



the Serra Leader

YOUR EXTENDED SERRA FAMILY

by USA Council President Douglas P. McRoy



Douglas P. McRoy

Dear Serrans: Please allow me to tell you a little about Serra in Lima, Ohio. As a Serra member here in Lima, there are four clubs within 70 miles of my own club, and we all share the same district. There are yet another five clubs within 110 miles of Lima.

Why do I point this out? Like you, I have neighboring Serra clubs that I know and care about. More importantly I very much want those clubs to be successful with their vocation and membership efforts. If there is a young person who decides to discern in Cincinnati or Detroit, I am as gratified as I would be if they had chosen to do so in my own city. I sincerely hope that you, too, are aware of what is happening in your district and Serra region. We must all participate in our efforts and celebrations together.

Our Serra mission, especially the aspect having to do with fostering vocations, reaches much further than the parishes and immediate geography known to your club. I encourage you to make sure your club has strong representation with your Serra district activities, hopefully on a strong district council. Keep an eye out for good future leaders in your club and district who will help accomplish our mission. Always encourage other Serrans to get involved.

I have been fortunate to have spent the

last five years on the USA Council Board and two years as a district governor before that. I have learned so much from other Serra leaders at varying levels: district governors, regional directors, USA Council committee chairs, and committee vice presidents. I ask you to reach out to these leaders and offer your assistance.

I am convinced that our success --more importantly, our beloved Church's success -- will be accomplished not only by prayer, but also by our individual works at the local club level and beyond, because vocations can come from anywhere. Please join me in working for membership growth and vocation success in your own club and in your extended Serra family.

As many of you know, my presidency started earlier than anticipated, but I am very excited about what we have in process. Please pray for me and by all means join me in our national efforts. Hope to see you at the Serra International Convention in Omaha, including at our own USA Council Super Weekend meetings that take place on August 26 and 27, and especially at our Annual Meeting which will be held on August 27. Find more details about these events at www.serraus.org.

Mary, Mother of Vocations, pray for us!

the USA Council leader datebook

ALL YEAR UNTIL JUNE 19, 2010

The Year of the Priest, as proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI. See www.usccb.org/yearforpriests for more details.

JULY 30

Regional/District award nominees due to USAC office, Chicago, IL

AUGUST 26-27

USA Council SuperWeekend, Omaha, NE

27

USA Council Annual Meeting, Omaha, NE

27-30

Serra International Convention, Omaha, NE

SEPTEMBER All month

District governor club visits
15

Regional director nominee report due to USAC office, Chicago, IL

OCTOBER All month

District governor club visits
25

Priesthood Sunday:

See inside this newsletter for a pull-out liturgy and celebration planning guide! Share with your parish!

Inside this issue of the Serra Leader:

☞ What do your USAC dues do? p. 2

☞ Priesthood Sunday 2009 parish planning guide: p. 3

What Do Our USA Council Dues Do?

A concise outline of where your USAC dues dollars go

by **Frank Gerner**, USA Council Communications Committee Chairman, Serra Club of Topeka, Kan.

The Parable of the Independent Log

The reign of God is like a bonfire in which the individual logs gathered to provide a magnificent display of light and a blanket of warmth. The logs unselfishly shared their very substance to provide the brilliance and heat to all who gathered in community around them.

One log, perceiving that there was not a continuing need to be associated with the others, rolled away from the bonfire and burned brightly on its own while radiating a substantial amount of heat. But soon the log became aware that its flame had diminished to a few flickers and the heat was not reaching as far as it had when independence from the bonfire was first achieved. The brilliance of the bonfire burned on as more logs moved into the flames, while the independent log found that its warmth was self-consuming and ceased to provide either heat or light.

We envision the synergy generated by individuals and organizations together, like the bonfire, as a means to achieve a common goal. The light and heat represent the dedication and commitment to the common goal. The independent log illustrates the isolation of a person or a group who believes that they have perfected a process and need no association with others pursuing the same goal.

Money: A Major Means to the Mission

If prayer alone were sufficient to promote, foster and sustain religious vocations, there would be no reason for the Serra Movement to exist. Serrans are called to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in the work of vocations -- that takes time, talent, and treasure along with the prayers to accomplish the mission.

