



Serra Club of Boulder County

District 6, Club #723 Region 13
Chartered September 29, 1990 *Chaplain: Fr. Mark Kovacik*

February, 2021

Club Meeting Times: 1st Friday and 3rd Friday of *each* month following the 7:00 a.m. Mass at SHJ. Selected member chefs bring breakfast *for* those present. Bring a friend and encourage them to join our club.

President: Sue Husler

Secretary: Dori Fitzgerald

V.P. Vocations: Bill Fitzgerald

V.P. Programs: Lillian Price

V.P. Affirmation: Ed Theiss

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings from sunny AZ!

I would like to convey a couple points from the District 6 meeting which was held 1/30/21.

USA Council is in process of developing a Marketing Project to get the Serra Message out there – to increase awareness and to create an environment to encourage people to join. Right now it is a pilot test which is targeting 50-65 year olds – those

President-Elect: Peggy Morrow

Treasurer: Ed Husler

V.P. Membership: Stan Peterson

V.P. Communications: Nancy Harris

Parish Liaison:

that have recently retired. It is being tested in Denver, Minneapolis, Kansas City and Cleveland. It was stressed when inviting new members, invite them to be part of our mission, not to just join a club.

Bishop Thomas Daly who will speak Feb. 13 on the topic of Lent, will have prerecorded weekly Lenten reflections (~10 min.) that we can listen to during all of Lent.

There will be a club 'ZOOM' meeting Feb. 5, followed by a board meeting.

You may review the board minutes and the newsletter on our club

website:www.serraclubbouldercounty.org

Mary, Mother of Vocations, pray for us

St. Junipero Serra, pray for us St. Joseph,

pray for us

Recent Past Events

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January 1 – Club Meeting

HOLIDAY – New Year’s Day
No Serra Meeting

January 15 – Club Meeting

At the first Serra ZOOM, 2021 meeting of January 15, the Boulder County Serra club was fortunate to welcome Fr. Emmanuel Osigie as our first speaker of the New Year. His vocation story was so inspiring! It’s these vocational narratives that keep Serrans invested in their support for the priesthood and religious life.

Fr. Emmanuel was born in Harcourt, Nigeria, the fourth child in a family of seven children. His father was a Catholic who taught the children the rosary. His mother was Anglican and converted to Catholicism at the time of their marriage so she taught the children scripture. Fr. Emmanuel credits his parents for his good Catholic upbringing and Marian devotion.

The pastor of his church, recognizing his fidelity, allowed Fr. Emmanuel, at the age of five, to serve at the altar. Also, at this time, he began celebrating Mass in his mother’s kitchen. At the age of eight, this same pastor gifted him with a Christmas gift of his own set of mass vestments. Fr. was amazed as he was very tiny, and the vestments were made to fit.

From 11 yrs. to 17 yrs. of age, Fr. Emmanuel attended Sacred Heart Seminary in Nigeria. He graduated summa cum laude with a degree in philosophy. At age 18, Fr., much to the chagrin of his bishop, wanted to try something else and

entered into medical school which was a six year program to certification but which he passed early on merit. He next graduated from St. Joseph Seminary in Rome summa cum laude with a degree in theology. Fr. Emmanuel was ordained a priest September 25, 2004. Since his father passed away when he was only 15, he was awarded a scholarship for life from an Irish family unknown to him. Due to this experience of generosity, Fr. Emmanuel, over the years, has tried to adopt other Nigerian seminarians. Sponsoring seminarians “gives him great joy”.

In 2011, Fr. Emmanuel was sent to Pittsburgh, PA to study systematic theology, a discipline of theology that addresses issues such as what the Bible teaches about certain topics or what is true about God and his universe. He received his PhD in 2017.

Fr. Emmanuel believes that every priest has a different vocation story. “Priesthood is a mystery and the mysteries we celebrate are not empty mysteries. God wants me to be a channel of his blessings despite my unworthiness and ordinariness. A priest is an ordinary person called to live among very good Catholic families. I constantly seek to find the Lord within my community. The rosary has been the devotion for me and, I have also been blessed to have personal encounters with God.”

Fr. was asked by an attending Serran if he would be willing to share one of these encounters with the club. He graciously agreed and proceeded to relate the story of his serious illness which occurred between ages 21 to 24 and which was caused by stomach ulcers. He was at

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seminary at the time and many of his fellow seminarians did not believe that he was ill. He was hospitalized and informed that an examination indicated he would need surgery. During his release back to the seminary to take exams prior to the surgery, he found his way to the chapel where he kneeled and asked God, "If you're real, convince me. How can I be an effective priest if I am ill?" The ulcer disappeared and has never returned. That's when Fr. Emmanuel became persuaded that God can work miracles.

