



The Serra Club of Johnson County  
Region 9 District 12-2 Central Club

March 2023  
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[www.jocoserra.org](http://www.jocoserra.org)

## Serran Sphere

### LENT AND LEADERSHIP: WHAT DO THESE WORDS HAVE IN COMMON APART FROM THE LETTERS “L” AND “E”?

Lent and Leadership may, on the surface, seem two completely unrelated subjects, except that both begin with the letters, “Le.” What more relationship might they possibly share? Let’s take a look at the possibilities.

Lent, as we know, is the penitential season lasting 40 days prior to the Church’s entry in the commemoration of the Lord’s passion, death, and its culmination in the highest feast of the liturgical year, Easter Sunday. To do Lent well demands spiritual dedication and discipline. The First Sunday of Lent this year takes us directly into the desert, a hot, dry, lonely place for us humans. Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit, where he fasted from food and water (just imagine . . . if you can!) for 40 days. There, he was also tempted three times by Satan, each temptation, at its root, about power and control.

Will Jesus trust his heavenly Father to provide for his physical needs, or will he turn stones into bread? Will he accept fully the frailty of his human nature, or will he call upon the angels to rescue him? Will he be one with the helpless and hungry of the earth or will he succumb to the temptation to power, claiming all kingdoms of this world and their splendor, as Satan offered? We know Jesus’ response to each temptation and we learn something of his tremendous humility in reading about it.

So, too, through the practice of self-denial, prayer, and works of charity, our Lenten journey will lead us to true humility even as it draws us closer to Jesus.

Read what **St. Josemaria Escriva**, a natural leader among men, has to say about leadership:

- Don’t compromise your principles. Like Jesus in the desert, who had come with a salvific mission, a leader has no room to compromise his or her principles. Compromise is a word found only in the vocabulary of those who have no will to fight — the lazy, the cunning, the cowardly — for they consider themselves defeated before they start. (The Way No. 54)
- Pay attention to the little things. Will-power. A very important quality. Don’t despise little things, for by the continual practice of denying yourself again and again in such things — which are never futile or trivial — with God’s grace you will add strength and resilience to your character. In that way you will first become master of yourself, and then a guide, a chief, a leader: to compel and to urge and to inspire others, with your word, with your example, with your knowledge and with your power. (The Way 19)
- Persevere. As the flames of your first enthusiasm die down, it becomes difficult to advance in the dark. But that progress is all the more reliable for being hard. And then when you least expect it, the darkness vanishes, and the enthusiasm and light return. Persevere! (Furrow No. 789)

See *Leadership*, p. 2



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#### MEETING/EVENT DATES:

- **3/2/2023—6:00 PM**, General Membership Meeting/New Member Initiation —**Curé of Ars**
- **3/3/2023—11:00 AM**, First Friday Holy Hour—**Holy Spirit Church**
- **3/7/2023—6:00 PM**, First Tuesday Holy Hour—**Curé of Ars**
- **3/9/2023—7:30 PM**, Thursday Rosary for Vocations—virtual/on-line
- **3/16/2023—7:30 PM**, Thursday Rosary for Vocations—virtual/on-line
- **3/23/2023—7:30 PM**, Thursday Rosary for Vocations—virtual/on-line
- **3/27/2023—7:00 PM**, Board Meeting, Holy Spirit Church

Leadership, cont. from p. 1

- Please God, not men. You are in a position of authority, and you go by what people say? You are a doddering old man! First of all, you should worry about what God will say; then, very much in the second place, and sometimes not at all, you may consider what others might think. "Whoever acknowledges me before men", says the Lord, "I too will acknowledge him before my Father who is in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father who is in heaven." (Furrow No. 970)
- Always stay humble. For all your learning, for all your fame, your eloquence and power, if you are not humble, you are worth nothing. Cut out, root out that self-complacency which dominates you so completely. God will help you — and then you will be able to begin working for Christ, in the lowest place in his army of apostles. (The Way No. 602)

This all has a bit of a Lenten undertone, does it not? Perhaps more succinctly, yet with similar clarity and focus, **St. Teresa of Calcutta** gives us the following bits of wisdom that also speak of a Lenten humility theme and leadership:

- "Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies." (perseverance)
- "I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God who is sending a love letter to the world." (humility)
- "In this life we cannot do great things. We can only do small things with great love." (charity)

Leadership is not unlike an approach to Lent: both demand perseverance in the search for a closer relationship with Jesus, relentless pursuit of humility, and the willingness to trust that God will manage all the details of every circumstance, if we but allow Him to do so. A leader is, in essence, a first among servants.

Is God calling you to a leadership role in your Serra Club or your parish? Think about making this a Lenten topic of conversation with Jesus in a time of quiet prayer. You may recognize His voice when you're tapped on the shoulder by someone who asks you to consider taking on a leadership role. Perhaps you will be moved to volunteer.