Individual Serra clubs need funds throughout the year for a variety of programs and activities: meals; mailings to members; meeting facilities; recognition of anniversaries and birthdays; affirmation events for priests, deacons, sisters and brothers; dinners, picnics, barbecues, and social events for seminarians; gifts, care packages and other support programs or projects. These are just a few examples of financial expenditures.

Consider the needs for funding in the world of Serra. The mission of Serra is not just a local effort. It is equally district-wide, regional, national, and international in

scope. Just as the needs of the Church are both local and universal, so the needs of Serra are both local and worldwide. Financial support is required from all membership to promote the objectives and purpose of Serra at all levels if we are to "set the world on fire" with the Serran zeal for vocations.

What Your USA Council (USAC) Dues Do

1. Support a Volunteer Organization

The Serra movement in the United States is overwhelmingly a volunteer organization. Leadership and management decisions at the club, district, region, and national levels are in the hands of over 3,000 volunteer officers. A very small paid staff (currently four people, including the executive director) is funded by USAC dues to provide ongoing coordination, information, program resources, and certain administrative services to USA clubs and Serrans that could not be provided effectively by a volunteer staff. Some of these services are discussed below.

2. Fund the USAC Office Staff

The salaried staff members function as specialists in communications, coordination, organization, and innovation in providing a united resource center for all USA Serrans. They have demonstrated that they serve willingly and with deep commitment by providing maximum performance in their desire to fulfill the mission of Serra. Their tasks include the following:

- Assisting in the planning, coordination, and implementation of multiple vocation programs throughout the USA
- Developing and distributing club manuals to support consistent and effective club leadership, programs, and administration
- Organizing and producing presentation slides and handout material for use in national, regional, and district training sessions
- Designing newsletter, financial record keeping, and other templates to ease the administrative work of clubs
- Handling the required reporting of financial information for each club to the Internal Revenue Service to maintain the non-profit "charitable organization" status of individual clubs

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Celebrate!

PRIESTHOOD SUNDAY

October 25, 2009

What is "Priesthood Sunday"?

Priesthood Sunday, Oct. 25, 2009, is a special day set aside to honor priesthood in the United States. It is a day to reflect upon and affirm the role of the priesthood in the life of the Church as a central one.

This nationwide event is coordinated and sponsored by the USA Council of Serra International.

What happens on Priesthood Sunday?

The lay faithful of all parishes in the USA develop their own special way of marking the day and honoring their parish priests both at Mass and other parish events, such as social celebrations and school activities.

Priesthood Sunday is designed to be an event led by the laity, but you can ask your parish priest to participate by talking about how he experienced and answered his own calling and about priests who have inspired him.

Priesthood Sunday offers an opportunity for priests and their parishioners to build a stronger working relationship. Together, they can dialogue to take an honest look at the challenges of the future and how they can collaborate to meet those challenges as a united force.

What is the USA Council of Serra International?

The USA Council of Serra International is an organization of lay men and women whose mission is to foster and affirm vocations to the ministerial priesthood and vowed religious life in the USA. More than 12,500 Serrans in over 300 clubs nationwide collaborate with their bishops, parishes and vocation directors to fulfill this mission. Through this ministry, Serrans work to further their common Catholic faith.

Visit the USA Council at www.serraus.org.

Turn the page for a complete Parish Planning Guide for Priesthood Sunday!

PARISH PLANNING GUIDE

PRIESTHOOD SUNDAY

October 25, 2009

STEP ONE: Plan a liturgy

October 25, 2009
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings of the day:

READING 1: Jer 31: 7-9

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 126: 1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6

READING 2: Heb 5:1-6

GOSPEL: Mk 10: 46-52

*For music and other liturgical ideas,
visit www.priestsunday.org*

Introduction at Mass

Parishioners and lay leaders may choose to celebrate Mass as a way to observe this special day. The parish liturgy committee may consider mentioning "Priesthood Sunday" in the introduction to the liturgy of the day. For example:

Through baptism, God has given us the gift of his Spirit to be faithful and loving disciples. On this, the Thirtieth Sunday of Ordinary Time, the Church in the United States observes "Priesthood Sunday." God blesses the universal Church with many priests who give of their selves for Christ's people. Their preaching, teaching and witness calls us to be as Christ is: loving, just and compassionate. Their service to the community called Church inspires us to continue the mission of Christ to a world in need.

