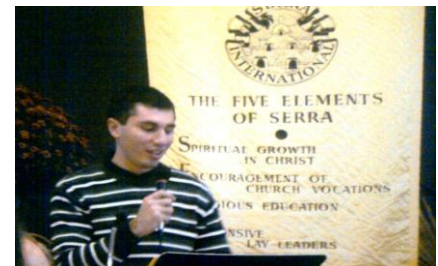


Evelyn presenting the token of appreciation to Fr. Carlos Martins.

He said the experience brought him a sense of peace which cannot be faked. A Catholic is not evangelized unless you evangelized others, for he or she is a “work in progress”. In other words, you are not considered evangelized, unless you are evangelizing. He was so motivated by the success of the retreat he organized at York U that he cut his budget; used \$7,000 to buy resources for students, including a pop corn machine and 1,100 lbs of kernels for campus meetings. He sent out 5,000 survey forms and received back 3,000 forms from students with contact information. Catholic students were

given a book to rediscover Catholicism. Fr. Carlos said people became hungry for God by their witnessing as a group at the campus. He is sending seven students from York University to the Pontifical Conference in Rome and asked Serrans for prayers.

Another blessing came to us when we held our **April 6th meeting** at St. Barnabas Parish. A Seminarian by the name of **Brother Massimo Buttiegieg** inspired us with his vocation story. He is a 3rd year seminarian from Malta, who is on a one-year assignment with St. Patrick Church, in Markham.



Brother Massimo Buttiegieg

Massimo said he was not seeking God or priesthood but it was God who searched him out. He related how at a family get-together in the presence of a visiting Cardinal from Spain he was “put on the spot” by the Cardinal who inquired when will he join the priesthood.

A few months later he received a letter asking him if he had considered his vocation to priesthood; he had actually forgotten all about it after having misplaced THAT letter somewhere.

Massimo attended the inauguration of a local bishop of which there were more than 150 priests in attendance; it was at that moment that he felt a stir in his heart about priesthood.

Initially, he was apprehensive about serving in a church with a non-Maltese priest but felt very welcome and comfortable at St. Patrick’s Parish in Markham. Now, he will have many memories to take home when he leaves for Malta in September to continue his seminary years. Our Club President mentioned that we should prepare to travel to Malta for Brother Massimo’s ordination. Everyone was in agreement.

Our last meeting before spring season ended was held on **May 4, 2013** at St. Barnabas Parish Hall. The guest speaker was **Rev. Dominic Mbah**, a Nigerian priest. He has conducted marriage encounter weekend retreats with the BLD Charismatic Group.

His inspirational talk was about our relationship with God and how **“Prayer Feeds Vocation”**. The culture of prayer is the foundation of our relationship and dialog with God. It is not a project, not a contract but allowing God to talk to us. A healthy prayer life is also allowing Jesus in our hearts, minds and soul. In other words, we cannot do the work of God without knowing God. And to know God, we must pray regularly, not making excuses that we are very, very busy. He recalled when he was a young boy, he was asked to become a leader of the Holy Rosary Crusade. This deep commitment to prayer had helped him in coping with his teenage years. In fact, at the age of 15, he received a prayer book about St. Brigit Novena prayer. He cherished this prayer book so much so that he felt very close to God. At one time, he fell asleep while studying and the lit candle was almost finished and left a burnt mark on his forehead and study table but the prayer book was still intact.



Felisa (Baby) Pulumbarit, Evelyn Manalo, Rev. Dominic Mbah and Maria-Luz Manalo



Before Evelyn presented the gift to Rev. Dominic, she stated that Father's last name (ie. MBAH) means M for Mary, B for Blessed, A for Anointed by, and H for the Holy Spirit.

During his formative years, he joined the Missionary of St. Paul. At that time, he wrestled with God, restless when he

received the Letter of Admission. He crumpled the Letter and placed it in the garbage bin. With God's "persistent calling" during that week, there was no garbage collection. Then, he begins to search for that Letter and talked to his friend, Mike, to take care of his personal belongings as he has to go to the Seminary. He was the last person to arrive amongst the 33 students. When the Rector saw him, he was welcomed, and he felt that God walked with him. And God begins to take over his life.

Travelling Vocation Chalice Program: Status Update



At **Precious Blood Parish Community**, the travelling vocation chalice program was initiated by Toronto Downtown Serra Club (i.e. Zinnia Milburn) in **early 2003**. This parish conducts the longest running program in Scarborough. The chalice has touched so many families (more than 500 families) praying for an increase of labourers for our Church. The vocation chalice has found its way from Christ's table to every family dinner table, using it as a centerpiece during the family's main meal for the whole week and using the prayers from the book we provide to ask God to open the hearts of young men and women to listen to His call and answer it. In fact, the community produced two homegrown priests, **Rev. David Berekowski & Rev. David McLeod**. Currently, the program is thriving and parishioners continue to pray and promote vocations through the great support of our pastor, **Rev. Ed Murphy**, who was the former pastor at St. Patrick's Parish in Markham.

