



The Lubbock SERRAN

Volume 10 Issue 4

Lubbock Serra Club • Club No. 318 • District 44 • Region 10

April 2007

What is 'Doing This in Remembrance of Me'?

By Msgr. James A Comiskey

Reprinted from

The Priest Magazine, December 2006

Early June is the usual time for ordinations to the priesthood. It is always a delight to be present for such an occasion, or to carry the young men in prayer. And when I do this, I am always called upon to review my own thoughts about priesthood or the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

As I was preparing for priesthood over 50 years ago, I am not sure that I can remember seeing myself in any other way except as a sacramental minister. The importance of being able to offer Mass and celebrate the Sacraments was uppermost in my mind. We were not able to get any "hands on" experiences or working in a parish in the good old days. The opportunity for seminarians to do this in our time is a real plus. What was I not prepared for in priesthood?

- Being in a hospital room with a young couple as their dead infant was brought into the room.

- Counseling week after week with a nine-year-old lad whose parents had divorced and whose whole world was peopled with monsters.

- Being in the room with a family as they bid their mother goodbye, giving them permission to let her go and giving her permission to go.

- Walking to the middle of the street in the rain to anoint the body of a policeman who only minutes before had been struck by a truck.

- Asking an AIDS patient if he wanted to go to Confession and watching him shrug his shoulders as he answered: "Well, I guess it won't hurt me."

- Going to the airport to tell a father and daughter that their son and brother had been killed in an air crash. The look on their faces as they came off the plane and found

their pastor waiting instead of the person they expected.

- Accepting an infant from a young woman who had delivered the baby alone in her room, and who wanted me to find a couple who would raise him.

None of these were part of my vision before ordination. As I reflect on 56 years of priesthood, there are the kinds of images that come into my mind and my heart. I continue to be amazed that I am a person who stands and calls people to worship in order to worship with them. Who preaches the Word because I have first wrestled with it during the week. Who calls others to sacramental moments because God bids me to do so.

And, oh, the blessings!

- Being a pastor and having a young man from the local university show up and tell me: "Monsignor, my dad said to tell you hello. You taught him in grade school and

he remembers."

- Not having a bishop for some time, and being given permission to confirm. And so able to confirm and give first Eucharist to groups of children, many of whom I had baptized.

- Being able to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with people coming back to Confession after being away 10, 20 or 40 years, while helping during Cursillos or Acts retreats.

- Baptizing a 70-year-old man in the hospital because, in his words, "You or any other priest never asked me before."

- Reacting to the beautiful letters of people who tell of their experience of going through the Catechumenate.

- Being the official witness of the Church at the wedding of two young people who are deeply in love with Christ and with each other.

(See **Priesthood** Page Four)

President's Message

by Carl Sundell

Serra Club members, under the direction of Jim Gibler, led the Stations of the Cross at Christ the King on March 16th. The Serrans will provide pizzas for the Altar Servers' Recognition Day Mass to be held at Christ the King on April 29 at 6 pm. Serrans are invited to attend.

In the future, when you pick up your name badge to attend a Serra meeting, suggestion forms will be available to fill out. If you have a great idea for a program for the Serra Club, let us hear from you. If you have an idea for recruiting new members, let us hear from you. Above all, if you have an idea for promoting or inspiring vocations to the priesthood and the religious life, let us hear from you.

In this issue of The Serran Newsletter will

be found the first entry for a regular column titled "Ask Father Bill." Father Bill Anton, our chaplain, has graciously answered the call for such a column. I guarantee that Serrans will be impressed with the style and content of his writing. If any Serran has an interesting question to ask about Catholic doctrine, history, or morality, these questions can be handed in-person to Father Bill at any Serra Club meeting.

The World Day of Prayer for Vocations is Sunday April 29, 2007. Serrans are encouraged to participate as fully as possible in any prayer activities scheduled by their parish that day.

The Spring Leadership Planning Conference is scheduled in Plainview on May 5 to familiarize new club officers with

(See **President** Page Two)

Sisters Corner

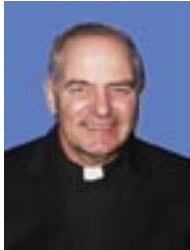
Rebuild My Church

The St. Francis Mission Sisters continue their ministry of spirituality with special events scheduled in May at Our Lady of the Angels Convent, 8202 County Road 7700, Wolforth, Texas.

- On Sunday, May 20, Sister Celine Thames will facilitate a "Marian Prayer" afternoon between 2:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. The presentation will include Marian talks, the rosary, hymns, and a pot luck picnic. Drinks will be provided by the sisters. Participants are asked to bring picnic food to share.
- Spiritual Direction training sessions will continue between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 5 and Monday, May 7.
- Individuals or groups who would like to sign up or obtain more information on any of these programs are asked to call (806) 863-4904. The sisters will be happy to provide direction assistance to the convent from your location. For information on future programs, please send your email address to franciscan@door.net.