Suggested Intercessions

The intercessions follow the Creed. After the intercessions, the blessing prayer is proclaimed by the liturgical assembly as a whole or by the chair of the pastoral council.

For the Church, especially for Benedict, our pope, _____
our (arch)bishop, priests and all your holy people:

May they be strengthened in faith, hope and love. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all nations and governments: May justice and peace be their goals. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all who suffer depression, anxiety and trauma: May they find loving hearts ready to offer healing and compassion. Let us pray to the Lord.

For those who hear Jesus' call to vocations within the Church: May our communities support and encourage those contemplating vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, religious life and lay ecclesial ministry. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all of us gathered to share the life promised revealed by Christ: Empowered by God's Spirit, may our service of Christ's mission be one that is based in faith, hope and love. Let us pray to the Lord.

Faithful and gracious God, throughout the ages you have been faithful to your promises. Stir within us faith to be true to your commands. Pour forth your love into our hearts to be servants to one another. Give us constant hope in your covenant that binds us in communion with you and one another. Continue to strengthen us, and all those who serve you and the church in ministry, especially our priests. We ask all of these prayers in the name of Christ our Lord.*

If the blessing prayer is used, the above prayer is omitted and the following blessing is used. The assembly may be invited to extend both hands over the priest.*

Blessing Prayer

In your loving kindness, O good and gracious God, you sent your Son to be our shepherd and guide. Father _____ continues Christ's ministry of working in the vineyard by sustaining and guiding your holy people. Bless Father _____. Let your Spirit uphold him always in his service to the people of this parish. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The above blessing is adapted from "Blessing of Those Who Exercise Pastoral Service" from the Book of Blessing (Washington, D.C.: ICEL, 1987), p. 689.

Blessing of the Parish Priest(s)

A member of the parish council or other parish leadership organization, or a deacon, may invite the members of the assembly to join in a blessing over the parish priest(s). This blessing may take place after the prayer after communion. This blessing is an alternate to the blessing following the General Intercessions.

The ministries of the Church are many and varied, but God shows God's goodness by sending priests to care for the people of God. Today we ask God to bless Father _____, who faithfully builds up the body of Christ.

Reflection

"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asks in today's Gospel. The blind man, Bartimaeus, replies, "Master, I want to see." Jesus heals the blindness of Bartimaeus, and says, "Go on your way; your faith has saved you."

Indeed, we who are Christ's disciples by baptism want to see. Faith is what makes us disciples see as God intends. Disciples strive to be faithful to the covenant of God. "From the ends of the world" God calls, gathers, and guides his own people -- people willing to respond to God's invitation to discipleship. This call to discipleship is a call to faith. Like a plant that has to be nurtured, watered, fertilized and provided sunlight in order to grow and thrive, so too does faith require nurturance. For Catholic disciples, that requires, among other things, prayer and especially participation in Word and Eucharist on Sundays. Participation -- that is, accepting and taking to heart God's offer of faith through Christ -- brings us closer in relationship to God and one another. Thus, growing in faith is being faithful to the covenant God offers us in Christ Jesus.

The alternative opening prayer for this Sunday eloquently describes the importance of God's covenant: "There is no power for good which does not come from your covenant,

and no promises to hope in, that your love has not offered. Strengthen our faith to accept your covenant and give us the love to carry out your command." God is always faithful to his covenant, to his promises; it is we who are not always present to God's invitation to covenanted life.

The Second Vatican Council's *Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests* reminds us that priests are co-workers with the bishops and support the laity in the laity's life of discipleship. Priests preach, teach and witness to Christ's mission entrusted to the Church. Disciples are encouraged by priests to participate in the life of the Church and to witness to the wondrous deeds of Christ in the world. All God's people are called to see in new ways, and Christ is the lens through which we see a world wherein the roads are level and "none shall stumble" (Jeremiah 31:9). In this regard, hope- and faith-filled disciples -- supported and served by ministerial priests -- can "take courage and get up" because Jesus is calling all of us to see in new ways that are the ways of disciples in covenant with the God of Jesus Christ.

Concluding Prayer

You are the giver of every good gift, O God of abundant goodness and mercy. Hear the prayer of your people, and bring us into closer union with your Son, Jesus Christ our Promise of Hope, in whose name we offer this prayer. He is Lord forever and ever.