Fr. Emmanuel was also asked if he had any favorite saints and a favorite Bible story. His favorite saint is St. John Vianney whose book he has read, and his second favorite is St. Thomas Aquinas. One of his favorite Bible stories is from John, Chapter 9. As Jesus passed a man, blind from birth, he was asked by his disciples who had sinned, the man or his parents. Jesus answered neither because it was so that the works of God would be visible through the man. And Jesus cured the blind man. The Pharisees did not recognize Jesus but the people of God, symbolized by the blind man, do.

Fr. Emmanuel now serves at both Sacred Heart of Mary and St. Marin de Porres Churches in Boulder. He also teaches at St. John Vianney Seminary on Mondays and Tuesdays. He came to the U.S. to study but desires to return to Nigeria to teach at the seminary there. Currently, he returns to Africa once every three years.

Fr. shared that 50% of Nigeria's religious population practices Islam. Islam is the fastest growing religion in the country. Catholics and Islamists encounter many

crises – lots of kidnappings of priests; some from Islamists and some from criminals looking for ransom.

Fr. Emmanuel ended his talk with these words, "Priesthood is part of God's divine work on earth. I am a very happy priest."

PRIESTS CORNER

We have finished 2020 and are already well into 2021. What will happen this year? We do not know but we do know that God knows what is coming and has prepared each one of us for the future. It is more important than ever to entrust our lives, families, Church and world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In the end her heart will triumph.

Fr. Mark

Masses for Seminarians

The club will be setting aside monies for masses for our seminarians once a month. If any club member is planning to attend or visit another church and would like to schedule a mass for the seminarians themselves, feel free to go ahead and do so but please notify the other club members.

Prayer for Seminarians

Father, thank You for the generosity of our seminarians. Safeguard them as they prepare for the priesthood. Keep all evil far from them so they become strong Christian men who are faithful to prayer, diligent in their studies, open to

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spiritual direction and docile to all aspects of seminary formation.

Above all, enflame their hearts with love so they will be ardent and gentle shepherds for your Church.

We make this prayer through the great High Priest, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Remember to pray for vocations, especially an increase to the priesthood; by dedicating a Mass, a rosary or an hour of adoration.

NOTE FROM TREASURER ED HUSLER

Our membership dues are now due for the new year. Our board has decided that the dues will remain the same as the last few years at \$77 per person. Please make your check to Serra Club of Boulder County. Mail your check to : Ed Husler, 297 Fourmile Canyon Drive, Boulder, CO 80302. Thanks!

Birthdays and Anniversaries

February Members Birthdays

February 18 – Bill Eck
February 22 – Dona Padrnos
February 26 – Nancy Sorenson
February 28 – Bob Gills

February Members Anniversaries:

February Seminarian Birthdays

February 7 – Ianana Taranteuea
FEBRUARY Religious Anniversaries

Prayer list: Please pray for those in need of healing: Fr. Greg Ames, Rosemary Ames, Tiki Theiss, Teresa Christoff, Lorna Christoff, Chase Curfman, Jeanette Denfeld, Audrey Kenney, Elaine Middleton, Helga Riedl, George Morzinski, Marcus Poulin-(Annette & Chase), Matthew Hibl, Angie McCann, Deacon George Theirjung, Fr. Jason Wallace, Vern Rogowski

And for all men and women and young people discerning a vocation to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life

Upcoming Events

Feb 6-7, 2021 – World Day for for Consecrated Life
Feb 13 – USA Council Monthly speaker **
Feb 13 – Ordination of Transitional Deacons
Feb 17 – Ash Wednesday
Mar 11-19 – Novena to St. Joseph
Mar 14 – Daylight Saving Time resumes
Apr 2-10 – Novena to Divine Mercy
Apr 4 – Easter
Apr 24 – Dist 6 meeting
April 24-25, 2021 – World Day for Vocations
June 30–July 3, 2021 – SI Convention, Toronto, Canada (canceled)
Sept or Oct – mini SI Convention in Chicago with board members and delegates (Business meeting)
July 2022 – SI Convention (hopefully in person)

****Next Serran online speaker on Saturday, February 13, 2021 at 10 a.m. (MT) will be His Excellency Bishop Thomas Daly of Spokane, Washington. I will send out a link to join the webinar site closer to that date.**

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USA Council collected \$25,000 which was presented to Los Angeles Archbishop Gomez to assist in the restoration of the fire damaged mission church at San Gabriel Mission in metropolitan Los Angeles. Thank you to all who contributed to this important effort.