Key to be Ordained

Paul R. Key, a member of the Serra Club of Lubbock from 1998 to 2002, will be ordained a priest in the Diocese of Tyler, Texas at 10 a.m., Sept. 1, 2007.



Read his interview with Elmus Beale in the next issue of *The Lubbock Serran*.

President *from Page One*

their duties and to begin planning for the new Serran year which begins in June. Newly-elected officers are urged to attend this conference.

We are proud to announce that a former Lubbock Serran, Paul Key, who is also a former Presbyterian minister, soon will be ordained a Catholic priest for the diocese of Tyler, Texas. Please keep him in your prayers.

Also, please pray for John Gaschen, Millie Callow, John O'Connor, Bill Brown, Mary Bulin, and all other Serrans and their families who are ailing and in need of our prayers.

Visit Often
www.serralubbock.org

Ask Father Bill

This question comes from Mr. Carl Sundell, who asks:

When, where, by whom, and for what purpose, were the first monastic orders begun?

For nearly 300 years (33 - 311 AD) Christianity was illegal in the Roman Empire, and many Christians died for their faith. These early Christians gave their lives as witness to their faith (the word "martyr" means "witness" in Greek). With the help of God's grace, they endured the pains of martyrdom, so as to inherit eternal life.

In the year 311 AD, Emperor Galerius promulgated his Edict of Toleration, and the killing of Christians was stopped. Suddenly, martyrdom was no longer an option for Christians wishing to give the ultimate sacrifice. Still, there were many Christians with the desire to divorce themselves from the world and dedicate themselves totally to prayer and the service of Christ, called "white martyrdom." So they moved out to the Egyptian desert to live a life of prayer in total seclusion.

These hermits were motivated by Bible passages such as 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 ("I tell you, brothers, the time is running out. From now on, let those having wives act as not having them, those weeping as not weeping, those rejoicing as not rejoicing, those buying as not owning, those using the world as not using it fully. For the world in its present form is passing away") and 1 Peter 4:7 ("The end of all things is at hand. Therefore, be serious and sober for prayers.")

Perhaps the most famous 4th century hermit was Saint Anthony of the Desert (c. 250 - c. 350 AD), who is called the father of Christian Monasticism. Anthony was just one of many hermits at the time, but he became famous because of his biography, *The Life of Antony*, attributed to St. Athanasius. In the year 311, Anthony (or Antony) settled on a mountain near the East bank of the Nile. Before long, other hermits settled nearby, each with his own shack. They each lived alone, but they would gather on Sundays for Eucharist and on other occasions as well. Different groups of hermits lived by different rules, some living more solitary than others. There were women hermits as well, also living in groups, and always separate from the men.

Eventually, the eremitical life evolved into the monastic life, as these men and women

of God saw the advantage of building one common monastery instead of many hermitages. The monastery gave the monks and nuns a place to gather for meals, prayer and worship, while still retaining individual "cells" for private prayer, meditation, and sleeping. The word "monastery," as well as the word "monk," both derive from the Greek word "mono," meaning "alone." As with the hermitages, there were always separate monasteries for women and men.

As the various monasteries developed, each group of religious developed their own rule of life, some stricter than others. Common to every monastic rule is the observance of the three Evangelical Counsels: poverty, chastity and obedience. Perhaps the most famous monastic rule is the Rule of St. Benedict of Nursia (c. 480 - 543).

More information on this subject may be found on the Internet at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/index.html>

Officers Elected

Officers for 2007-2008 were elected at the April 12 lunch meeting. They will begin service on June 1st.

All new officers are encouraged to attend the Spring Leadership Training Conference on Saturday, May 5 at the Cotton Patch Cafe in Plainview.

Officer installation will be on Friday, May 25 at St. Elizabeth's Hanley Hall.

Congratulations to those elected and a word of thanks for their willingness to serve.

- President Carl Sundell
- President-Elect Judy Simmons
- VP for Programs Roy Towle
- VP for Membership Jim Christy
- VP for Vocations Nasri Talamas
- VP for Communications Judy Simmons
- Secretary Ed Quitevis
- Treasurer Tony Buxkemper
- Trustee (One-year) Elroy Simnacher
- Trustee (Two-year) Bob Goyette
- Trustee (Three-year) Brian Beauchamp
- Past President Gary McDonald
- Foundation Representative.. David Buescher

The Lubbock Serran is published quarterly by the Serra Club of Lubbock Communications Committee. Judy Simmons, Vice President Communications, 9302 Quinton Ave., Lubbock, TX 79424, 794-4384; Elmus Beale, Larry Craig, Mike Custy, Bob Goyette and Gary McDonald.

