



# SERRA CLUB OF CANBERRA

## Newsletter May 2020

### The Five Elements of Serra

- ✠ Spiritual growth in Christ
- ✠ Religious education of the laity
- ✠ Encouragement of church vocations
- ✠ Responsive lay leaders
- ✠ Association in Christian fellowship

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### Serran Prayer for Vocations

O God who wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live, grant we beseech you, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, Saint Joseph her spouse, Saint Junípero Serra and all the saints, an increase of labourers for your Church, fellow labourers with Christ, to spend and consume themselves for souls, through the same Jesus Christ Your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

### Prayer for the Perseverance in Vocations

O God, you have constituted your Only Begotten Son supreme and eternal Priest for the glory of your majesty and the salvation of mankind: grant that those whom he has chosen ministers and dispensers of his mysteries may be found faithful in fulfilling the ministry they have received. We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

### To Serrans and Friends of Serra,

I will continue to send out the monthly newsletter, albeit with a difference, during this time of isolation/social distancing directions.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> MAY - GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

#### Reminders

**REMEMBER** to say the Serran Prayer **DAILY**.

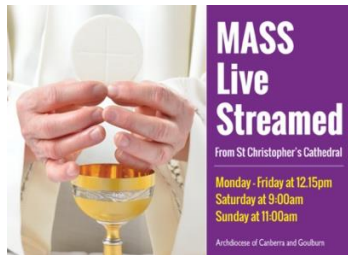
#### Trustees Meetings

Suspended. Trustees will be able to communicate via e-mail/phone.

**Rosary, Monthly Masses & Dinners:** suspended due to coronavirus protocol directions.

**Important information for all; especially 31 CLUB members, please note that we now have Mass online daily, via the Archdiocesan Website:**

<https://www.catholicvoice.org.au/mass-online/>



### Spiritual Communion Prayer of St Alphonsus Liguori

My Jesus,  
 I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.  
 I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
 Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.  
 I embrace You as if You were already there  
 and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

**The Month of May:** This May, during the month dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Pope Francis has invited the faithful to renew their love for the Most Holy Rosary.

A prayer to add at conclusion of the rosary:

We fly to your protection,  
 O Holy Mother of God;  
 Do not despise our petitions in our necessities,  
 but deliver us always from every danger,  
 O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.

**3<sup>rd</sup> May (Sunday):** Good Shepherd Sunday and 57<sup>th</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

*Always to go forward, never to turn back*

**Plenary Council Prayer:** Come, Holy Spirit of Pentecost. Come, Holy Spirit of the great South Land. O God, bless and unite all your people in Australia and guide us on the pilgrim way of the Plenary Council. Give us the grace to see your face in one another and to recognise Jesus, our companion on the road. Give us the courage to tell our stories and to speak boldly of your truth. Give us ears to listen humbly to each other and a discerning heart to hear what you are saying. Lead your Church into a hope-filled future, that we may live the joy of the Gospel. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, bread for the journey from age to age. Amen. Our Lady Help of Christians, pray for us. St Mary MacKillop, pray for us.

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### **Message of the Holy Father for the 57th World Day of Prayer for Vocations**

The following is the Message the Holy Father Francis has sent for the occasion to bishops, priests, consecrated persons and faithful all over the world:

Extracts only \*

**On 3 May 2020, Fourth Sunday of Easter, the 57th World Day of Prayer for Vocations will be held on the theme: “Words of Vocation”.**

On 4 August last year, the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of the Curé of Ars, I chose to write a letter to all those priests who daily devote their lives to the service of God’s people in response to the Lord’s call.

On that occasion, I chose four key words – **pain, gratitude, encouragement and praise** – as a way of thanking priests and supporting their ministry. I believe that today, on this 57<sup>th</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations, those words can be addressed to the whole people of God, against the backdrop of the Gospel passage that recounts for us the remarkable experience of Jesus and Peter during a stormy night on the Sea of Galilee (cf. Mt 14:22-33).

After the multiplication of the loaves, which had astonished the crowds, Jesus told his disciples to get into the boat and precede him to the other shore, while he took leave of the people. The image of the disciples crossing the lake can evoke our own life’s journey. Indeed, the boat of our lives slowly advances, restlessly looking for a safe haven and prepared to face the perils and promises of the sea, yet at the same time trusting that the helmsman will ultimately keep us on the right course. At times, though, the boat can drift off course, misled by mirages, not the lighthouse that leads it home, and be tossed by the tempests of difficulty, doubt and fear.

Something similar takes place in the hearts of those who, called to follow the Teacher of Nazareth, have to undertake a crossing and abandon their own security to become the Lord’s disciples. The risk involved is real: the night falls, the headwinds howl, the boat is tossed by the waves, and fear of failure, of not being up to the call, can threaten to overwhelm them.

The Gospel, however, tells us that in the midst of this challenging journey we are not alone. Like the first ray of dawn in the heart of the night, the Lord comes walking on the troubled waters to join the disciples; he invites Peter to come to him on the waves, saves him when he sees him sinking and, once in the boat, makes the winds die down.

