



# The Saginaw Serran

Established June 20, 1951

Vol. 2, Issue 1, September 2005

## **A Message from Our President by Bill**

**Ruger**

"Be Not Afraid."

That was quite a theme for the annual International Serra Convention.



Attending an affair such as this helps you appreciate the freedom that exists in our country in terms of worship.

One of the conference speakers, Cardinal John Baptist Pham Minh Man of Ho Chi Minh City described the conditions for the church in communist Vietnam. Parishioners may practice their religion only in the

parish church. Potential seminarians must be approved by the Communist government before admission. There are men on the waiting list for seven years before approval. Yet their seminary is thriving and full. They say that the Church gets many seminarians from the countries

with significant challenges because they are the people truly opening their hearts to the messages of Jesus. The Church in Vietnam cannot perform social works such as providing hospitals and healthcare, etc., outside of their parish building. The only exception to this is AIDS clinics. The Communist government experienced a significant problem with AIDS and had no structure to handle it. They then asked the Catholic Church of Vietnam to run their clinics.

A second message which came from the convention was very encouraging. Chinese leaders announced that they were opening dialogue with the Vatican. The church in China is strong and growing. It was wonderful to meet people from all countries of the world with the same goals and beliefs.

"Be Not Afraid" and continue to pursue the goals of our Serra Club while praying for full religious freedom in this world.

## **Call Forward: Denis Heames Shares His Vocation Story by Bernie Coppolino**

As with the biblical Samuel, God called Denis Heames several times before His message got through.



However, God is persistent, and now, the 33 year old Heames is one of twelve Saginaw Diocesan seminarians. He soon will start as a second-year theology student at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in

Detroit, with plans to be ordained as a priest in the summer of 2008.

In June, Denis shared his story with Serra Club members, and also has spoken at a number of parishes throughout the diocese.

One of eight children, Denis was 6 when first called by God while witnessing the Consecration at Mass. He said God showed him how the priest is "Jesus Christ to the Church" in a way that no other vocation shares. However, Denis did not receive much support when he announced his career goal to his friends, and his childhood dream was put aside by that peer pressure.

After high school, Denis went to Hollywood to

become a film actor. Despite initial success, he soon felt an incredible loneliness, a "wall so big, nothing could take me through it." He eventually said "Yes" to God, realizing that human beings and God are "hard-wired for each other" - that we are meant to acknowledge, interact with and serve God.

Leaving Hollywood, Denis went to Canada and joined Madonna House, a Catholic lay apostolate organization dedicated to good works such as hostels and soup kitchens. After nine years there, Denis again felt his childhood call to enter priesthood. He eventually arrived in South Dakota, where he met Bishop Robert Carlson and began his theological studies. After Bishop Carlson became Bishop of Saginaw, Denis decided to join him in Saginaw.

Denis firmly believes in the power of prayer. He asks that our young people pray for "a generous heart", so that they might be open to God's call. He asks that all people, young and old, pray to discover the depth of their own vocation - whether it be priesthood, religious life, marriage or generous single life. Finally, he asks for our prayers as he continues to respond to that call that God first issued to him so many years ago.

**SHARE SERRA...BRING A FRIEND!**

**From Our Chaplain by Fr. Ron Dombrowski**

Did you ever stop and think about the meaning of our Sunday Liturgy? I thought we would just look at the first two parts of the Liturgy today: the Gathering and the



Liturgy of the Word. Most of us think that our Sunday Worship begins with the gathering of God's people. But the beginning of our celebration really begins in our homes and on the way to church. This sets the tone of our celebration. If we come to church tensed up, sleepy and have many other things on our minds, then we have to put ourselves in the right disposition.

At the door of our churches there is someone to greet us and welcome us. We all like to be greeted wherever it might be, but especially in church and that is why our churches have greeters to just say hello, or to wish us a prayerful experience and to make sure that we have all the worship aids needed for the celebration.

The celebrant begins with the Sign of the Cross and this reminds us of our Baptism, and he will greet us saying "The Lord be with you." Again, this can mean many things, like "good day". It can mean both "hello" and "good bye." It is a profound statement of Faith and a wish that the Lord be with you. The ritual response is always the same; "And also with you", by which we return the greeting of the celebrant.

The celebrant will then ask us to join him in prayer and after a few moments of quiet prayer he begins to gather all our prayers for the day at which we all respond, "Amen", or in Hebrew translation, "So be it."

The Liturgy of Word is the story telling part of our

Eucharistic Celebration. We gather as we would with our friends and tell stories about the goodness of our God and the Lord Jesus. The first reading will be from the Old Testament or the Hebrew Scriptures recalling God's many covenants with his people throughout the ages. The Second Reading is taken from the Letters of Saint Paul or other New Testament Scripture

Many of our prayers that we use in the Mass are taken from the Scripture such as "Holy, Holy Holy" the Lord's Prayer, and many of the prayers we use in the Mass. In the Gospel we believe that Christ is present in the word since it is He himself who speaks when the Holy Scriptures are read. Out of respect and reverence we stand as the Gospel is proclaimed. The priest or deacon will again greet us with the "Lord be with you". He will also make a Sign of the Cross on the Gospel passage and then on his forehead, lips and heart while praying silently that the Lord cleanse his mind, lips and heart so that he may worthily proclaim the Gospel. Once again we conclude with the ritual formula, "This is the Gospel of the Lord", and we respond by saying "Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ." The celebrant then takes the scripture reading and tries to bring them to life for every day situations in his family.