STEP TWO: Set up a dialogue

How well do your parishioners and priests know each other? Start a dialogue to exchange concerns and ideas.

Use Priesthood Sunday as a starting point for opening parish communications. Set up an informal parish meeting with your priests. The purpose of this meeting is to give parishioners a chance to listen to priests talk about their everyday lives and need for support, and for the priests to hear the laity's concerns, needs and ideas for mutual support with priests. This meeting requires a little planning:

- Consult with your priest(s) to select a date for the meeting.
- Draw up a meeting agenda.
- Select a volunteer parishioner to record the highlights of the meeting's discussion.
- Decide on a start and end time for the meeting.
- If you need a second meeting, repeat the steps above.

One afternoon, I was waiting for Mass to start at St. John's and there was no priest. Some nuns were visiting from New York and they said they didn't have a priest in all their parishes anymore, and that Eucharistic services were common.

I thought, "What would it be like if there were no priests?" And I asked myself, "What are you doing about it?"

Elizabeth Shrier, Serra Club of Omaha, NE

STEP THREE: Celebrate!

There are many ways to celebrate Priesthood Sunday with the whole parish. Here are some ideas:

- Parish pot luck dinner to celebrate "Father's Day"
- Coffee cake reception following Masses
- School essay, poster or poetry contest
- Banner in front of church
- Send press releases and photos to local press
- Photo on cover of parish bulletin along with biography
- Check the www.priestsunday.org "Share Ideas" section to find out what other parishes and institutions are doing to celebrate the event

Celebration planning:

- Form a celebration committee
- Select dates for the committee to meet
- What parish groups would like to participate?
- Select a date for the celebration

NEED HELP?

Visit www.priestsunday.org!

Expanded versions of materials in this guide are available at the website. You may also download graphics for parish mailings, bulletin notices, and ads for other print materials.

Prayer of Affirmation and Strengthening in Holiness for Priests

This composition is an arrangement of phrases from ancient ordination liturgies (cf. Bradshaw, Ordination Rites of the Ancient Churches of the East and West) that emphasize the call to holiness. Ordinations always began with a Rite of Election. The proclamation which begins this prayer was at the end of that rite and invited the people to affirm the calling by prayer that the person would be strengthened in holiness to conform to their calling, recognizing that both calling and holiness come from God.

Divine Grace, which always heals that which is infirm and supplies that which is lacking has called our beloved brothers to sacred ministry. Let us pray that they be confirmed and strengthened with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Fill them with grace and counsel, that they may love you with all their hearts, all their minds, and all their strength. Grant them irreproachable conduct, steadfast faith, and good works so that they may help and guide your people with unselfish motivation. Grant them wisdom, let their minds be sober and watchful, so that they may be filled with works of healing and words of instruction. May they teach your people in meekness and serve you in holiness with a undivided mind and a willing soul. May they be the light of your only begotten Son that the word of your gospel may be spread and your name may be glorified in every creature. May they serve at your holy altar with pure hearts and good consciences. Grant that they may prosper in all your commandments and the keeping of your laws, so that they may be able to minister joyfully on the day of your coming.

USA Council Serra's College Connection Program links Catholic youth with church on campus

by **Homer Radford**, USA Council Vocations Vice President, Serra Club of Kansas City, Mo.

Parents are often dismayed when their kids go off to college and wander away from the Catholic faith. The USA Council of Serra International saw the need to connect young people with the Church on campus and developed the College Connection program to forge that bridge.

The College Connection was initiated seven years ago by the late Dick Stolly, of the Serra Club of Lima, OH. The program was piloted through the USAC Vocations Committee for three years and was approved as a national program in January 2009. The program works through local Serra clubs around the country that coordinate with their Catholic high school principals, youth ministers and parish priests to obtain the names of graduating seniors and provide them with information about the Catholic presence at their college of choice. The clubs in turn give those students' names to the Catholic campus ministries, or to the pastor of the nearest parish, so they can invite their participation at Catholic events and liturgies. The program will reach approximately 10,000 students this year through 60 participating Serra clubs, up from 4,400 students last year.

The USA Council Vocation Committee's hope is that these young people will meet other like-minded Catholics and grow in that faith community, and that the Church will influence their lives during these very important formative years. When young adults have a strong prayer life, there is an increased potential that some will be open to hear God's call to serve the Church."

