

Opening Remarks of Archbishop Elden Francis Curtiss  
To the Serra Gathering in Omaha December 3, 2007

- 1) You can always tell when things are going well in the Life of the Church when the Evil One tries to disrupt the process – so I sense the devil’s hand at work deepening the rift between the Serra International Board and USAC. This evil has to be exorcised by prayer and deep faith. Jesus has conquered the Evil One and He will heal our divisions now.
- 2) Because we are human, struggles that take place in our church organizations are caused often by money issues and control issues, very often by well-intentioned people. The issues about money and control have to be resolved between the leadership of Serra International and the US Council.
- 3) We need to begin our discussion today where we left off in Philadelphia with the proposal suggested by Lloyd Crockett regarding the restructuring of the US Council. All discussions about the legality of Serra International Board decisions are off the table. We need to begin with the Philadelphia proposal and bring it to a conclusion.
- 4) It’s important that we work out an agreement to be presented to the Serra International Board for its consideration and vote regarding the structure of the US Council and its relationship to Serra International. This agreement as accepted by the Serra International Board will be binding on all Serra members.
- 5) I recommend to you that all the participants at this meeting sign the agreement that is achieved before we leave tomorrow. If someone must abstain from signing the agreement, then let it be so. But it must be understood clearly that once the Serra International Board acts on the agreement worked out at this meeting, then it will be binding on all Serra members. Anyone who refuses to accept the decision should remove himself or herself from Serra, at least temporarily, so that the dissent does not continue to be part of Serra USA.
- 6) I will moderate this meeting and help Lloyd keep the meeting on track. I remind you that we are men and women of faith who love the Church, and have committed ourselves to the mission of supporting, with considerable effort, vocations to priesthood and consecrated life in the Church. We are Catholic gentlemen and Catholic ladies. Let us conduct ourselves as such in the hours ahead of us.

I have spent hours in prayer about this meeting and I know that you and your people are doing the same. I can assure you that the Lord will be with us as we enter these discussions, and that His grace will help us overcome all obstacles – so let us begin Lloyd!