

Junipero Serra  
(1713-1784)



# The Serra Club of Stockton, California

Quarterly Edition: Winter 2011

“Siempre adelante” ---”Always forward”

## This Edition Features Several Fall-Winter Events Sponsored By Stockton Serra Club

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### PLEASE NOTE:

ALL CLUB MEETINGS  
ARE NOW HELD AT  
PRESENTATION PAR-  
RISH IN THE ST. JOSEPH  
MEETING ROOM.

### 2010 Annual Essay Contest Winners

Seventy-seven entries were received from six Diocesan Parish schools for the 2010 Serra Club Essay Contest conducted during 3rd week of October. Participating schools were: Annunciation Catholic School-Stockton, Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School-Modesto, Presentation Catholic School-Turlock, Saint Anthony's Catholic School-Manteca, and Saint Luke's Catholic School-Stockton.

The assigned topic was “*What a Priest Means to Me.*” The approximately 500 word essays were screened and judged over several days in November by a five person team consisting of Serrans, and members of the clergy...all working individually. A uniform, five criteria scoring system was used. There were many very good essays, and the judges had their work cut out for them! However, at the end of many hours of rigorous reading and re-reading, three outstanding essays were chosen, earning student authors the top awards of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place, and a respective \$100, \$75, \$50.

Tom Butler, Stockton Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, Serra Club President, Linda Thibodeaux, and Vice President (Communication), Bill Lina, traveled to the students' schools to present the awards; students' teachers, priests, parents, and peers, proudly witnessed and applauded the presentations.

The winning students and parents also were invited to attend the Stockton Serra Club Annual Christmas luncheon on Dec. 15th, during which each student read their essay to attending club members and other appreciative guests.

### Winning 2010 Essays

#### WHAT A PRIEST MEANS TO

ME

By

*Kyle Sylva*

*Sacred Heart School-Turlock*

1<sup>st</sup> Place Award



There are many ways to define a priest. A priest is a person you can trust that will never let you down and is always there to help you. A priest is not only a friend, but a man who has an amazing devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ. When I look at my priest I think of him as an example of being faithful, a friend, and responsible. Father Manuel inspires me to be a better person and to try to live the way Jesus would live.

A priest must be faithful to his vows to the Catholic Church just as a man being faithful to his wife. Besides vowing to be celibate, he must be faithful to spiritual leaders of the community, to the Pope, and most importantly to God. This requires a priest to spend time praying in adoration, reading scripture from the Bible, and attending retreats to strengthen his love and faithfulness to God.

One thing that I admire about priests is their responsibility. Being responsible is very important when it comes to preparing for the daily liturgy of the Mass. It takes time for priests to familiarize themselves with the readings and prepare a homily. Sacraments are another important responsibility of our priests. Reconciliation is a sacrament where priests will spend hours as we go before them to ask for forgiveness and absolution. It's important for our priest to focus on the responsible needs of the Catholic Church.

Father Manuel not only shows friendship to adults in our parish, but encourages the youth

to follow God's call to holiness. One way Father Manuel promotes the Catholic faith to the youth starts with our Catechism program. Father Manuel is there as a friend dedicating his time every Monday night hearing confessions and witnessing conversion stories. I will never forget the time when Father Manuel came to our family dairy and said a blessing with holy water. Seeing how many friends Father Manuel has inspired me to someday become a priest.

A priest is a special gift no matter where he is, or what he is doing. He is always sharing God's Word.

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### WHAT MY PRIEST MEANS TO ME

By Lindsey Morrison  
Presentation School-Stockton  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place Award

I am writing about Father Jose Luis. Father Jose Luis is a great priest. He brightens up my day. He shakes my hand when we walk into the school building in the morning, and that reminds me what my part is to do that day: to walk in Jesus' footsteps. He inspires me to help others.



When I go to Mass, I feel very calm and know God is within my heart. I listen to Father's homily and feel the warmth in me that tells me that the Lord is my shepherd; therefore, I shall not want. I could not ask for anything more. I think Father Jose Luis helps me understand that.

I usually have Reconciliation with Father Jose. He helps me know what I did wrong and gives me penance to heal the bad things that I have done. I know I have definitely learned from Father and have gotten closer to God by listening to him speak God's word.

Father Jose Luis is a kind, good-hearted person who teaches me to walk along the path of Jesus. He reminds me what I can do for my school, community, or just at home. He reminds me to pray to the Lord every night to thank him for the roof over my head and the meal I just ate. Also, to pray for those in need, who aren't as lucky as I am.

Another thing Father Jose Luis taught me about is faith. Faith is a gift from God that we cannot earn. We trust in God and believe in Him and know that He will be by our side every step of the way. Father teaches us how we can come to know God, which has helped me grow as a Catholic. Father Jose Luis helps me, and others as well, understand the scriptures by giving examples, comparing current events to past events. This helps me under-

stand the scriptures.

I will pass on the information Father Jose has given me to others and teach them about the scriptures. I want those people to be as inspired as I am. I want younger grades to follow Jesus and make good choices, as they get older. All the little things can make a difference like cleaning up the playground or helping someone if they're hurt.