The first word of vocation, then, **is gratitude**. Taking the right course is not something we do on our own, nor does it depend solely on the road we choose to travel. How we find fulfilment in life is more than a decision we make as isolated individuals; above all else, it is a response to a call from on high. The Lord points out our destination on the opposite shore and he grants us the courage to board the boat. In calling us, he becomes our helmsman; he accompanies and guides us; he prevents us from running aground on the shoals of indecision and even enables us to walk on surging waters.

Every vocation is born of that gaze of love with which the Lord came to meet us, perhaps even at a time when our boat was being battered by the storm. “Vocation, more than our own choice, is a response to the Lord’s unmerited call” (Letter to Priests, 4 August 2019). We will succeed in discovering and embracing our vocation once we open our hearts in gratitude and perceive the passage of God in our lives...

The Lord knows that a fundamental life choice – like marriage or special consecration to his service – calls for **courage**. He knows the questions, doubts and difficulties that toss the boat of our heart, and so he reassures us: “Take heart, it is I; have no fear!” We know in faith that he is present and comes to meet us, that he is ever at our side even amid stormy seas. This knowledge sets us free from that lethargy which I have called “sweet sorrow” (Letter to Priests, 4 August 2019), the interior discouragement that hold us back from experiencing the beauty of our vocation.

In the Letter to Priests, I also spoke about **pain, but here I would like to translate the word differently, as fatigue**. Every vocation brings with it a responsibility... If we let ourselves be daunted by the responsibilities that await us – whether in married

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life or priestly ministry – or by the hardships in store for us, then we will soon turn away from the gaze of Jesus and, like Peter, we will begin to sink. On the other hand, despite our frailty and poverty, faith enables us to walk towards the Risen Lord and to weather every storm. Whenever fatigue or fear make us start to sink, Jesus holds out his hand to us. He gives us the enthusiasm we need to live our vocation with joy and fervour.

When Jesus at last boards the boat, the winds die down and the waves are calmed. Here we have a beautiful image of what the Lord can do at times of turbulence and tempest in our lives. He stills those winds, so that the forces of evil, fear and resignation no longer have power over us.

As we live out our specific vocation, those headwinds can wear us down. Here I think of all those who have important responsibilities in civil society, spouses whom I like to refer to – note [not] without reason – as “**courageous**”, and in a particular way those who have embraced the consecrated life or the priesthood. I am conscious of your hard work, the sense of isolation that can at times weigh upon your hearts, the risk of falling into a rut that can gradually make the ardent flame of our vocation die down, the burden of the uncertainty and insecurity of the times, and worry about the future. Take heart, do not be afraid! Jesus is at our side, and if we acknowledge him as the one Lord of our lives, he will stretch out his hand, take hold of us and save us.

Even amid the storm-tossed waters, then, our lives become open to **praise**. This is the last of our vocation words, and it is an invitation to cultivate the interior disposition of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Grateful that Lord gazed upon her, faithful amid fear and turmoil, she courageously embraced her vocation and made of her life an eternal song of praise to the Lord.

Dear friends, on this day in particular, but also in the ordinary pastoral life of our communities, I ask the Church to continue to promote vocations. May she touch the hearts of the faithful and enable each of them to discover with gratitude God’s call in their lives, to find courage to say “yes” to God, to overcome all weariness through faith in Christ, and to make of their lives a song of praise for God, ...

FRANCIS

\* [Full text sent on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in Edition 0016-2020 *Vocational News for Serrans*.]

## 35 years since the letter “Dilecti amici”

On March 31, 1985 Pope John Paul II addressed a letter to young people entitled "Dilecti amici," the origin of WYD and the annual messages to the youth of the world



When the United Nations declared 1985 the International Year of Youth, St. John Paul II wanted to address an Apostolic Letter to young people all over the world. Today, in the centenary year of the birth of World Youth Day’s founder, we can read this letter as part of his spiritual testament to the youth of many different generations.

The words of St. Peter the Apostle are repeated in this letter like a refrain: “Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you.” (1 Peter 3:15) With this exhortation, and with the parable of the rich young man, the Pope shows young people how rich and how full of hope each of their lives are. From the document

emerges an anthropological vision of man, created in the image of God and destined for eternal life, which characterizes all of his papal teachings.

Facing the specific challenges of the modern world, St. John Paul II encourages young people to have the courage to ask questions like the young man in the Gospel, and to seek answers in personal prayer and in the scriptures. He exhorts them to discover their Christian vocation and to live their lives from the point of view of a gift of self. But, above all, he wishes that young people would discover for themselves personally the loving gaze of Jesus: “It is also my hope that, after you have made the discernment of the essential and important questions for you youth, for the plan of the whole life that lies before you, you will experience what the Gospel means when it says: “Jesus, looking upon him, loved him.” May you experience a look like that! May you experience the truth that he, Christ, looks upon you with love!” (n. 7)

Given the richness of its content, the letter “Dilecti amici” has become a source of inspiration for catechists and youth leaders, and has been repeatedly referenced in papal teaching, as well as during the 2018 synodal process. [<http://www.laityfamilylife.va/>]

*Always to go forward, never to turn back*