The Liturgy of the Word comes to an end with the General Intercessions. In these intercessions we have a chance to pray for the needs of the world, our Church, our government, for peace, for shelter for the homeless, healing of the sick, food for the hungry and any personal needs that we may have that day. The whole assembly then has a chance to pray aloud with us as we all respond, "Lord hear our prayer", or some other acclamation.

**Why I am a Serran by Angelo Guerriero**

I have been a Serran for nearly twenty-five years. At our twice monthly meetings and special events I learned a lot about my faith and the work of others serving the Church of Saginaw. A real bonus has been meeting some wonderful people who I now count as my friends. When my Hildegard and I were able, we attended Regional and International conventions, all of which contributed to my appreciation of Serra's widespread influence.

Regionally, I remember Morgantown, WV, Louisville, KY and our own Grand Rapids. Being of Italian decent, I was most impressed with an International Convention held in Rome, Italy. There were side trips to Milan and Genoa. But the real treat was an audience

with His Holiness, Pope John Paul II. The Holy Father praised Blessed Junipero Serras's work for priestly and religious vocations, and encouraged us to keep at it! I visited many of the Missions established by our patron and wish that we could learn more about him.

Over the years I have brought in several members to our Club and even helped pay for dues for some.

I am filled with joy that we are now seeing the fruit of our work. Our new Bishop reports that as many as 10 men are preparing to begin their studies to serve the Diocese of Saginaw.

I am thankful and feel rewarded for the time I have spent in Serra.

***SHARE SERRA...BRING A FRIEND!***

## **A Report on The 2005 International Serra Convention by Bill and Janet Ruger**

The International Serra Club June 2005 Annual Convention in Thailand was the first ever held in an Asian country. Thailand is the only country which has a Serra Club in every diocese. They were well represented.

The highlights of the convention were the daily masses. The music was heavenly with the Convent Choir of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Bangkok, Saengtham (Lux Mundi) National Seminary choir, the Bangkok's Assumption Cathedral Choir and the Bangkok Combined Choir and Orchestra participating in the four masses from the opening to closing. The Thai hosts provided excellent meals and entertainment during the convention. There were great speakers from Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, Prefect of Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education from Rome to Bishop Louis Antonio Tagle, of Imus, the Philippines.

The tours were plentiful. Janet and I participated in the pre-conference tour, which was seven days. It included: tours of Wats (Budda Temples); the Imperial Palace; arts and crafts centers of Thailand, an elephant camp show including elephant ride, raft ride, ox cart ride; dinner cruises; visits to Thai mountain villages; and many other interesting sights. The country is very beautiful and the people very friendly.

The conferences were informative and provided suggestions for activities and programs for all Serra clubs.

Some of the activities suggested were to adopt a seminarian within the diocese or other countries; create relationships between seminarians and Catholic schools; host Vocation week dialogues at schools; promote priests speaking of vocations within the diocese; and the need to

visit diocesan parishes to promote membership in Serra.

Some of the other tips were use of the chaplain for a program; use experts in the diocese to discuss official church documents (i.e. Vatican II US/State Conference of Bishops material and Decree on Apostolate of Lay People); work with the Knights of Columbus to jointly promote vocations. There are pages of program suggestions on the Serra website.

"There is no story until it's told." Communications Directors should send their newsletters to both USA Council and Serra International. Websites should be developed and linked to Serra organizations, diocesan and Knights of Columbus websites. These are effective in promoting vocations and membership. Make contact with parish bulletin preparers and get schedules of Serra activities published. Include the Bishop in communications distribution. Newsletter items could include appointments, yearly events, special events or programs, awards, visits and conventions.

It is important to solicit members of each committee and encourage their participation. Use individual members' talents to plan the year and set goals. The club may elect to use the Pope's annual theme (i.e. Year of the Eucharist) or set an individual theme for the year. Use a 15 month planning calendar. Plan to attend ordinations. Distribute the Bellringer. Send minutes of meetings by e-mail to members. Hold dinners with pastors to get ideas. Provide articles for the Catholic Weekly.

There were excellent talks on vocations and the conference ended with the installation of the new International President of Serra, Dennis Leiber of the Grand Rapids club.

Next year's International Convention will take place in Spokane, Washington.

## **Charter Night by Kathy Bronz**

Each year we have a special night that we gather to celebrate our charter as the Serra Club of Saginaw. Our first charter night was June 20, 1951. This year we gathered on June 21 at Swan Valley Banquet Center, where we enjoyed a great dinner and fellowship. There were 47 of us in attendance along with 2 seminarians. Our special guest was John Osterhart and his wife. John is our District Governor and traveled from Grand Rapids to be with us. Bud Richter and Eddie Balcueva also were happy to award our Serran of the Year Award to a very worthy candidate, Sharon Wahl. Sharon has taken on many activities and positions in the club. Instead of the installation of officers (Bill Ruger and Janet were on their way to the International Convention in Thailand) we had a talented musician, Bob Barcalow, entertain us with his guitar and singing. A great time was had by all and for those who didn't join us, you missed the fun!