Father Jose Luis is a wonderful priest, teacher, speaker, and friend. We are very fortunate to have him as our priest, and benefit from his guidance.

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### WHAT MY PRIEST MEANS TO ME

By Rachel Purl  
Our lady of Fatima School-Modesto  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place Award



To me my priest means and abundance of things. My priest means inspiration because of how inspiring he is. He means care because of how caring he is. My priest means peace giver to me because he shows peace to all people. My priest means love for he is very loving. My priest is Father Khoi.

My Priest, Father Khoi, is as inspiring as saint. He inspires the study of faith. My priest inspires love for all, so all people may live in peace. Father Khoi inspires me to love Jesus Christ because love for Jesus helps provide knowledge about Him. His show of inspiration for us is very caring.

Father Khoi, a caring priest, means care to me. He shows care for all people, and that in turn encourages others to show care to people they meet, creating a caring chain. Father Khoi's contagious regards for the church spreads throughout the parish. This caring man shows care for Lord Jesus through his care for his people and house. Father Khoi, caring man, is helping to spread peace throughout the church.

My priest, Father Khoi, means peace giver to me. Whenever he visits our classrooms, Father always blesses us with peace. He is a peace-giving saint. Father Khoi always gives peace to everyone he meets, and peace is very easily spread around in our community. His show of peace is loving to people, especially those in my parish.

Father Khoi, passionate man and priest, means love to me. He shows love to all people, and it is transmitted throughout the church just as easily as the choir's singing. Father Khoi's passion for faith is the second reason why he means love to me. The last of many reasons on

why Father Khoi means love to me is his love for God. His overall passion for God is overpowering, and it illuminates my world like the sun. I think he means love more than all other things he means to me, but only by a wee amount. Father Khoi's love is one characteristic that makes him such a great priest to me.

Father Khoi means inspiration, care, peace giver, and love to me. With his inspiration, regard, peacefulness, and passion, Father Khoi reminds me of someone else. He reminds me of Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God. I have heard many stories of the Son of God, and He sounds similar to Father Khoi, because He sounds like He is also inspiration, care, peace giving, and love to me. Father Khoi means heaps of things to me, and if you knew him, I bet he would mean a plethora of things to you.

*A Short Prayer for Vocations*

*"Heavenly Father, open the hearts of Your children that they may discern Your Holy Will; inspire in them a love and desire to surrender themselves to serving others in the name of Your son, Jesus Christ."*

**STOCKTON SERRANS PROVIDE VOCATIONAL SUPPORT FOR SEMINARIANS & INQUIRERS**

The Serra Club Of Stockton raised \$1,765.00 during our last fundraiser. We are thankful for the continuing, generous support by Stockton Serrans and others. As a result, we were able to make a monetary gift of \$150 to a total of twelve seminarians, and inquirers in discernment during the Christmas Holidays for personal vocational expenses. Those gratefully receiving the gift were:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Ernesto Madrigal     | St. Luke's Church - Stockton - pastoral year -              |
| Jeff Wilson          | St. Patrick's Seminary - Menlo Park                         |
| Julio Cesar Isaza    | St. Patrick's Seminary - Menlo Park                         |
| Andres Carmona       | St. Patrick's Seminary - Menlo Park                         |
| Cesar Martinez       | St. Patrick's Seminary - Menlo Park                         |
| Ronald Manango       | St. Patrick's Seminary - Menlo Park                         |
| Trung Hieu (John)Ngo | St. Patrick's Seminary - Menlo Park                         |
| Son (Joseph) Nguyen  | St. Partick's Seminary - Menlo Park                         |
| Daniel Barba         | Mt. Angel Seminary - St. Benedict, OR                       |
| Abraham Barrera      | Mt. Angel Seminary - St. Benedict, OR                       |
| Hector Rodriguez     | St. John Vianney House - Stockton - Inquirer in discernment |
| Lance Houck          | St. John Vianney House - Stockton - Inquirer in discernment |

**ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS FOR WINTER 2011**

**JANUARY**



The Reverend Javier Campechano, 16 Years, St. George



The Reverend Hung Nguyen, 17 Years--St. Anne

**FEBRUARY** (None)

**MARCH**

- The Reverend Monsignor Bonifacio Baldonado, 26 Years -- Our Lady of Fatima

- The Reverend Alvaro Lopez, 27 Years----- St. Anthony's Manteca

**SPECIAL NOTES:** *Seminarian, Jeff Wilson, will be ordained a priest on June 4, 2011. Seminarian, Julio Cesar Isaza, will receive the Call to Candidacy on April 5, at St. Patrick's Seminary.*

**Gracious Notes, Prayer Intentions, & Holiday Wishes Were Received From:**

- |                              |                                     |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cesar Martinez-Seminarian    | Sr. Regina Alonzo                   |
| John Ngo-Seminarian          | Sr. Ann Venita-                     |
| Ernesto Madrigal-Seminarian  | Sisters of the Cross off the Sacred |
| Ronald Manango-Seminarian    | Heart of Jesus- Modesto             |
| Julio Cezar Iszza-Seminarian | Father Alvaro Araque, Pastor        |
| Andres Carmona-Seminarian    | of St. Gertrude's Church            |
| Abraham Barrera-Seminarian   | Sister Wanda Billion- Vocational    |
|                              | Director, Stockton Diocese          |