THE SIX MOST IMPORTANT WORDS IN VOCATIONS

***AWARENESS, according to the late
Bishop David Choby, Bishop of
Nashville:***

***“HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED
BEING A PRIEST (OR RELIGIOUS
SISTER)?”***

MONTH OF February, 2021 – MEN SAINTS

Saint Valentine 226 - 270
(Feast Day– February 14)

Officially recognized by the Catholic Church, St. Valentine was said to be a holy priest in Rome in the days of Emperor Claudius II. Under Claudius' rule, Rome was involved in many unpopular and bloody wars. The emperor had difficulty appropriating and maintaining a strong army. He believed that Roman men refused to join the army because of a strong attachment to their wives and families.

To rid himself of this problem, Claudius banned all marriages and engagements in Rome. Valentine, realizing the injustice of this decree, continued to perform marriages in secret.

When his actions were discovered, Valentine was arrested and beheaded. The sentence was carried out on February 14.

According to legend, St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter who had become his friend and signed it "From You Valentine".

Valentine was a popular name in ancient Rome, and there are at least 50 stories of saints by that name. The earliest surviving accounts of two February 14 Valentines, written starting in the 500's, have a whole lot in common.

St. Valentine's Day has also been associated with the Christian effort to replace the older pagan holiday, "Lupercalia" which Romans celebrated on February 15. It was a pageant of bawdy behaviors.

In the 1370's or 1380's, the poet, Chaucer, wrote a poem called "Parliament of Fowls" that contains this line: "For this was on Saint Valentine's Day, when every bird comes there to choose his mate." By the 1400's, nobles inspired by Chaucer had begun writing poems known as "Valentines" to their love interests. It was at this point that stories began to appear linking St. Valentine to romance.

The Catholic Church discontinued liturgical veneration in 1969 though his name remains on its list of officially recognized saints.

Saint Paschal unknown – 824
(Feast Day – February 11)

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St. Paschal was a member of an aristocratic Roman family. He studied at the Lateran (an ancient palace of the Roman Empire, later the main papal residence in Southeast Rome) and was named abbot of St. Stephen's Monastery which served pilgrims visiting Rome; many of whom were fleeing the Byzantine Empire. He was elected pope by the College of Cardinals to succeed Pope Stephen the IV one day after Stephen died suddenly. From January 25, 817 till his death, Paschal served as bishop of Rome and ruler of the Papal States.

St. Paschal made pope without the sanction of Emperor Louis the Pious although the Catholic Church was beholden to the Turkish Empire. Paschal stressed that the office had been thrust upon him. He was able to smooth things over and win the approval necessary due to the shaky nature of the political situation in Rome.

Pope Paschal I spent much of his time dealing with iconoclasm which supported destruction of all statues and images of religious figures based on biblical (Book of Exodus) warnings against "graven images". The Byzantine Empire (eastern Orthodox faction of the Catholic faith) was a proponent of iconoclasm. The members of the Byzantines that fled to Rome were seeking to escape persecution due to their opposition of iconoclasm.

Pope Paschal I completed, restored and beautified a number of churches in Rome. He also recovered many relics and returned them to these new churches.

When Pope Paschal died in 824, the Roman Curia denied him the honor of burial in St.

Peter's Basilica based on his "harsh treatment" of Roman citizens. It took more than 500 years before he was finally canonized in the late 16th century.

St. Gonsalo Garcia 1557 - 1597
(Feast Day – February 6)

St. Gonsalo Garcia was born Gundi Slavus Garcia in a western coastal town, a burb of the city of Bombay, India. His father was Portugese and his mother was Canarese (southwestern India).

St. Gonsalo studied under the guidance of Jesuits for eight years from 1564 to 1572. At the age of 15, Gonsalo was taken by a Jesuit priest, Fr. Sebastian Goncalves, to Japan. He soon mastered the language and became very popular in the local community as a catechist. Eventually he resigned to set up a business which prospered.

When St. Gonsalo's long cherished dream of becoming a Jesuit failed to materialize, he moved to the Philippines to become a lay missionary. Finally, he became a lay brother with the Franciscans, worked with leprosy patients and was finally formally ordained a Franciscan in Manila.

In 1592, the Spanish governor of the Philippines sent Gonsalo back to Japan on a diplomatic mission. After working there four years, the Japanese shogun suspected the missionaries of sedition, and they were placed under house arrest. A few days later, while singing vespers, they were arrested, manacled and confined against their wills. On January 3, 1597, the left ears of 26 confessors including Garcia were cut off. They were collected in reverence

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by the local Christians. On February 5, Garcia was crucified in Nagasaki with his 26 companions. While being nailed, Garcia sang praises of God, earning him the title of martyr.

On June 8, 1262, Garcia was declared a saint by Pope Pius IX.