## **Five New Members Inducted**

On June 7, 2005 at a Mass celebrated with Bishop Carlson we were fortunate to have the following new members inducted into our club; (from the left) Louis Rapin, Janet Ruger, Tracy Knaub, Kathy Myles, and Bishop Carlson. Not pictured: Ken Grembowski. The Mass was in the chapel at the Center for Ministry



and lunch followed. Once lunch was over we had a conversation with Bishop Carlson. He updated us on the status of our seminarians saying that he hopes to have 11 men in one stage or another of formation by this fall. We also had a presentation from Denis Hermes, a seminarian, about his journey and the roads he has taken to answer God's call (see article on p. 1).

**MEMBER LIST**

George Ayotte	684-3447
Edgar Balcueva	793-5692
Ray Bartels	790-1224
Dave Beyerlein	790-7328
Tom Bivens	752-8560
Jerry Breen	793-5337
Kathy Bronz	792-2890
Bernie Coppelino	791-6126
Fr. Ron Dombrowski	753-2497
James Drinan	793-1770
Frank Drinan	799-4115
Carl Gohm	793-2855
Ken Grembowski	799-7285
Dennis Grimaldi	799-5572
Angelo Guerriero	792-1268
Bud Irish	792-2157
Bill Irish	792-0627
Tracy Knaub	793-5735
John Kunitzer	792-5453
Len LeFevre	793-7490
Robert Looby	799-3500
Terry Manwell	799-4060
Dick McKinley	799-3839
Kate Miller	790-2878
Kathy Myles	791-3806
Ernie Muscott	792-0536
Gerald Parent	667-0524
Dick Powell	781-9305
Louis Rapin	781-1878
Bud Richter	792-5571
Bill Ruger	792-6473
Janet Ruger	792-6473
Dave Schaeffer	792-1914
Scott Seamon	793-6814
Jean Seman	792-2011
Mary Siers	792-1334
Hank Slachta	799-3111
Stan Sobol	793-4720
Jerry Talbot	792-4130
Bob Vitu	799-1236
Sharon Wahl	799-2925
Marty Wilson	790-2727

**PROGRAM SCHEDULE**

September 6	Tom Conklin
September 16	Board Meeting
September 20	Tom Conklin
October 4	Mass
October 11	Board Meeting
October 18	Internal Program
November 1	Sr. Laura Hammel, OSC
November 8	Board Meeting
November 15	Fr. Bill Taylor
December 6	Mass at St. Josaphat Church
December 13	Board Meeting
December 20	Christmas Party

All meetings (except Board meetings) are held at the Center for Ministry, except Dec. 6. Rosary will be said at 11:30 a.m. before all meetings. The Christmas Party is an evening affair.

**SHARE SERRA...BRING A FRIEND!**

**2004/05 Officers and Trustees**

Bill Ruger	President
Kate Miller	President Elect
Tom Biven	Past President
Jean Seman	VP Programs
Kathy Bronz	VP Vocations
Clement Richter	VP Membership
Ray Bartels	VP Communications
Bernie Coppelino	Secretary
David Beyerlein	Treasurer
Edgar Balcueva	Trustee
Scott Seamon	Trustee
Sharon Wahl	Trustee
Fr. Ron Dombrowski	Chaplain

**Do you know someone who would like to know more about Serra? Call Bud at 989-792-5571, or email him at budcjrigh@aol.com**

**The USA Council of Serra International invites you to visit its website at [www.serrus.org](http://www.serrus.org) for up-to-date information on Serra and other great information.**

**PRAYER LIST**

Jerry Breen  
Angelo Guerriero  
Fr. Robert Davey  
Fr. Gerald F. Kukla

**Serra Mission**

Our mission is to foster and affirm vocations to the ministerial priesthood and vowed religious life in the Saginaw Diocese and through this ministry enrich and develop our members' common Catholic faith.

The USA Council of Serra International invites you to visit its website at [www.serrusa.org](http://www.serrusa.org) for valuable and informative information about Serra International.

## ***The Serra Club of Saginaw***

The Center for Ministry  
5802 Weineke  
Saginaw, MI 48603  
989-797-6607



### ***I Golf Outing*** by Frank Drinan

Former Saginaw Serra Club Chaplain, Fr. Pat O'Connor, was on the winning team for second straight year at the Annual Serra Golf Outing for priests of the Diocese of Saginaw. The event was held at The Swan Valley Golf Club on August 10th.

Shortly before noon, about 40 Serrans and priests had lunch at Swan Valley and then eiandn oursomes played an eighteen hole scramble.

Fr. Floyd Wellna and Serrans Dave Beyerlein and Ken Grembowski joined Fr. Pat O'Connor on the winning team which shot five under par. Two teams tied for second place at four under par.

After some rain in the morning, the skies cleared the golfers enjoyed very pleasant conditions during the competiion.