The program has received positive support from many serving Catholic youth and young adults. The National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministers Executive Director, Robert McCarty, said the College Connection program responds to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' goals for Catholic youth ministry: "To call young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ," and to "draw young people to responsible participation to the

life, work and mission of the faith community."

National statistics show that 85 percent of kids don't come back for additional formation after Confirmation. Former youth minister and current Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Evansville, Ind., Steve Dabrowski, agrees. "After Confirmation, young people typically fall off the face of the earth until they get married or want to baptize a baby." Dabrowski started a diocesan initiative similar to College Connection to solicit the names of graduating seniors so that high school, college and young adult ministry operate on a smooth continuum.

"They get to college, have some freedom and if they don't have a relationship with Jesus Christ, why would we expect them to go to Mass?" Dabrowski continues. "While in their college years, if they stay connected to their Catholic roots and they start to question, 'Is God

calling me to do something with my life?', that's when they see the importance of young adults being connected to the Church again."

Programs such as College Connection are important because it is a personal invitation, and one of the key points in any relationship is knowing that someone is interested in you.

Programs such as College Connection are important because it is a personal invitation, and one of the key points in any relationship is knowing that someone is interested in you, he said. "A lot of young people float away because there's nothing there to keep them connected; others do because they're ignorant and are easy targets for Campus Crusade. Having someone on the college campus that calls you up and says 'I'm your Catholic minister and we'd love to have you join us for pizza at the Newman Center' establishes a relationship so they can explore their faith. Getting them connected is crucial because it's such a gaping hole in Catholic Church ministry."

More than 1.2 million Catholic students graduate from high school each year, and 90 percent of those going on to higher education will attend a secular college or university. Catholic campus ministers are blocked by privacy laws from obtaining the religious preference of incoming students. The College Connection program can solve that issue for people like Lisa Campbell, Director of Catholic

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USAC Dues

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- q Collecting, analyzing, and reporting on statistical data to support membership, vocation, and other initiatives at all levels of Serra in the USA
- q Providing a USAC website (www.serraus.org) where information vital to Serrans throughout the United States is available on a 24/7 basis
- q Organizing and making all necessary arrangements for semi-annual Super Weekends for USAC Board and committee meetings, as well as for the legally required annual meeting

3. Maintain website (www.serraus.org)

Through the technological expertise of the USAC staff, all Serrans have access to an easy-to-use website that provides:

- q A continuously updated calendar of Serran activities and events
- q A link to other Serra clubs in the United States
- q A forum for the presentation of programs, ideas, and achievements
- q Downloadable manuals, forms, and promotional pieces
- q Publication of the latest program materials from the USAC Vocations, Membership, Communications, and Programs committees
- q The newly introduced SerraUSA e-store, featuring Serra apparel and gifts
- q A sharing source for all Serra clubs
- q Online publication of the *SerraUSA* magazine, the *Serra Leader*, and USAC's annual reports and audits
- q A listing of Serra International, national USAC, regional, and district activities
- q The history of the Serra movement
- q Frequently Asked Questions about Serra
- q A directory of Serra clubs throughout the United States
- q News about individual club activities, including pictures
- q Links to other Serra and vocation-related organizations

A visit to the site will reveal much more in resources and other valuable information.

4. Support Training of Volunteers

The Leadership Development Committee of USAC annually provides a three-day regional director/district governor training session in Kansas City, Mo. Spring Leadership Training Conferences are to be held in each district in the Spring months, organized by the district

governor. These SLPCs are for all club officers, training them in their roles as leaders and presenting them with an opportunity to problem solve and contribute to the training from experience. In addition, the district governor organizes a seminar for incoming presidents. USAC provides the manuals for the regional directors, district governors, and each local club officer for these training events. These manuals are continuously updated to reflect new methods, technology, and administrative revisions; they are available at all times for free download from www.serraus.org.

5. Provide nationwide USA Serra publications and multimedia

In addition to the resource manuals provided for Serra leaders, the USAC staff publishes the *SerraUSA* magazine three times each year, and the *Serra Leader* newsletter, which is published quarterly either online or in print. These publications are included in the USAC dues.

