



Serra Mensajero

Serra Club of North Central Dallas

Volume 29 Issue 5

Richardson, Texas

May 2014

**MARK
YOUR
CALENDARS**

Friday, May 2

1st Friday Mass, Breakfast
6:30 a.m.
St. Mark's

Sunday, May 4

Mass with the Seminarians
9:15 a.m.
Holy Trinity Seminary

Sunday, May 11

World Day of Prayer
For Vocations

Wednesday, May 14

Installation Dinner
7 p.m.
St. Mark's Activity Building

Saturday, May 17

Dallas Priest Ordination
10 a.m.
Cathedral Guadalupe

June 20-22

VAP Weekend

Serra Mensajero is the North Central Dallas monthly newsletter which reports activities, provides news to members and supports Club goals.

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Staff Photographer, Katy Warren
Mary LaFave

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Serra web sites...
North Central Dallas
Serra Club
www.ncdserraclub.com

Serra USA Council
www.serraus.org

A Public Servant, Servant Leadership

Jennifer Staubach Gates was actually born in Georgia when her dad was in officer training for the Navy, lived in Pensacola Beach for a while when her sisters were born and in 1969 moved to a house on Prairie Creek. She attended Prairie Creek Elementary for a while, being parishioners at St. Marks Catholic Church. It wasn't too long after that when her dad's playing ability kept improving while playing for the Cowboys and the family moved to Dallas. Jennifer then attended St. Paul's Catholic School, Ursuline Academy. She holds a degree in nursing from Incarnate Word in San Antonio. She still keeps her nursing license current for many different reasons. She used to be the school nurse when her children attended St. Rita's school, used it for Girl Scout camp and family "crisis" questions. She wears the nurse hat proudly and a nurse is always handy!

Jennifer decided on a whim to jump into politics. She had always been interested in government from the city level all the way up to the federal level. Once time when her path crossed with Ron Kirk when he was still Mayor, she mentioned her interest in becoming involved with local government. He suggested different boards or commissions that she could do. She had been taught to give back at a very young age and witnessed it first hand with her parents. At the time though, the timing was not right. Her mom had a saying "Don't step on your own child to help another child" It is easier to help others then doing laundry and dishes. Give back to where you are called. Jennifer had

chaired auctions, served on PTA board. But she wasn't involved in their activities as they got older, so she served on Catholic Charities board, a special needs camp, Catholic Schools endowment fund committee, the Warren Center board, inside and outside of church, Good Samaritan coordinator at St. Rita's, taking communion to shut in's Eucharist minister and Girl Scout leader among other things. Through the years she forgot about the invitation from Mayor Kirk.

Her husband has a busy professional life where he travels a lot. One morning she received a phone call from a friend who asked if she was going to run for the position of Representative in District 13. She had read it in the paper that District 13 representative was not going to run again. This might be the right time to give back to the community on a different level Jennifer thought. Over Thanksgiving, she announced it to the family. Her youngest who is in college was like okay, whatever it won't affect her, the married daughter was hesitant, thinking that her mom would want to be around more for whenever she started a family. Jennifer's husband listened and didn't say anything until Monday night when he commented that it was obvious it was something she had thought about for a long time and she should talk to Mike Rawlings, who he had served on a couple of different boards with. She had a meeting with Mike Thursday. He asked her why do you want to do this? 15 minutes he didn't say he would support her but did give Jennifer the name of the public reactions firm that he used and



she found herself leaving even more interested. That afternoon she had a meeting with PR firm that worked on her campaign. She was able to get a better understanding of cost and what it would look like. Naively she thought no one was in the race but did find out there was someone going to announce and she had to decide in 3 days. She did not have a chance to tell her parents but that Friday night at a social event her dad was hurt that he heard it from Mike Rawlings first; she was going to talk to him on Saturday. She told him she didn't exactly need his endorsement. He finally did after hearing her platform. It all happened in a short, short time. It just was the right thing at the right time. She had completed Catholic Biblical school in four year program, had done about 18 years of bible study and was doing St. Ignatius discernment process. Praying really, really hard about the right direction to go.. One day during her discernment, she was jogging in her neighborhood, a gentleman made a comment about the nice weather and she stopped and asked him if he would vote for her and explained her platform. He asked her one question "Are you a Christian?"

She felt like this was the right path. Something she was called to do. (continued on Page 4)

President's Focus**Lenten Reflections**

God. Who is God to you? Throughout our lives there have been various images of God. We read the bible about an all powerful God who brought a great flood upon Noah and his people (despite Hollywood's recent story). We read about God showing his wrath upon Sodom and Gomorrah for the sins of those people. Our Jewish brethren recently celebrated God's power at Passover in bringing his chosen people to the promised land as we celebrated the resurrection of His Son at Easter. But who is God to you?

