



# Serra Club News

Meetings are held the first and third Friday of each month at noon at the Wheeling Civic Center

A publication of the Wheeling Serra Club

February 2009

## March Programs

March 6 – special video presentation  
Prayer Leader: **Chuck Wagner**  
March 20 - **Fr. Harry Geib, SJ**, from Wheeling  
Jesuit University Prayer Leader: **Brann Altmeyer**

## Vocation Awareness Weekend

**Joe Front** and **Mike Hall** from the Vocation Awareness Committee report that the recent weekend was a tremendous success. Four men and four women, most of them students at Wheeling Jesuit, participated in the weekend. It was a prayerful, joyful weekend of discernment for all of those present. The Serra Club is proud of its involvement in this wonderful annual event.

## Upcoming Events

March 29 – The Bishop's Burse Dinner begins with Mass at 5 p.m., followed by a social at 6 p.m. at Paul VI Pastoral Center, Wheeling WV. **Bishop Emeritus Bernard Schmitt** will preside at the dinner, as **Bishop Michael Bransfield** had a scheduling conflict. Thanks to **Larry Bandi** for coordinating the arrangements for this event.

## Meet the Seminarians: an Update

*By Carlos Melocoton, Jr.*

I was born 35 years ago in Manila, Philippines as the eldest of five siblings. Education played a vital part while I was growing up and my parents endured the hardship of life just to send me to a Catholic school run by the sisters of the Religious of the Assumption. I did not push through with my priestly vocation right after high school, yet I took an accounting degree in college and worked as an accountant for six years. Through the Assumption sisters, I was connected with the Augustinians of the Assumption, their male counterpart. In Massachusetts, I started my religious formation with the Assumptionists, whose way of life was inspired by the Rule of St. Augustine. I enriched myself with every mission experienced with my Assumption family.



I finished three years as a religious brother on temporary vows while doing my three years of Theology. Serving my neighbors and the Church encouraged me to give myself freely as a seminarian for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia. I find service as a means of responding to Jesus' dual commandment of love, "To love God is to love your neighbor as you love yourself."

I finished a year of Pastoral work with **Fr. Joseph Hayden, S.J.** along with the people of Benwood and McMechen. While in the suburb of Wheeling, I invested my time knowing people through volunteer work at the Catholic Neighborhood Center, Bishop Donahue High School, and with the Filipino-American Medical Association where we did our 1<sup>st</sup> Filipino Dinner to benefit the Sts. James and John School in Benwood. Last summer, I also worked at my pastoral assignment at St. Brendan in Elkins, St. Patrick in Coalton, and at the Tygart Summer Camp sponsor by our Diocese. I enjoyed my time with our little brothers and sisters along with the many volunteers who run the camp every year.

Then, last December 14, 2008, **Bishop Michael Bransfield** ordained me as transitional deacon for our Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. It was a great sign of community, friendships, and thanksgiving for the many blessings that God is giving me. It was also an occasion to be with relatives and friends. I was thankful for **Bishop Bernard Schmitt**, who prepared me during my retreat and was at my deaconate ordination along with the presence of our priests and deacons.

At present, I am finishing my last year of Master of Divinity program at St. John's Seminary in Brighton, Massachusetts. My program includes a weekend parish assignment at St. Mary's of the Annunciation in Cambridge, MA serving as a deacon. Cardinal Sean O'Malley, the Archbishop of the Diocese of Boston, granted me faculties to serve the parish, which is in between Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. My assignment involved dealing with a diverse cultural background in an environment of many ideological divergences. However, Christ's message of love and unity are present among the people of the parish especially the community of priests and deacons living in the rectory. Please pray that I will smoothly end my program this coming May of 2009 so I can soon serve our Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

## Prayer for the Month

### Prayer for Vocations

O Holy Spirit, Spirit of wisdom and divine love, impart Your knowledge, understanding, and counsel to youth that they may know the vocation wherein they can best serve God. Give them courage and strength to follow God's holy will. Guide their uncertain steps, strengthen their resolutions, shield their chastity, fashion their minds, conquer their hearts, and lead them to the vineyards where they will labor in God's holy service.

Amen Amen