Deacon Profile - Enrique (Rick) Vasquez

This issue's profile tells a remarkable story that starts in very humble surroundings, takes a path of growth and determination, and reaches what has to be some of the highest mountains in west Texas.

The story begins 51 years ago in the little town of Pearsall, Texas with the birth of Rick Vasquez, one of 11 offspring, into a family of migrant farm workers. Early in Rick's life, the family settled in Floydada where they continued to toil in the fields. He attended local schools; elementary in the country and junior and senior high in town. However, he did not complete school due to the call to help support the family. He went to work in farm-related equipment manufacturing and worked for many years with Tye Manufacturing and other companies, including his current position as Supervisor of Operations-Manufacturing for the Lummus Corporation in Lubbock.

Rick married his school sweetheart, Ilda, who was originally from the same area of Texas as Rick, and had also dropped out of school for economic reasons. Both of

them obtained GED certificates. They became very active in their home parish of St. Mary Magdalene leading their Youth Organization, teaching baptism classes, preparing people for confirmation, and becoming involved in the church's music group which Rick ended up leading for many years. Rick is self-taught on the guitar.

Rick's pastor had approached him about considering the Deaconate Program but Rick felt that he wasn't qualified. He was totally involved in the many activities mentioned above, plus he traveled with some of his sisters who had formed a music group. Rick and Ilda were also very active presenters for the Charismatic movement.

Rick's pastor again approached him about 14 years ago and Rick finally felt like he was ready, so he entered the four-year training program. Rick and Ilda had two young children, a girl and a boy. Ilda concentrated on keeping the children busy with activities on the weekends while Rick was involved with the Deaconate lessons. He is quick to point out that an expected priority of deacons is "Family First."

Rick has spent the last 10 years as a Deacon serving St. Mary Magdalene Church and reflects that the duties in a small parish are many, including everything from baptisms, funerals, weddings, and much more. Rick and Ilda recently relocated to Lubbock and requested a Deacon reassignment to a Lubbock-area parish. Bishop Rodriguez assigned him to Holy Spirit.

Now on top of all these activities, Rick is a physical fitness advocate, plays golf and works in the Produce Department at the United Supermarket between Frankford and 82nd from 5 p.m. until 11 p.m., three days a week. He is also helping both of his children with their education; daughter Ruth Anne who is in graduate school at West Texas A & M and son David who is in his second year at the South Plains Levelland campus.

Rich gave his first homily at Holy Spirit recently and dazzled the congregation with his style, articulation, substance and delivery. We welcome Rick and Ilda Vasquez to Lubbock.

Editor's Note

Christ the King High School Students, grades 9 through 12, recently had the opportunity to submit entries for an essay contest sponsored by the Lubbock Serra Club. Vacations Committee members served as judges. Jim Gibler, vice president for the committee, indicated that the purpose of the contest was not only to give students an opportunity to share their feelings and thoughts about their Catholic faith, but to hopefully generate their awareness about the Serra Club and its mission. The students were given a choice of subject, "Why I Am a Catholic" or "My Favorite Saint."

The following essay was one of four selected by the committee to receive a \$50.00 prize. Other winning essays will be selected and published quarterly in the newsletter.

Why I Am a Catholic

By Kevin Mantooth

I am a Catholic for many reasons.

From wanting to become closer to God all the way down to wanting to be saved by God, I am a Catholic because of my Holy Father's love for me. Jesus died for me on the cross to save my sins because John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him shall never perish, but shall have eternal life." This verse from the holy Gospel says that he loved me so much he would go through the agony to sacrifice his son for us so we can live with him in a holy communion in Heaven.

As I live my life here on earth, I am faced with decisions that could effect the outcome of my own particular judgment, if I sin then it will be on my head and I will have to make up for it in Purgatory. I must look at the situation thoroughly and decide what is right for my own life. For example, if I go to the movie instead of church then I have sinned and I must deal with my suffering in Purgatory or I can try to make up my sin here on earth.

My purpose of being a Catholic is that I have to try and proclaim God's word to other people so they can see the true word of God and hopefully be changed like I was by reading God's ever holy Word. By doing this, I am taking up my Bible as my shield to protect myself from persecutors, my rosary to counteract evil, and defeating my own personal devil clothed in my armor of God's love to proclaim myself as a soldier of God. By taking up my responsibilities as his beloved soldier, I have a better chance of understanding his word and telling others what God truly means to do with our lives and hopefully saving myself and other people from a doom known as Hell.