### JOCO SERRA INTRODUCES THE 31 CLUB: "PICK A DAY, PRAY, DON'T DELAY!"

For new Serra Club Co-Vice Presidents of Vocations, Thomas and Nicole Skoch, it hasn't taken long to get their feet on the ground.

At the February General Membership meeting, the Skochs announced, after prayerful consideration, the launch of the [Serra 31 Club](#), an opportunity for Serra Club members to pick one day (the same day of each month) to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Membership response has been great thus far. The seven remaining open dates of the month are the 4th, 9th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 23rd, 24th, 26th, 28th, and 30th. Thanks to all who have signed up for a day. Three individuals have signed up for specific days of each month (e.g., the fourth Thursday), which is also a great approach.

In all, we have 32 members covering 20 days, with four members additionally covering every Wednesday, every Thursday, and every 4th Monday of every month! This is *fantastic!*



The goal is to have at least one member of our club praying for vocations every day of every month throughout the year. Participation is voluntary, and your commitment lasts as long as you want to continue the effort.

The link above will take you to a sign-up page at the website. Alternatively, you can email Thomas and Nicole at [vocations@jocoserra.org](mailto:vocations@jocoserra.org). For access to a list of participants, sign into the Member Log In side of the website and click on 31 Club Participants. There you can see participants and their phone numbers, in event you need to find a substitute for a given day if you cannot make your commitment.

The requested prayer effort in fulfillment of this commitment is that the volunteer offer either a Mass intention or a Holy Hour intention for vocations.

What better time than the season of Lent to make a commitment like participating in the **Serra 31 Club** prayer for vocations?





## INITIATION OF NEW MEMBERS AT THE FEBRUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: NEW LABORERS FOR THE HARVEST

The February General Membership Meeting of the Serra Club of Johnson County saw the initiation of 36 new members into the club! Of these, 19 were able to attend the evening's events, which began with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered by the club's chaplain, Fr. Scott Wallisch, at 6:00 PM at Curé of Ars Church in Leawood, KS.

Club members assisting at the liturgy included Mike Conran, Sacristan and server; Dale Romme, lector; and Mike and Ginny Skoch musicians.

In his remarks to club members, Fr. Scott spoke of the reassurance that new club members lend to the Serra community, just as new seminarians give priests hope that there is a good future of men to keep carrying the torch. In the same way, new Serrans show that Serra and its mission remain important and give hope that the good work of Serra will continue. "We know that help is on the way," he said with a smile.

He spoke about his own vocation, the call to which began at his baptism when his father declared to the priest that, of his six sons, "this one will be the priest." With humor, Fr. Scott acknowledged his dislike "for a long time" knowing his parents wanted a priest, but also shared his deep love for, and gratitude to God for his priestly vocation.



The initiation of new members took place immediately following the homily at Mass. Master of Ceremonies and club President, John Weber, led the initiation ceremony. Speaking the words of St. John Paul II, John described attributes of Serrans. "Serrans have wished to keep two outstanding characteristics of Father Junipero Serra: love for priestly and religious vocations, and the constant testimony of Christian faith in the environment in which your activity takes place." Further, "It is really admirable that lay people, deeply convinced that the Church and society needs priests and religious, take as a purpose of their commitment as Christian prayer and hard working action for the spread, development, perseverance, increase and assistance of vocations. You are mindful of this in Jesus' words: 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'"

### SEMINARIAN BIRTHDAYS

#### March/April

Zachary McGuinness...28 Mar  
Alex Rickert.....31 Mar  
Den. Colm Larkin.....20 Apr  
Joseph Punswick.....25 Apr  
Den. Tim Skoch.....30 Apr

Mark your calendar with Seminarian Birthdays and pray for the seminarian's intention.

New members of the Serra Club of Johnson County are listed in the continuation of this article on page 5.



Mark your calendar! The 2023 **Master's Cup** golf event is slated for **Monday, July 10, 2023**, at beautiful **Ironhorse Golf Club** in Leawood, KS. A one-of-a-kind golf event, *The Master's Cup* brings together young men and young women discerning vocations to the priesthood and religious life, seminarians, priests and religious, for a round of golf, sharing a meal, and hearing a great witness to the faith. Make plans now to join the fun and fellowship.

Guest luncheon speaker this year: American film producer, writer, and Catholic speaker, **Jim Wahlberg**. You won't want to miss it!

