

Homily
"SERRA CLUB MASS"
Bishop Robert J. Baker, S.T.D.
June 2, 2008
Our Lady of Sorrows Church

My Dear Friends of the Serra Club,

Thank you for being here today and for your participation in this special organization that promotes vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life. I appreciate very much all that you do through the year to help foster vocations.

You probably know of my involvement with the message of stewardship, as former head of the Bishop's Committee on Stewardship. I now represent the stewardship concerns on the Committee for Catechesis and Evangelization, hoping to promote the message of stewardship along those lines.

It is my feeling that promoting stewardship will help us promote vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life, meaning—asking all our young people to give back 100% of what God has given to them, leads them to consider how best to do that. Everybody is called to give their lives 100% serving the Lord. The question is how, in what vocation of service to God.

Telling everyone that all they are and have belongs to God reminds them of the centrality of their lives in Christ—everyone is called to give it all back to God.

When parents witness that kind of giving to one another and to their children, vocations are fostered—in the home, which should be the primary setting for vocations' promotion. When parents are generous people, children get the message.

People giving of their time, talent, treasure and their Catholic tradition 100% in serving the Lord leads to solid vocations in a diocese.

Giving of their time through Sunday Mass and daily morning offering of their entire day to God, then periodic prayer through the day, including the praying of the Rosary.

We must recover in our Western society what we have lost—the importance of the family attending Sunday Mass and helping foster the offering of one's entire day to God through the morning offering prayer.

When God becomes the center of one's life and one's family once again, vocations begin to flourish.

Too often our young people have to fend for themselves to find God. They often do, but many don't.

Families need to recover a sense of belonging to God 100%, in a stewardship way.

Not like the pattern of the Pharisees and Herodians who were sent to ensnare Jesus in His speech, with the question whether it was lawful to pay the census tax to Caesar, a crafty question, calling for a crafty response....They figure they had trapped Him. Either answer, yes or no, could result in Jesus getting into hot water, with the Romans or the Jews.

Instead He reminds them that their own coins had Caesar's image on them; so give to Caesar what belongs to him and to God what belonged to God.

You and I would say God already owns everything. He owns our entire lives. In giving anything, we should always remember, all that we have and all that we are belongs to God.

And we place Him first and foremost in our lives. Caesar, like ourselves, is merely His servant. Let Caesar never forget that!

Our vocation is to evangelize our families, our culture and our world. And some among us are called to do that as Priests, Deacons and Consecrated Religious. Those are the people whose vocations you in the Serra movement are called to foster and support and sustain.

I had the privilege of ordaining yesterday Brother Patrick Egan as a Benedictine Priest at St. Bernard Abbey.

Saturday will be the Ordination of Fathers Rick Chenault and Bryan Jerabek.

Next Monday I will ordain Benedictine Brother Bede to the Diaconate.

So we are blessed in the Diocese of Birmingham by the efforts of Serra.

And we look to your help and support of your many prayers in the days ahead.

Thank you for all you do in the very important Apostolate to help our church share the person and message of Jesus Christ in our own day and time. God bless the Serra movement in the Diocese of Birmingham and all you good people!