



SERRA CLUB of MELBOURNE Newsletter

February 2020

RETREAT AND SEMINARY VISIT

The Annual Serra District 89 Retreat has been booked at Holy Cross Retreat Centre, Serpells Road Templestowe, where we have been now for several years. The date is Saturday 28th March 2020. Bishop Terry Curtin DD will be the Retreat Master. This has been timed to coincide with the Serra members being invited to attend Mass and lunch at Corpus Christi College Seminary, on Sunday 29th March. This joint weekend will now be the third year that this has been arranged, and it certainly has proved very popular. It is vital that all members are advised of the dates so that they can make provision for it.

SALE GOLF/BOWLS DAY

The Serra Club of Sale is once again holding its annual Sports Day and Dinner on Monday 6th April. The event is held on the Monday of Holy Week as the priests of the Diocese are in Sale to celebrate the Feast of the Holy Oils on the next day. The Sports Day attracts over a hundred guests each year. The Club invites all the clergy of the Diocese, and also the ministers of the other denominations, and is a great ecumenical gathering. The amount of preparation and work put into conducting this event is a tribute to the club members, and in particular Reg Carmody.

CONGRATULATORY CARDS

An initiative that commenced with the very first meeting in 1968, resolved in sending Congratulatory Cards to priests and religious on their significant anniversaries. The Melbourne Club has now sent many thousands of cards, and makes enquiries from the dioceses and religious orders, so that as many as possible receive cards. No doubt some will be missed, which is unfortunate, but we have to rely on receiving the information from the various Orders. However, those that do receive them often respond with grateful thanks. For the twelve months of 2019, a total of 228 Cards were sent.

K.S.C. DINNER

The Annual Archbishop's Dinner, sponsored by the Knights of the Southern Cross, will be held on Friday evening 21st August 2020. The venue will once again be held at Moonee Valley Racecourse in their entertainment Centre. This will be the 22nd Annual Dinner and it has raised 1.3 million dollars, which is shared equally between the Dioceses of Victoria, and the Military Ordinariate to assist in the education of seminarians and additional study for priests. The guest speaker will be Archbishop Peter A Comensoli

SERRA AUSTRALIA 50 YEARS

The Serra Club of Melbourne was Chartered on 28th January 1970, and so the Club thought it fitting to celebrate this event on 19th February 2020, the first meeting for the year. Archbishop Peter A Comensoli was approached to be the Celebrant for the Mass, and he readily accepted. All clubs were invited, and various priests who had been guest speaker, or from other contacts over the years, and some nuns who also have been involved with the club. Eleven priests concelebrated the Mass, and the Archbishop was assisted by Deacon Brian Murling . Club Chaplain, Fr Gerard Dowling OAM, gave the homily. He likened it to a conversation with Saint Junipero Serra and gave thanks that he had implanted in Serrans their belief in, and support for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

He said that it was a great joy to himself and to priests and religious, that Serrans gave such generous support with pray and friendship in that they encouraged them to follow God's call.

Father made special mention that our meetings commenced with the Rosary and the Mass. He also thanked Serrans for the Prayer Crusades and personal life of faith that was demonstrated by participation in Serra sponsored activities.

Father Gerard gave as an example that during his time as Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, he decided to arrange a BBQ for priests of the Diocese on Melbourne Cup Day and asked for assistance of the Serrans. This was readily given and was conducted each Cup Day when he was Dean.

He also mentioned the prayers for ill or deceased priests and religious, and fellow Serrans at each meeting. Father Jacob MST, Parish Priest of Holy Trinity, thanked the Archbishop.

Archbishop Comensoli spoke at the dinner that followed the Mass, and commended Serrans for their work and suggested that perhaps we could look at the possibility of starting clubs within some of the ethnic communities, as they demonstrate strong faith. The President of SCANZSPAC, Anne Larkins, thanked Archbishop Comensoli.



A wonderfully decorated cake to mark the occasion was enjoyed by those present, and table decorations also themed with the 50th Anniversary.

A total of fifty Serrans and guests were present including District 89 Governor, Bernie Roney, and Serrans from the Oakleigh Deanery, Sale and Bendigo enjoyed a Buffet Dinner.

During the Mass, the Archbishop inducted Jolyon Butler as a new member of Serra. Jolyon is the husband of Christine Butler and is the third husband and wife group that the club now has. Jolyon is the first member to be inducted by an Archbishop!

R.I.P. Theresa Fitzgerald, widow of Leo Fitzgerald, died on Saturday 22nd February, and her funeral was held at Holy Eucharist Church, Malvern East. And was attended by a large crowd to honour her. Fr Kevin Dillon was the celebrant and spoke of his association with both Leo and Theresa from his time as Vocations Director.

Leo was a Charter member of the Serra Club of Melbourne and was elected President of the club in 1979.

Theresa was a very strong supporter of Leo, and his involvement in Serra, and last year, she attended the Annual Luncheon that the Melbourne Club conducts each September.

May she rest in peace.