### REMINDER:

#### General Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 2, 2023  
6:30 PM

Fr. Burak Room  
Curé of Ars

### DID YOU KNOW?

- ⇒ SHOES SPECIFIC TO THE LEFT AND RIGHT WERE NOT MADE UNTIL THE CIVIL WAR.
- ⇒ AT AN AVERAGE OF 15 BREATHS PER MINUTE, WE TAKE ABOUT 400 MILLION BREATHS DURING A LIFETIME. THIS IS EQUIVALENT TO ABOUT 53 MILLION GALLONS OF AIR.
- ⇒ BEING COMPASSIONATE TO OTHERS--AS WELL AS ONESELF--LEADS TO GREATER HAPPINESS.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**SERRA CLUB  
OF JOHNSON COUNTY**

**2022-23  
Officers**

**President**  
John Weber

**President Elect**  
Dale Romme

**Immediate Past  
President**  
Doug Leibbrandt

**Secretary**  
Judy Rielley

**Treasurer**  
Chuck Lillis

**Vice Presidents**

**Vocations**  
Thomas and Nicole Skoch

**Membership**  
Joane Wilkerson

**Programs**  
Larry Ryan

**Communications**  
Michael Skoch

**Trustees**  
Len Chmelka  
Ray Zielinski  
George Len

**District Governor**  
John Caton

***First Friday  
Holy Hour  
for Vocations***  
***11:00 AM 2/3/2023***  
***Church of the Holy  
Spirit***

Date	Agenda	Location
March 2 Thursday	JOCO Serra General Membership Meeting New Member Initiation Mass at 6:00 PM	Curé of Ars Church Leawood, KS
March 3 Friday	First Friday Holy Hour for Vocations 11:00 AM	Holy Spirit Church Overland Park, KS
March 7 Tuesday	First Tuesday Holy Hour for Vocations 6:00 PM	Curé of Ars Church Leawood, KS
March 9 Thursday	Thursday Rosary for Vocations 7:30 PM	Virtual See website calendar for details
March 16 Thursday	Thursday Rosary for Vocations 7:30 PM	Virtual See website calendar for details
March 23 Thursday	Thursday Rosary for Vocations 7:30 PM	Virtual See website calendar for details
March 27 Monday	JOCO Serra Board Meeting 7:00 PM	Holy Spirit Church Overland Park, KS
April 4 Tuesday	First Tuesday Holy Hour for Vocations 6:00 PM	Curé of Ars Church Leawood, KS
April 6 Thursday	JOCO Serra General Membership Meeting 6:30 PM	Curé of Ars Church Leawood, KS
April 7	First Friday Holy Hour for Vocations 11:00 AM	Holy Spirit Church Overland Park, KS
April 13 Thursday	Thursday Rosary for Vocations 7:30 PM	Virtual See website calendar for details
April 19 Thursday	Thursday Rosary for Vocations 7:30 PM	Virtual See website calendar for details



*Mark your calendar!*  
**USCCB World Day of Prayer for Vocations**  
**April 23, 2023**



*The Vocations Committee will provide a slate of suggested  
activities—stay tuned!*

New members, Serra Club of Johnson County:

- *Lucy Skoch*
- *Don Pratt*
- *Winnie Pratt*
- *Craig Herre*
- *Joanne Herre*
- *Daniel Collard*
- *Glen Shain*
- *Sue Shain*
- *Steve Kitts*
- *Nancy Kitts*
- *Marty DeRuyter*
- *Mary DeRuyter*
- *Robert Kopp*
- *Heidi Kopp*
- *Gabe Lyssy*
- *Terry Lyssy*
- *Jeffrey Thompson*
- *Grace Thompson*
- *Scott Tampke*
- *Marilyn Tampke*
- *Edward Embree*
- *Michelle Embree*
- *JohnMarc Skoch*
- *Kelsey Skoch*
- *Benjamin Skoch*
- *Angela Skoch*
- *Wayne Conway*
- *Jane Conway*
- *Sister Anne Saji Varghese*
- *Bryan Wilkerson*
- *Larry Ryan*
- *Kathy Ryan*
- *Richard Cofer*
- *Carolyn Cofer*
- *Thomas Skoch*
- *Nicole Skoch*

During the ceremony, new members were given a candle and an invitation to recognize the light as a symbol of Jesus, the light of the world, and the fire as the transforming energy of the Holy Spirit, calling to mind the baptismal pledge to direct oneself to Christian principles. New members pledge their time, efforts, and prayers for the encouragement and preservation of vocations to the ordained priesthood and professed religious life.

At the conclusion of Mass, the group gathered in the nearby Fr. Burak Room for a short meeting program and a delicious catered dinner. New members were invited to introduce themselves to the group. Another group photo (below) of the new members who were able to stay for dinner. Parishes represented by new membership include Church of the Nativity, Church of the Holy Spirit, Holy Trinity, Prince of Peace, St. Paul, St. Michael the Archangel, and Curé of Ars.

Welcome to the new members of the Serra Club of Johnson County!