When I was growing up, my religious education was from Ursuline nuns. As they needed to make lasting impressions on children, the God they told me of was a stern one. Salvation was very similar to an electric switch. If you committed a mortal sin, however innocently, and died, you went straight to hell. Simple at that. We were told tales of children who sinned, went swimming, and died in the middle of Mountain View lake, and went into "the fire". There was no "gray". Here are the commandments and if you obey them you went to God. If you didn't you go where there is Gnashing of teeth. (We had no idea what "gnashing" was; it just sounded painful.) As we got older, we were introduced to a more loving and understanding God. In the '60s, God was Love - gentle and caring. And at



times of crisis, God was sometimes even characterized as uncaring and apathetic.



I now think that I understand who God is. At least who He is to me. Jesus teaches us the greatest commandments. "Love God with your whole mind, heart and soul" and "Love thy neighbor as thyself". Those, according to Jesus, are the greatest commandments. And in the Lord's prayer, Jesus points first of all to the power of God and His will. Then he tells us to forgive our fellow man as we ask for His forgiveness. Finally He acknowledges our struggle versus evil - "Lead us not into temptation". He knows we are weak and need Him. To me that is a loving and caring God.



We strive to live a life that will allow our salvation and to be with God in the hereafter. If we live our lives with love for Him and our fellow man, the God that I understand would certainly welcome us in Paradise. Heaven is not only for saints. When Jesus, His son, died, one of his last acts was to forgive a sinner next to him on the cross and promise him life in paradise. **His Whole passion and death was for OUR SINS.** Does this sound like a harsh judge? If we love Him and his Creations, He certainly would not condemn us for a moment of anger or for harsh statements directed at the guy who cut us off on 635. As long as we know and Love Him, we should be with Him when we leave this life. That's good enough for me.

*God Bless,
Pete*



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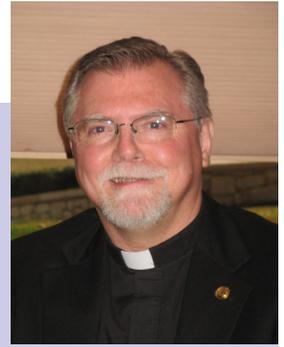
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Reflecting of the Priesthood

On a cold but sunny day in January of 1949 I was bundled off to the parish church along with parents, godparents and other family members. I was carried in as a creature of God, and carried out a Child of God. Although I had little to say in the matter, other than expressing my displeasure at being hungry, wet and having cold water poured over my head, I became a Catholic Christian. My family and Church had begun to fulfill the mandate at the end of Matthew's Gospel: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." (NAB Matthew 28:19-20)

From an early age I was attracted and enticed by the church and the Mass. Stained glass windows, incense, music and ritual gesture, signs and symbols engaged my senses. Unknown then, I was responding to God, to paraphrase St. Augustine in his *Confessions*, having made me for Himself, my restless heart was seeking rest in Him ... although I was never a very attentive listener. My parents should have named me after the Bishop of Hippo as it took another 30 years before I recognized God's call and responded. Like most callow youths I wandered from the Church but was continually drawn back. I never left the Faith. The sacramental ties that bind were often stretched but never broken, and at last I listened. I entered seminary in 1990 and was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Dallas in 1996 ... just in time for the clerical sex abuse scandal. Nietzsche was right: "That which does not kill us makes us stronger." (Nietzsche) The Church thrives under adversity.

As Archbishop Timothy Dolan writes in the Forward to Stephen Rossetti's *The Joy of Priesthood*, "the unfailing power, awe.... mercy, and strength of the grace of holy orders, blended with the wholesome, healthy, self-knowing, mature nature of a man humbly open to that grace, produces a chemistry that combines God and man, heaven and earth, saint and sinner, rise and fall, life and death -- a *priest*, a man of joy." (Joy of Priesthood 9)

In 1960 a priest named Father Thomas E. Langer wrote a short piece called *What is a Priest?* which remains true today:

Priests are mystery men. They come in assorted sizes, ages, weights and collars. They are found everywhere – speeding along, perspiring over, walking by, kneeling on, praying over, laughing with, preaching to, teaching about, pardoning for... He penetrates secrets, shares sorrows, heals wounds. He has the trust of a child, the kindness of a best friend, the sternness of a tight-rope walker, the authority of an encyclopedia, [and] the versatility of a commando...

A priest is all things to all men in the sight of God. He may be misquoted, mistaken and misunderstood, but he'll always forgive – because he's a mediator; a peacemaker, a go-between heaven and earth. Its no wonder God loves him. He's a man standing at an altar, clothed in Holy clothes, who while being aware of his own nothingness speaks to God for us and to us for God. And although his greatest act is to offer sacrifice, his most consoling one is to say to me, "Go in peace – Your sins are forgiven."

From creature to child of God ... from priest to pastor ... confector of the Eucharist and purveyor of sacraments, alone but not lonely, God never asks more of us than is possible ... and in God all things are possible.

Fr. Clifford Smith, Chaplain

INSTALLATION AND REDEDICATION EVENING

May 14, 2014

Mark your calendar for Wednesday evening, May 14 for an evening of fellowship, entertainment, a full catered meal, an introduction of your new officers for next year, an announcement of our Serran of the year, and our rededication for being a Serran.

