



## PARISH VOCATION PROMOTERS WORKSHOP



Parish Vocation Promoters travelled to Dumfries, Virginia this year for their annual workshop. Two-thirds of the parishes of the diocese were represented as they gathered at the new John Paul the Great High School on November 15, 2008. The morning began with the Mass in the school chapel celebrated by the Director of the Office of Vocations Father Bashista. Having served on the Building and Architecture Committee during the high school's planning, Father was able to explain a bit of the history of the plant layout and how the chapel came to be such a prominent focus. His homily reminded the promoters that they must have the qualities of the widow in the Gospel passage that day—continuous, courageous persistence. After Mass during the checking in session, a welcoming breakfast was made available in the foyer area outside the auditorium.

Sister Mary Jordan, OP, a Dominican Sister of St. Cecilia and the new high school's principal, gave the keynote address on the topic of consecrated life. She explained that her vocation is a call to love and described herself as "a woman in love." In sharing her vocation story she focused on three dimensions of religious life: the vows, the common life and prayer. During the break all were invited to tour around the new facility. Then Father Bashista gave a brief run down of the basic responsibilities of a parish vocation promoter and thanked those present for their dedication. He went through the upcoming vocations calendar events and updates to the web site resources for promoters. Several promoters shared suggestions during the Q&A period. The Office of Vocations showed their appreciation for the promoters continued efforts by treating all to a delicious lunch served in the school cafeteria. Promoters then stocked up on printed vocation materials including the new vocations brochure in English and Spanish.

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## SERRANS VISIT ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO SEMINARY

Having travelled to Mount St. Mary's Seminary in 2007, members of the Serra Club of Arlington made a trip to Philadelphia on October 18th this year to visit our seminarians at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary and assure them of their continued support. Upon arrival the Serrans met the Arlington seminarians over coffee and were then given a tour of the beautiful grounds, chapels and artwork throughout the seminary. The tour was followed by Mass concelebrated by their chaplain Rev. Robert Rippey, who is an alumnus of St. Charles, and Rev. Brian Bashista, Director of the Office of Vocations. After Mass the Serrans treated the seminarians to lunch at a nearby restaurant.



1<sup>st</sup> Year College Seminarian Joe Rampino commented that *"The Serrans provide such steady support and assistance through their prayers and activities, and so to be able to meet, talk with and pray with them was a great blessing to us. How wonderful it is to have a concrete sense of the support of the People of God, and the Serran visit gave us that."* Brendan Bartlett who is in Pre-

Theology II, added, "It was a great joy to finally put some faces and names to the men and women of the Serra Club who do so much to support vocations in the Diocese of Arlington. I was particularly touched that they would make a special trip up here to St. Charles to see where we are being formed for the priesthood. I often thank God that we are blessed with such good people to pray for those of us already in the seminary and all of the others in the diocese discerning their respective vocations."

Nicholas Barnes, also in Pre-Theology II remarked that "It was a great reminder of the wonderful support that many individuals, throughout the diocese, have for us seminarians. The Serrans' visit provided a great opportunity to give them an insight and a better appreciation into our formation here at St. Charles."

If you would like more information about becoming a Serran, please contact the Office of Vocations or visit: [http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/vocations/voc\\_serra\\_club.php](http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/vocations/voc_serra_club.php)

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### **2009 NATIONAL VOCATIONS AWARENESS WEEK—CALLED BY NAME**



National Vocations Awareness Week will be held January 11-17 in 2009. The week follows the feast of the Baptism of the Lord and is especially set aside for more focused prayer for vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. May we all increase our efforts to help those whom the Lord is choosing to share His mission in this unique way, to discover and be faithful to their particular vocations in Christ. The Office of Vocations will be sponsoring its **CALLED BY NAME** program during the 2009 National Vocation Awareness Week. Every parishioner is invited to prayerfully consider the qualities they find in others who might make a good priest or consecrated religious. Then they are asked to send in the names of potential candidates to the Office of Vocations so that they can be invited to discernment events sponsored by the office. Recommendation forms can be found linked in *Upcoming Events* here <http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/vocations/vocations.php>

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### **STEBENVILLE VOCATION AWARENESS DAY**

Father Brian Bashista attended the Religious Vocations Fair at Franciscan University in Ohio on October 24. It is the largest of its kind in the country with vocation directors from 93 religious orders and dioceses represented. Students have the chance to discover more about the vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life by asking questions about how the various orders live out their particular charisms and missions in the Church. The fair helps build up the culture of vocations through this prominent witness and gives solid information to students interested in the discernment process.



Joining Father Bashista this year were two of our men in formation at the Pontifical College Josephinum in neighboring Columbus, Ohio. David Dufresne and Fernando Mora helped Father set up and talked with many of the visitors to the Finnegan Fieldhouse that day. David commented that "It was

*a great time! I loved speaking to so many young people about discerning their vocation. They are so eager to do God's will. This trip afforded me time to reflect on how Christ has been working in my life and to share that with others. It is very moving to see so many other young seminarians as well as religious sisters and brothers from around the country. This trip is a reminder that, as Pope Benedict says, "The Church is always young!"*

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### **ON THE STABLE AT BETHLEHEM-POPE BENEDICT XVI**

*In the stable at Bethlehem, Heaven and Earth meet. Heaven has come down to Earth. For this reason, a light shines from the stable for all times; for this reason joy is enkindled there; for this reason song is born there. At the end of our Christmas meditation I should like to quote a remarkable passage from Saint Augustine. Interpreting the invocation in the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father who art in Heaven", he asks: what is this – Heaven? And where is Heaven? Then comes a surprising response: "... who art in Heaven – that means: in the saints and in the just. Yes, the heavens are the highest bodies in the universe, but they are still bodies, which cannot exist except in a given location. Yet if we believe that God is located in the heavens, meaning in the highest parts of the world, then the birds would be more fortunate than we, since they would live closer to God. Yet it is not written: 'The Lord is close to those who dwell on the heights or on the mountains', but rather: 'the Lord is close to the brokenhearted' (Ps 34:18[33:19]), an expression which refers to humility. Just as the sinner is called 'Earth', so by contrast the just man can be called 'Heaven'" (Sermo in monte II 5, 17). Heaven does not belong to the geography of space, but to the geography of the heart. And the heart of God, during the Holy Night, stooped down to the stable: the humility of God is Heaven. And if we approach this humility, then we touch Heaven. Then the Earth too is made new. With the humility of the shepherds, let us set out, during this Holy Night, towards the Child in the stable! Let us touch God's humility, God's heart! Then his joy will touch us and will make the world more radiant. Amen. 2007 Midnight Mass Homily*

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*We wish you a Blessed Christmas  
And a New Year full of grace!*

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**MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH AND MOTHER OF VOCATIONS, PRAY FOR US!**

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