



Serra Club News

Meetings are held the first and third Friday of each month at noon at WesBanco Arena

A Publication of the Wheeling Serra Club

September, 2011



In Memory of Bishop Emeritus Bernard W. Schmitt

On August 16, 2011 our Bishop Emeritus, our former Bishop, our spiritual leader of many years, our brother, our friend, our dedicated servant, and our fellow Serran left this earth to join our Heavenly Father. When I reflect upon my experiences with Bishop Emeritus Schmitt the two words that come to mind the most of the many wonderful words that can be used to describe him such as holy, prayerful, wise, kind and determined, are the words sincere and humble. I remember having a conversation with him when he had first been appointed Auxiliary Bishop. I was amazed at how deeply he seemed to question if he deserved this honor and responsibility but also how he faithfully accepted the call to service and relied on God's loving support. He truly seemed to trust and put himself in God's hands as an instrument of God's will as the Shepherd of the flock of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

From the outset and throughout his service as our Bishop he remained truly humble and sincere. He always focused not on himself but on God's love for us and his love of God and

his gratitude for all his blessings. Many people cherished his homilies and his talks because of the sincerity and holiness that shone through his words and the wisdom of his message.

Throughout his life, Bishop Schmitt played some special roles regarding promoting and supporting vocations to the priesthood and religious life. In addition to his witness through the living of his own vocation, Father Schmitt was appointed director of Vocations for the diocese in 1963. In 1966, he was appointed rector of St. Joseph Preparatory Seminary in Parkersburg, W.V. After being installed as the seventh bishop of Wheeling-Charleston, he was appointed to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry.

We, the Serra Club of Wheeling, have been particularly blessed with having had Bishop Schmitt actively involved in our organization along with his brothers Raymond and Robert. Bishop Michael Bransfield noted in his homily for the Mass of Christian Burial of Bishop Schmitt that he (Bishop Schmitt) spoke "regularly at Serra club and other events", and that he "loved the Serra Club and the Knights of Columbus." We have been very fortunate to have shared his time and talents.

Bishop Bransfield, in his article in the Catholic Spirit, shared the following last words of Bishop Schmitt written in his own hand a few days before his death. Included were the following:

"First, I thank God for the gift of Faith, that I might know Him personally and the opportunity to love Him and be loved by Him.

Secondly, I thank God for the gift of sharing with me His very life through Baptism, by making me a member of the Body of Christ, the church, and co-laborer with Christ in the work of salvation. I particularly thank God for the great gift of serving Him and His people as priest and Bishop."

As usual he said it so well.

Bishop Schmitt, the Serra Club thanks you for loving us and allowing us to love you. We miss you already.

Our condolences to all the surviving Schmitt family members and relatives, especially those who are our fellow Serrans.

In closing I ask you to now pray a prayer that was written by Eric Gadd, one of our new members, and was read at the first Serra meeting following Bishop Schmitt's passing.

In memory of his lifetime of service to God and his fellow man, I would like you to join me in a prayer of thanksgiving for the life of Bishop Emeritus Bernard J. Schmitt.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us all with the gift of this earthly life and has given to our brother, Bishop Emeritus Bernard J. Schmitt, his span of years and gifts of character. God our Father, we thank you now for all his life, for every memory of love and joy, for every good deed done by him and every sorrow shared with us. We thank you for his life and for his death, we thank you for the rest in Christ he now enjoys, we thank you for giving him to us, we thank you for the glory we shall share together. Hear our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thank You Serrans

Thank you to the following Serrans for their role in the Reception of the Body & Midday Prayer service for Bishop Schmitt. Joe Pangilinan for reciting the intercessions and Nancy Ellen O'Leary for reading. Thanks to Larry Bandi, Pat Felton, Frank Carenbauer, Jack Palmer, Gene Fahey, Bernie Coyne, Mike Niggemyer and Mike Medovic who served as Pallbearers and to all Serrans who attended. We were all honored to participate.

Thank You, Guest Speakers

Thank you to Julie Shively, our new principal at Wheeling Central Catholic High School, for her presentation. Julie is from Atlanta. She served ten years of active duty as an Airforce Officer and pilot and is in the Airforce reserves. She has an MA in Education from Virginia Commonwealth University, an Education Specialist degree from Brenau University and an MA in Education Leadership from Georgia Southern University.

In her speech, Julie emphasized that one of the most important roles of Catholic education is to help the students to live their faith. She

stated she came to Central because it has the Christ centered approach she was looking for. She also stated that it is important for the students to have high expectations for self and to remember that they represent every student and graduate of Central. In addition she also believes that the students should be service oriented.

To promote Central Julie, teachers and current students have been talking to local 5th through 8th grade classes. She believes the key is to also win over the parents of potential students so that they make Catholic education a priority.

Julie enjoys the local community and has been impressed with the quality of the teachers at Central and the curriculum, and would like to have even more AP classes. She looks forward to being part of the continued success of Central and the local community. We wish her well.