Please pray for Anne Larkins and her extended family. Robert O'Brien. A nephew of Anne's died unexpectedly on 6th March. He had been living with Anne for several years/ He has not had good health and was only 42 years old. It was a great shock for Anne and the family.

The full homily at the 50th Anniversary Mass by our Chaplain, is hereunder.

Our Archbishop, Peter Comensoli, agreed to be the chief celebrant of this Mass. Which was planned for the 50 years commemoration of the chartering of the Melbourne branch of the Serra international, which delighted us a great deal.

However, it was his decision that one of the priests, who benefited from the services of the Serra Club should preach on that occasion. So, I being the longest serving chaplain of the Melbourne Club volunteered to carry out that responsibility as I'm doing tonight.

It was of course easy to say "Yes" to that challenge, when it was still several months away. But when it dawned on me a few days ago, I realized soon I would have to fulfil my promise. That had me asking myself, "What am I to say on that occasion to the assembled Serrans and the families and friends?"

Conscientious as I am of our firm belief as members of the Catholic church in the doctrine of the Communion of the Saints that those who are already living in the presence of the Lord have a genuine interest in those of us, who are still in this world, So, I decided to seek that help, and who more appropriately could I turn to that St Junipero Serra.

So, one afternoon recently I sat down with him to share with him my need. Not surprisingly he was happy to help in the project of members of an organization that is committed to his patronage.

So, he asked me to tell him what it was specifically that I wanted from him. I explained the nature of our proposed gathering to celebrate 50 years as a Serra Club.

Well, he said, "Just thank them for their work as Serrans. While that seemed an appropriate theme, I politely suggested that I needed more than that to preach about, and pointed out that the priests from the Society of Jesus, who educated me at Corpus Christi College, the seminary where I trained for the priesthood, insisted that every worthwhile sermon has three points. So, I pressed him for further suggestions.

And he had no hesitation, as I sat there listening, that I should tell you members of the Serra Club that your most important contribution to us as priests and religious is your firm belief in our personal vocation. In other words, that what you do for us is because they see you as carrying out God's call.

I appreciated that that was his fundamental point that I should share with you tonight, but I pressed him to go on further. So, he added another reason. He said I should express gratitude to you and that I should affirm you for your awareness of the value and importance of God's help, that your work is not merely up to you and your contribution.

And I could readily endorse that. For instance, prior to your monthly meeting you pray the Rosary. In other words, you make meaningful use of that prayer that involves the reliance and the interested assistance of Jesus' mother, Mary.

Then he went on to say, "You always have a priest celebrate the Eucharist for you, and readily obey Jesus' injunction at the Last Supper "Do this in Memory of Me."

While I was more than grateful for his generous assistance to this point, he could see my eagerness to hear a third point, and he said "You ought be thankful for their willingness to assist with any pastoral project that Serra can get involved in".

I was quick to grasp his third point because I have personally benefitted from that ready willingness to help. As the Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, I used to provide an annual open day at the presbytery free of charge for the priests of the diocese, and

your practical assistance was readily forthcoming each time from Serrans ensuring that my brothers could dine for lunch in a marquee in the central gardens of the presbytery with a nicely prepared barbeque lunch, the service of which was well handled by members of the Serra Club of Melbourne.

Assistance, too, in the Cathedral with Mass for Religious at the beginning of each year, and help, too, later in the year with the Mass for families and friends, who have given valuable support to the priests and religious of the diocese, greatly benefited from your presence.

There was one other project that he asked to include, and that is your Mass Crusade in the parishes, so that the Faithful can be meaningfully involved with your prayerful approach towards the continued supply of vocations.

At that point, I was truly filled with grateful delight for all that he had shared with me that afternoon.

But before he let me go, he smiled and he said, "There is one more thing I'd like you to do for all those, who have come along. Please invoke God's blessing on every one of them that they might be enriched for their attendance this afternoon, and in gratitude for their personal contribution to the ministry of the Serra International in Melbourne for the last 50 years, with a special prayer for those, who are no longer in this world, and that they may be blessed with the gift of eternal happiness."

Finally, I invoke on each of you gathered here tonight, the love and joy of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit for now and forever. Amen.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

March 25th	St. Catherine's Church, 2 Buchan Street, Moorabbin
April 28th	Rosary 6.15 pm. Mass 6.30 pm. followed by Dinner
May 27th	Meeting in the Sweeney Centre.

SATURDAY MORNING MASS for VOCATIONS

March	St Leonard's, Glen Waverley	9.15am
April	St Joseph's, Elsternwick	10.00am
May	Stella Maris, Beaumaris	9.15am

MASS ROSTER:

	<i>March</i>	<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>
Reader:	Frank	Anne	Dan
Prayers of the Faithful:	Christine	Dan	Jo
Offertory Procession:	Max/Anne	Jo/John	Max/Terry
Minister of Communion:	Dan/John	Frank/Terry	Anne/Christine
Meals Clean Up:	All Members urged to assist.		