We are having our May meeting on a Wednesday evening at St Marks in their McGuivney Hall location at 7:00 PM with a catered meal and beer and wine to help us celebrate being Serrans.

Jennifer Staubach (continued from Page 1)

The 5 months of campaigning were tough, it made her better person, a better candidate. Jennifer stepped into City Hall 10 months ago and it continues to be a challenge. She has learned so much such as streets and gutters, potholes and how they are maintained, 67% of the budget is spent on public safety, 24% spent on debt. Everyone has to serve on sub committees and Jennifer serves on public safety, domestic violence, Library, Arts and Culture committee and is the Budget vice Chair. Domestic violence accounts for the most dangerous calls police officers answer, it accounts for 1 out of every 4 woman and Mayor Rawlings has made a huge stand that he is not going to let this happen in Dallas. In regards to the budget committee, she is very knowledgeable on reading financial reports after all the years of serving on various boards with school and church.

Weekends are spent reading agendas, Mondays in committee meetings, two Wednesdays on agendas and the other two Wednesdays in meetings. Jennifer used to like to read but now she only reads the agenda, this past weekend it was 580 pages which she finished late Sunday.

District 13 is a very diverse district, has some of the wealthiest of the wealthiest (Park lane and Preston Hollow) to some of the most challenged areas (Victory Meadows neighborhood east) which has the highest concentration of refugees, built for single, young professionals that now house large families that fill up the community. There are 25,000 people in 4 square miles. There is a lot of work with a lot of the social service groups there and Jennifer really enjoys it. There are 27 crime hot spots which represent 6% of the geographical space but 40% of the crime. Victory Meadows is #5 spot in Dallas, refugees mostly being the victim. There are 89,000 people in District 13 which encompasses 30 square miles. Miles vary; districts are based on number of people. There are 1009 lane miles, 2nd largest amount of lane miles in the number of districts. 900 million dollars to get streets back to decent shape. The City of Dallas is partnering with the schools. The Mayor is trying to get the schools working with the city; joint meeting last Wednesday. Not all in agreement about how it should be done, but City Council is understanding and recognizing that it is too impactful on the city. Jennifer is trying to have neighborhoods adopt schools in their area, and it helps build strong neighborhoods. 85 percent of tax revenue comes from the north part of the City. No tax incentives in her district because it is market driven.

Her faith helped her discern if this was the right thing to do. Jennifer uses her faith to help decide if this is the right thing to do, she tries to treat everyone like children of God. She tries to listen, be engaged, go to a lot of community meetings. She admits she is not always going to make the right decision but tries to and prays about decisions. Her theory is "We are not in charge; we have to rely on our creator". She views herself as a public servant not a politician.

Upcoming June Meeting

Sneak Peak

Our guest speaker for the Monday, June 16th dinner will be Fr. Joshua J. Whitfield from St. Rita.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Dick Reed	11th
Ann Larriviere	18th
Bill Higgins	21st
John Fitzgerald	26th

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

Bill and Mary Higgins	12th
Lou and Jean Neefs	18th
Vince and Florence Ahern	27th

31 Club The 31 Club is a commitment by Serrans to attend Mass and pray for vocations on a specific day each month. If you wish to participate in this important ministry please e-mail Hank Himmelberg at hankhimmelberg@verizon.net

<u>1st</u>	Jerry Hurster	<u>16th</u>	Hank Himmelberg
<u>2nd</u>	Dick Park	<u>17th</u>	John Fitzpatrick
<u>2nd</u>	Katie Park	<u>18th</u>	Ann Larriviere
<u>3rd</u>	Bill Crowley	<u>18th</u>	Rod Larriviere
<u>4th</u>		<u>19th</u>	
<u>5th</u>	Bob Baillargeon	<u>20th</u>	Tony Schmidt
<u>6th</u>	John Fitzpatrick	<u>21st</u>	Doug Biglen
<u>7th</u>	Vince Ahern	<u>21st</u>	Veronica Biglen
<u>7th</u>	Betty Monaghan	<u>21st</u>	Bill Higgins
<u>7th</u>	Bill Condon	<u>22nd</u>	Joe Semler
<u>7th</u>	Lou Neeb	<u>23rd</u>	Paul Reittinger
<u>8th</u>		<u>24th</u>	Ralph Armstrong
<u>9th</u>	Peter La Fave	<u>24th</u>	Jim Hogan
<u>9th</u>	Mary La Fave	<u>24th</u>	Kay Hogan
<u>10th</u>	Vicki Dean	<u>25th</u>	
<u>11th</u>	Jim Duffy	<u>26th</u>	
<u>12th</u>	Mark Venincasa	<u>27th</u>	Chris Taylor
<u>13th</u>	Therese Reittinger	<u>27th</u>	Warren Schneider
<u>14th</u>	Jack Tromba	<u>28th</u>	Bill Larsen
<u>15th</u>	Don Simoneaux	<u>28th</u>	Bonnie Larsen
<u>15th</u>	Jack Hardage	<u>29th</u>	Carl Rossini
		<u>30th</u>	Katy Warren
		<u>31st</u>	