**Scheduled Club Meetings, Events, & Presenters**

- March 07 - Lance Houck- Topic: My Vocation
- March 16 - Altar Server Recognition Mass- Annunciation Cathedral
- March 21 - Ernesto Madrigal - Topic: Pastoral Year at St. Luke's Church- Stockton
- April 04 - Brandon Ware- Pastor St. Anne- Lodi Topic: My New Pastoral Role
- May 15 - World Day of Prayer for Vocations

*MEETINGS BEGIN AT 12:00 P.M. ON 1ST AND 3RD MONDAYS PER MONTH, UNLESS NOTIFIED OTHERWISE. GUESTS ARE WELCOME!!!*

**Serra Club of Stockton Officers & Board of Trustees**

- President: Linda Thibodeaux-- lmthibo@comcast.net
- Membership Vice President: Rita Allyn--rallyn1940@sbcglobal.net
- Programs Vice President: Pat Sorini-- no e-mail address
- Communications Vice President: Bill Lina--tailgun@comcast.net
- Vocations Vice President: Vacant - under the direction of the President
- Secretary: Msgr. Larry McGovern--2frlarry@presentationchurch.net
- Treasurer: Bob Merdinger--rgmert@aol.com
- Chaplain: Msgr. Larry McGovern--as listed above
- Trustee: Steve Groom--groomcpa@aol.com
- Trustee: Paul Jacobs--paulandwaded@sbcglobal.net

**NEXT BOARD MEETING**  
*Monday--Feb. 28*

Stockton Serra Club Priest and Religious Appreciation Dinner chairperson, Gay Hughes, sent the following e-mail message to all e-mail capable club members in late October of 2010. In case you missed it,...here it is:

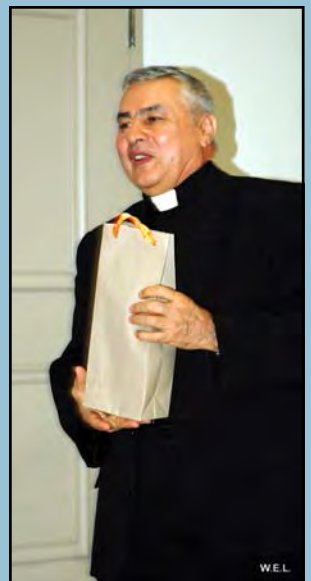
*Dear Friends,*

*Thank you all very much for your part in making the Serra Club Religious Appreciation Dinner a success. I know that the Priests and Religious who attended were very grateful for the evening of fun and fellowship. May the Lord bless each of you for your generosity of Time, Talent and Treasure....Gay Hughes*

Truly, her description of the evening was correct...it indeed was an “evening of fun and fellowship.” The photos on this page and the next that were taken during the evening give ample evidence of this fact!







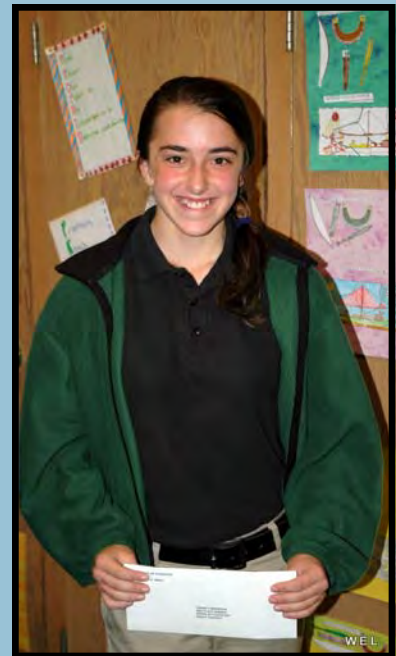
**SERRA ESSAY CONTEST AWARD PRESENTATIONS AT  
OUR LADY OF FATIMA, PRESENTATION, & SACRED HEART SCHOOLS**



**WINNER--RACHEL PURL--OUR LADY OF  
FATIMA- MODESTO  
December 9, 2010**



**WINNER-- LINDSEY MORRISON--CHURCH OF THE  
PRESENTATION --STOCKTON-December 9, 2010**





**WINNER**

**KYLE SYLVA**

**SACRED HEART  
SCHOOL  
TURLOCK**

**December 9, 2010**



**THE DAY WAS A DAY TO REMEMBER  
FOR ALL CONCERNED!**

# 2010 ANNUAL STOCKTON SERRA CLUB CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

PHOTOS: Members and Essay Contest Winners & Parents



**EVERYONE ENJOYED EACH OTHER'S  
PRESENCE, GREAT FOOD, AND  
LISTENING TO THE HEARTFELT  
READING BY THE ESSAY  
WINNERS!**