In conclusion, I am a Catholic because I love God and he loves me. I love him because he loved me so much he gave up his son for me to live an eternal life in communion with God, the Saints, my family and all the other people in Heaven. I love my Catholic faith and I am very happy for one of my friends who is being converted soon because I feel like he will become closer to God as I have in recent years.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Apr. 6** First Friday Rosary & Mass
Christ the King Cathedral
6:35 a.m.
Donuts and coffee follow
- Apr. 10** Board Meeting
Gary McDonald's office
7:00 p.m.
- Apr. 12** Lunch Meeting
Lakeridge Country Club
Roberta Meyer
12 Noon
- Apr. 12** Holy Hour for Vocations
Christ the King Cathedral
7:00 p.m.
- Apr. 27** Dinner Meeting
Hanley Hall, St. Elizabeth's
Lawrence D'Souza
6:30 p.m.
- May 4** First Friday Rosary & Mass
Christ the King Cathedral
6:35 a.m.
Donuts and coffee follow
- May 5** Spring Leadership
Training Conference
Cotton Patch Cafe
Plainview, TX
9:00 a.m.
- May 8** Board Meeting
Location TBA
7:00 p.m.
- May 10** Lunch Meeting
Lakeridge Country Club
Deacon Clarke Cochran
12 Noon
- May 10** Holy Hour for Vocations
Christ the King Cathedral
7:00 p.m.
- May 25** Dinner Meeting
Hanley Hall, St. Elizabeth's
Installation of Officers
6:00 p.m.
- June 1** First Friday Rosary & Mass
Christ the King Cathedral
6:35 a.m.
Donuts and coffee follow
- June 12** Board Meeting
Location TBA
7:00 p.m.

Date / Facility	Speaker / Topic
Apr. 12 Luncheon Lakeridge Country Club	Election of Officers Program by Roberta Meyer : <i>Catholic Education vs. Public Education</i>
Apr. 27 Dinner Hanley Hall, St. Elizabeth's Parish	Lawrence D'Souza : <i>The Nurturing Center: True Compassion in Action</i>
May 10 Luncheon Lakeridge Country Club	Deacon Clarke Cochran : <i>Deacon Formation Update in the Lubbock Diocese</i>
May 25 Dinner Hanley Hall, St. Elizabeth's Parish	Installation of Officers

State of the Priesthood

from Page One

• Being able to lay hands at the ceremony of Holy Orders on men I had known as laymen or seminarians — especially the laying of hands on a young man I had baptized and given First Communion to in the seventh grade.

Where is the priesthood today? There have been any number of scandals involving priests in the news. To deny this is not to recognize the truth. This comes at a time when the number of Roman Catholics is getting larger, and the number of priests is getting smaller. Will priesthood change? I do not know.

Not all of the troubles in priesthood can be traced to celibacy. If tomorrow the Church did away with the rule of celibacy, there would be men who would opt to priestly service as celibates. Why? Because they hate women? Not at all. Why? Because they are homosexual or asexual? Not at all. There will always be both men and women in our Church, as there have been in every age of the Church, who opt for celibacy as a sign of the kingdom of God among us.

Jesus came among us as a sign of complete obedience and complete dedication to God — body, soul, heart and mind. He was a walking, talking, breathing sign of this on Our earth and in Our world. There will always be men and women who will opt to be this kind of sign. Not because marriage is less good and less holy and less dedicated, but because it is a different kind of dedication. Both ways of life are expected to lead to holiness and goodness and service of God in our world.

Further, a priest in Our tradition is to stand before God and speak in the name of the people. Even as there were such persons in societies and civilizations from the beginning, there continues to be the need for such people.

In the early Church the community

decided who should exercise this role among them. Already Paul changed that a bit by putting Timothy in charge of a community out of which he had not come. But one way or the other, one from the group stood before the rest of the group calling them to love and service of their God.

In our tradition., the call to priesthood is that the priest be a living sign in our world of the one great priest, Jesus the Christ. A human priest is the one called by the Church through the bishop to stand at the altar and speak in the name of the group. He is the one who deals with the sacred signs and symbols in a world which has largely forgotten or even denies that there is anything sacred. He is the one who is to take the Word and try to make it come alive. He is to take the symbols and try to make them speak.

Am I discouraged with where we are? Discouraged, No! Curious? Yes! In faith I believe the Church to be of God, and so somehow, what we are experiencing now and what we may be called to experience in the future as Church, is of God.

I cannot believe that more of our young men are not called to priesthood and the service of God through the Church than we are experiencing at this time. It seems that all of us who are priests should speak of this whenever we are able. And that we should urge adults to think, talk and encourage in a positive way service to God through the priesthood and dedicated service through the Church. There is a passage (Rom 10: 14-15) that goes like this:

How can anyone go unless they are sent?

How can we hear the Word if no one speaks it among us?

How can we receive the Lord unless someone prepares the offering and calls down the Lord into the offering?