Also available to Serrans are DVDs and CDs of the national and international meetings. The documents necessary for the formation of new clubs are available as well. A review of the list of available publications is best done by a visit to the website and using the linkage on the left side of the screen.

6. Provide a centralized communications center

The USAC staff functions as a hub for information exchange for all Serra clubs and individual Serrans. This service is provided through the staff's broad knowledge of Serra programs and activities, the staff's research capabilities, and the various information sources available to them. The staff may also refer a question to another Serra club or individual who has engaged in a similar project or program. Contact the USAC office by phone (8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central Time) at 888.777.6681, by FAX at 888.777.6803, or by email at serraus@serraus.org.

7. Develop program resources

Charter anniversaries, membership records, individual Serran recognition awards, newsletter awards, and Outstanding Serran and club awards are all coordinated through the USAC Office in Chicago. These records are available upon request to the office staff.

8. Relieve clubs of certain legal concerns

USAC provides all government registration and reporting as a 501 (c)3 tax-exempt corporation/organization for all USA clubs. If a club disassociates from USAC

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boring but important

by Ed Verbeke, USAC Executive Director

A few important reminders for all Serrans and especially those in a leadership capacity:

Omaha Serrans are working diligently to coordinate a great International Convention at the end of this August. **And in order to have a really great International Convention, they need you register and be there!** Registration information is available on our website, www.serraus.org. Just click on the link on the right side of the home page and it will take you to where you can find all that you need to know for registering at the convention.

There will be a meeting of the delegates on Sunday, August 30, 2009 at 2:30 p.m. In addition to the election of the members of the Serra International Board and the approval of the budget, the delegates will be voting on changes to the Serra International Constitution and Bylaws and on a Serra International dues increase. As always, more information can be obtained at www.serraus.org. Click on the link to the May 2009 Serra International Bellringers. **It is vitally important that all of the clubs have either a delegate, alternate or proxy at the Delegates Meeting to vote on these important issues.**

The USA Council Board and committees will meet in Omaha on August 26 and 27. All Serrans are invited to attend. The schedule is available on our website. On Thursday, August 27 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. at our Annual Meeting, USAC President Doug McRoy will give the annual report for the Council. Bishop Christensen, our Episcopal Adviser, will install the board and district governors. **We are often asked, "What does the Council do?" Attend the this meeting to hear for yourself what we do and how we spend your dues money.**

Club Vocations committees should be planning now on how you will celebrate **Priesthood Sunday** on Oct. 25, 2009. Don't forget to plan what special things you will do to celebrate Pope Benedict's **Year for Priests**. See our website for more information.

By now, all club treasurers should have received a letter from us asking them to provide information so that we can file 990-EZ forms. This information is vital and a stiff penalty is assigned by the IRS for non-compliance. Please contact us if you have not received this important document.

USAC Dues

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and Serra International, this "umbrella" coverage is no longer in effect, and the club must apply for its own tax-exempt, charitable organization registration and report directly to the IRS annually.

USAC also provides liability coverage for USA Serra officers.

9. Maintain contacts with Catholic organizations

Through the USAC Relationships Committee, the USAC staff and committee members maintain ongoing communications and interfacing with the United States Council of Catholic Bishops, the National Council of Diocesan Vocation Directors, the National Coalition for Church Vocations, the National Religious Vocations Conference, and the National Federation of Priests' Councils. Additionally, there are working relationships with the Knights of Columbus, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, and the National Evangelization Team -- to name a few other organizations.

In summary, **the mission of Serra is not just a local effort. The USAC services provided through member dues do much to support and coordinate local club activities and to provide the leadership needed to achieve Serra goals and purposes at the national level.**

College Connection

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Campus Ministry at the University of Texas in Arlington.

"Other than bulletin inserts and orientations, we have no way of identifying these students," Campbell said. "If the Serrans are willing to do this in our diocese and have the resources to do the legwork in the parishes, it would be extremely beneficial. We all have a common mission here: raising the next generation of practicing Catholics."

The 2009 College Connection Program will continue through July and start again in the Spring of 2010. As of June, over 60 clubs have made commitments to collect names of Catholic graduating seniors and prepare the information packets regarding Catholic presence at their colleges. The names of over 10,000 incoming freshmen will be sent to the campus ministers and pastors. Learn more about College Connection and how you can participate at www.serraus.org, or contact me directly at 816-356-1760.