The Travelling Vocation Chalice Ministry at **St Patrick's Church** has been in existence since **spring of 2010**. It started with about 150 Families receiving the Vocation Chalice on a weekly basis, at a Mass of their preference. Some Families had moved

but there are many other Families who requested to receive it into their homes. This program started with Rev. Ed Murphy when he was first installed as Pastor of St Patrick, and continued on today with the blessings of **Rev. Dominic Barber**, our new Pastor. This Ministry was featured twice in the Ministry Fair of the Parish and is well received by all Parishioners. Some of the Families shared with us many stories of healing, peace, gift of prayer and other miracles during the week that the vocation chalice stayed at their homes. Only one chalice is shared by the whole Church but received by Families in all the Masses including the Saturday mass at 5:00 pm and the San Lorenzo Mass at 10:15am. Also, St. Patrick's Parish will have a recruitment day for the vocation chalice on May 25/26 along with the Rosary Apostolate & Legion of Mary through all the masses for that weekend.

The travelling vocation chalice program began at **St. Thomas More** on **November 3, 2012** through the generous support of its pastor, **Rev. Octavio Beltran**. Up to the week of May 4, 2013, 23 families have received and welcomed the vocation chalice in their homes to pray for priests, nuns, and brothers & sisters, whether current or future in consecrated life. It is our belief that our prayers and prayers of the 23 families will result in an increase in priestly vocations not only within the Archdiocese of Toronto but the whole world as well. As quoted at the Serra connects magazine by the Myers family, who received the chalice for a week; "Yes, we recommend this chalice to all families as it helps the parents and teachers to teach our children of the need to pray for vocations and to pray for all priests and consecrated religious life".

Through the tremendous support of the SCMS Chaplain, **Rev. Edwin Gonsalves**, we plan to promote the travelling vocation chalice through pulpit announcements on all masses on the weekend of May 25 & 26 at **St. Barnabas Parish**. This will be coordinated by Dan McNeil, Classina Lewis & Maria Wennink.

We pray for the successful upcoming Travelling Vocation Chalice Campaign at these Parishes:

June 2013 – St. Justin Martyr Parish in Markham

September 2013 – St. Agnes Kouying Tsao and the Chinese Martyr's Churches in Markham

February 2014 – St. Rose of Lima Parish in Scarborough

Let's Celebrate!

➤ Wedding Anniversaries



Happy
Wedding
Anniversary!

Sample 99

Congratulations to:
Florencio & Josephine Ortiz – April 30
34 Years Wedding Anniversary

Fran & Felisa (Baby) Pulumbarit – May 29
16 Years Wedding Anniversary

➤ Grandparents



Congratulations to:
Iselyn Murray for being a grandma to
Elijah, born on January 25, 2013

➤ Birthday Celebrations

We extend Happy Birthday greetings to the following SCMS members, who are celebrating their birthdays in the month of May.

Louisa Wu – May 4
Nattie Aquino – May 10
Evelyn Manalo – May 20



Let's Pray

➤ For a Speedy Recovery:

Clarissa Baldwin
Robert Bentley
Peter Hospedeles

➤ For Altar Servers from Precious Blood Parish, considering Priesthood:

Francis Akkarapattiakal
Allester Labrador
Jonathan Pus
Joseph Narca

➤ For Receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation on May 19 Florencio Ortiz

Your 2012 -2014 SCMS Executive Members

President: Maria-Luz Manalo
VP Programs: Fran Pulumbarit
VP Vocations: Wilfred Gomez
VP Memberships: Evelyn Manalo
VP Communications: Dennis Wahking
Treasurer: Iselyn Murray
Asst. Treasurer: Sophie Manalo
Secretary: Aggie Gomez
Trustee: Classina Lewis
Trustee: Robert Atkinson
Trustee: Tony Ientile
Trustee: Peter Hospedeles

Past President: Felisa Pulumbarit
Chaplain: Rev. Edwin Gonsalves,
Pastor St. Barnabas Parish

Committee Chairs:

Breakfast – Louisa Wu/ Nattie Aquino
Baptismal Bib – Sophie Manalo
Altar Server Award Coordinator: Robert Bentley
Asst. Coordinators: Larry Blas & Dan McNeil
Travelling Chalice Program:
Felisa Pulumbarit – Chair
St. Patrick's – Mario S/Carmela I
Precious Blood – Gloria Wilson
St. Barnabas – Classina S/Dan M.
St. Aidan – Aggie/Wilfred Gomez
St. Thomas More – Dennis W/Sophie M

Upcoming Events

Date: Saturday, 01 June 2013
6:00 pm – 12:00 midnight
Annual Fundraising Event
Theme: Rancheros y Rancheras en la Rancho Grande (Western Dinner/Dance)
St. Patrick's Parish Hall
5633 Highway 7, Markham, ON

Date: Saturday, 15 June 2013
10:00 am
Serra District Council Meeting
Serra House, Toronto, ON

Date: June 20 – 23, 2013
72nd Serra International Convention
Palma de Mallorca, Spain

Date: Saturday, July 20, 2013
Serra District Council Meeting
Mary, Mother of God, Parish
Oakville, ON

Date: July 27 - 29, 2013
SCMS Annual Pilgrimage
Quebec & Montreal, Quebec

Date: Saturday, August 17, 2013
SCMS Picnic/Executive Meeting
Sagrada Familia Centre
Orangeville, ON

God invites vocations — you can help!

Serra strives to strengthen the bonds between the ministries of the laity, clergy, and religious, as fellow-workers in our church.

If you wish more information contact the Serra website www.serracanada.com



OUR PATRON

The founders chose Father Junipero Serra as their patron. He was the Spanish-born 18th century Franciscan missionary who established the first missions in Mexico and the coast of California. Father Serra was beatified in 1988.