



SERRA COUNCIL of AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND and the SOUTH PACIFIC

June 2019

SCANZSPAC Board Meeting:

The SCANZSPAC Board held its first meeting for 2019 on Saturday 13th April.

The day commenced with Mass at St Mary's Cathedral, Sale, which was celebrated by the Dean of the Cathedral, Fr Peter Bickley. Members of the Serra Club of Sale acted as hosts for the meeting, and members were invited to attend the meeting as observers.

A letter from Sheree Limbrick, Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Professional Standards Ltd, which had been sent to the SCANZSPAC President, Anne Larkins, was tabled. CPSL was established by Catholic Bishops and Religious Leaders in 2016 in response to issues emerging from The Royal Commission into institutional responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The safeguarding standards require a Church entity to enter into a Service Agreement with CPSL that will ensure that the entity has appropriate procedures in place to ensure the safety of children. The entity is subject to audit by SPSL. Board members were of the view that Serra Clubs do not 'work with children' as such, but it may be possible that some members could come into contact with children during, perhaps fundraising activities. It was agreed that SCANZSPAC should write to CPSL to commend its work and to seek clarification on Serra activities.

President Anne Larkins extended a welcome to SCANZSPAC'S new Episcopal Advisor, Bishop Michael Kennedy from the Diocese of Armidale, N.S.W. The Bishop was unable to attend but had accepted the role of Episcopal Advisor.

Anne proposed that some Board members arrange a visit with Bishop Michael to brief him on SCANZSPAC's current position, and to consider any advice that he may have.

Bishop Les Tomlinson, Sandhurst, was thanked for his service as Episcopal Advisor.

SCANZSPAC congratulated the Serra Club of Sale on its achievement of 40 years of faithful service. Many of the Club members are long-time members, and their service is a tribute to their Catholic faith demonstrated through their support for vocations.

It was reported that the 50th Anniversary of the Charter of the Serra Club of Melbourne will occur on 28th January 2020 and the occasion will be celebrated at the club's February meeting. Archbishop Peter Comensoli will be the Principal Celebrant at the Mass.

Vice-President Vocations, David Carson, reported that despite the problems in the Catholic Church, men from around Australia are responding to God's call to the priesthood. David has been in contact with a number of seminarians which have provided the following information.

Vianney College Wagga Wagga NSW—The Seminary has 20 Seminarians in residence plus 4 students on placement. Three Deacons were ordained for Lismore Diocese last November. One Deacon will be ordained for Wagga Wagga Diocese this May.

Seminary of the Good Shepherd Homebush NSW—The Seminary has 55 students including nine for the Diocese of Broken Bay. The Broken Bay enrolment is the largest for the Diocese in many years.

Holy Spirit Seminary Banyo Qld—The Seminary has 26 students. One Deacon will be ordained to the Priesthood for the Archdiocese of Brisbane in May this year. One Seminarian was ordained to the Diaconate for the Diocese of Townsville in February this year.

Redemptorist Mater Seminary Chester Hill NSW—There are 19 students at the Seminary. This includes two Seminarians who were ordained to the Diaconate last year and who are anticipating ordination to the Priesthood this year. The Seminary is expecting that 3 new students will join later this year.

Corpus Christi College Carlton Vic—Ten students entered First-year studies this year bringing the enrolment to 50. It is anticipated that, later this year, 3 Deacons will be ordained for the Archdiocese of Melbourne and 1 Deacon will be ordained for the Diocese of Sale. It is likely that, during this year, 12 students will be ordained to the Diaconate for the Archdiocese of Melbourne, the Archdiocese of Hobart, the Diocese of Sale and the Diocese of Sandhurst.

Missionaries of God's Love—The Order continues to attract young men to the Seminary. The Seminary has two sites, Canberra and Melbourne. The Canberra Seminary has 14 students in 'early formation' whilst the Melbourne Seminary has 18 students in initial formation and 1 student preparing for final vows. In December this year 1 student will be ordained to the Diaconate and 1 student will be ordained to the Priesthood.

Since its establishment in 1986, the order has 31 priests in Australia and overseas (Indonesia and The Philippines) and 2 Consecrated Brothers.

Holy Spirit Seminary Harris Park NSW— Holy Spirit Seminary is part of Parramatta Diocese. David did not have current numbers but, last year, the Seminary had 14 students. Four of these students were ordained to the Priesthood last November.

Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese—Four Carmelite Nuns from Lincoln Nebraska USA have arrived to form an enclosed community. Two of the nuns are Australians.

Vice-President Membership, John Mason said that 2016-2017 SCANZSPAC Directory listed membership at 154. The 2018-2019 Directory lists 121. This shows the need to heed the call from Serra

International to increase individual efforts by any means.

Anne Larkins reported membership of 13, with one other joining in July. Three members are to meet with a Permanent Deacon in a parish to start discussions about another club or more members for the Melbourne Club.

Sale Club reported that they have found it is best to invite prospective members to attend a few meetings. The club enjoys a lot of support from many people, but they don't wish to be full members.

Kevin Fellow, North Shore Club, indicated that membership is stable, attracting about 20 members to its meetings, with normally one or two visitors. It is recognised that the club needs new members to maintain its highly regarded position in the Diocesan structure. The club is well regarded in the Diocese, and has a good relationship with the parish priests.

Michael Allan, Canberra Club, advised that they had 31 members, plus 6 who have not renewed their membership.

Wagga Wagga Club is stable with 21 members and a meeting attendance of 16 to 17. Two new members were inducted earlier this year.

Max Spencer commented that since 2009, Serra in Australia has lost 4 clubs and 42 members. Serra needs to attract ethnic groups.

Governor, District 89, Bernie Roney, who had just been installed as Governor in March, reported on the Oakleigh Deanery Club and their '*Travelling Chalice*' that is transferred on a weekly basis, plus four small chalices that go to Catholic schools in the area.

The members conduct a Holy Hour of Adoration after the 10.00am Mass each Thursday. At club meetings, the club's Spiritual Director, Sister Mary Batchelor, discusses with the members the Gospel reading for the following Sunday.

The Bendigo Club reported that Deacon Nathan Varello was ordained to the Priesthood on 24th November 2018 at Sacred Heart Cathedral Bendigo. This was the second ordination for the year. The club continues to conduct parish

visits to speak about Serra, and the need to pray for Vocations.

Governor, District 92, Andrew Kennedy said that Evening Prayer and Adoration is conducted each Friday by the Canberra club at Mary Help of Christians Parish.

The Wagga Wagga Club reported that 3 new first year Seminarians commenced studies at Vianney College this year. The College also has a new fourth year Seminarian studying for the Armidale Diocese. The club continues to have all-night vigils with first Friday Mass, and the Serrans are rostered through to Saturday morning.

Ten North Shore Club members met with Plenary Council Co-ordinator, Peter Mears, and provided feedback on all the issues raised. The club held a most successful Christmas Party at Magpies Club, Waitara, with 41 members and guests in attendance, along with 34 Clergy, Deacons, Consecrated men and women and seminarians. The Club maintains a continued Serra presence at the Holy Hour for Vocations at St Agatha's Parish, Pennant Hills, on the first Friday of the month. Broken Bay Diocese has recently appointed a Vocation Officer, Michelle Chahine, to support Fr Paul Durkin, who is Parish Priest of St Agatha's Parish, and diocesan Vocations Director.