Thank you to Mark Hayes, the new Director of Catholic Charities of West Virginia, for his presentation to Serra. Mark has an MSW and has worked in social services, and comes to us from Texas. He is married and has four young children. His most recent work was with Catholic Charities in Texas serving victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Mark talked with us regarding the many services that Catholic Charities provides to the people of West Virginia. Mark emphasized that service and charity is an intricate part of the Catholic Church, and Catholic Charities is that service arm of the church. He said one of his main focuses is to help people maintain healthy marriages because those with healthy marriages are less likely to have a variety of problems. Mark also proudly noted that Catholic Charities has been in the United States for 100 yrs. and has been in West Virginia for the past 80 yrs. He encouraged us to continue to pray for others and for the success of the services of Catholic Charities.

Schedule of Meetings

Friday September 2nd, Speaker: Patrick McCarthy, Director of Religious Vocations Awareness for Diocese of Wheeling - Charleston
- Prayer Leader: Ed Schmitt

Friday September 16th, Speaker: Rev. Mr. George Smoulder, Executive Director of the United Way of the Upper Ohio Valley – Prayer Leader: Gary Mulhern

Priests' Picnic

Thanks to Pat Felton and his crew we had another enjoyable and successful Priests' Picnic on Wednesday, August 31st at Bethlehem Community Park. There were at least 46 individuals present including 15 priests. We were especially honored and pleased to have Bishop Bransfield present for the picnic.

Thanks go out to Pat Felton for organizing the event and to those who helped including Jack Fahey, Bob Schmitt, Jack O'Leary, Bill Grubler, Pat Adamo, Tom Fahey, John & Renee Anderson, Gary Mulhern and Joe Pangilinan.

News Items and Reminders

Our club president, Joe Pangilinan, requested I share the following information:

I write to let you know that our dear friend, Father Walter Buckius, left Wheeling Jesuit University on Wednesday, August 24th to join his new community in Baltimore, Maryland, which is set up to provide dedicated treatment for Jesuits with serious medical needs. I know that we are all grateful that his caring, kind and gentle soul has touched our lives.

Before his departure, the school attempted to plan a brief gathering so that we could personally say farewell, but because of waning energy resulting from treatments, Father Buckius thought it would be too much for him. I know I am not alone in feeling much gratitude for a priest and a man who has embodied the spirit of Christ, and has been a friend, mentor and spiritual advisor to us all.

Father Brian O'Donnell, the Rector of the Wheeling Jesuit Community, encourages us to call and write to Father Buckius, and if we happen to be in Baltimore, to stop by for a visit!

Contact Information: Phone: 410-532-1430

Address: Colombiere Jesuit Community
5704 Roland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21210.

Wheeling Jesuit University has been Father Buckius' home for most of his life. While there, we are witness to his unselfish devotion to educating and serving those around him.

I invite you to join me in making a gift in Father Buckius' honor. A gift to Wheeling Jesuit University will help to continue his legacy and life-long commitment, and support an effort that is near and dear to his heart.

Please make your tax-deductible donation payable to Wheeling Jesuit University and be sure to include that your gift is made **in honor of Rev. Walter Buckius, S.J.** The University will notify him of your kindness.

Should you have any questions, please contact Joe Buch, Director of Major Gifts and Planned Giving at 304-243-8144 or jbuch@wju.edu.

Mass for Vocations

A Mass for vocations will be held on Tuesday, October 25th. 7:00pm, at St. Vincent's Parish.

Rosary Rally

Sunday, October 9th 1:00pm – St. Joseph Cathedral

Prayer for Vocations

Lord Jesus Christ, Savior of the world, show forth, we beseech Thee, in Thy Church the Holy Spirit with whose Power the Apostles were so abundantly filled. We thank Thee for the blessings bestowed upon the work of priests and religious; and we pray that Thou wilt add to the number of those who now pray, labor and sacrifice themselves for Thy glory and the salvation of souls. Give them unselfish zeal for Thy glory. O good Jesus, give us more priests and religious after Thine own Heart! Amen

31 Club and Eucharistic Adoration programs

Contact Joe Pangilinan to sign up to attend a daily Mass at your parish to pray for vocations and/or to attend Eucharist Adoration at Saint Michael parish. Joe can be reached at 304-277-3150 (home), 740-391-9465 (cell) or at joeypang@aol.com

Priest Website

Remember to visit the wonderful website our Diocese has developed promoting vocations to the priesthood. www.wvpriests.org It is artistically designed and very informative.

This site is a very important part of the recruitment process because studies have indicated that the internet is where most candidates learn about vocations programs. Make sure you take the time to view it yourself.

Serra address and Links

Wheeling Serra Club
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Wheeling Serra
www.wheelingserra.org
USA Council of Serra International
www.serraus.org
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