



The Serra Club of Arlington
Minutes for Tuesday 05 September 2023 | Luncheon Meeting
The Portofino Restaurant | Arlington, Virginia



GUEST SPEAKER – FATHER DAVID DUFRESNE - PAROCHIAL VICAR AT ST CHARLES BORROMEIO CATHOLIC CHURCH, ARLINGTON, VA

Born to Bette Jo and Philip Johnson, Father David grew up in downtown Denver, Colorado. His parents divorced when he was four years old and is an only child. Notwithstanding great promise and potential, young David made many poor life choices. The consequences of which led him to be expelled from high school, ostensibly ran away from home and joined a gang...all before reaching sixteen years old. By the time David was 19, it was as low as he wanted to go. So, he looked up and encountered God profoundly.

At twenty years old, David was baptized and received into the Catholic Church in Denver. He felt called to become a priest. However, he was given the sage advice that he should first learn to become a Catholic before learning to become a Catholic priest. In 2003, he moved to Virginia to work in the pro-life movement.

He applied to seminary through the Diocese of Arlington in 2007. The Bishop sent him to the Josephinum seminary in Columbus Ohio where also earned his bachelor's degree in philosophy and classics. For theological studies the Bishop sent David to study in Rome. He was ordained into the priesthood of Jesus Christ June 7th, 2014.

He has served as parochial vicar at St. Leo the Great in Fairfax (2014-2018), and the Basilica of St Mary in Alexandria (2018-2022). He is currently the parochial vicar at St. Charles Borromeo in Arlington.

Fr. David has retained a love of the outdoors from his youth in Colorado. He enjoys climbing mountains, fly-fishing, backpacking, and hunting. He is a self-professed mama's boy who strives to take good care of his mother who has since moved to Virginia to be closer to her boy.

Highlights: Father Dufresne's talk begin with recapping his path to the priesthood. Basically, from his wayward lifestyle after his father died when he was 4 years old to finding God and Faith after hanging out with his youthful friends "lost its luster" and he sank into "deep unhappiness.

Below are some of the highlights of the talk:

- In hindsight, "Don't discount anyone who hears the Lord's calling."
- Father died when he was four years old. Mother work at nights to support him. Couldn't meet friend's parents as his mother worked 60-80 hour weeks thus leaving a vacuum being at home.
- Invited to "youth group." A "safe space" for at-risk group. A place to hang out. Invited to "after parties," in short, a gang. Wound up getting arrested whereby his mother, upon visiting the jail said, "Let him do the time."
- Concluded there is "no joy" in a gang resulting in deep unhappiness. Sat alone in an apartment, flipping burgers
- Transferred from public to private school where they recognized his potential
- Realized there is only one God. Discounted religions that didn't have a god.

- Catholic faith offered two things: the Apostles would die for God, and one didn't have to be perfect.
- Read about St Ignatius of Loyola and his conversion to dedicating one's life, which is what Fr David wanted.
- Regis University – had to find out the truth and contacted the Archbishop of Denver but to his surprise, the Archbishop got back to him. Encourage him and sent him to the review Board where he was given three years to learn the Faith and become Catholic.
- Felt the Diocesan community is a sense of family.
- Became pro-life witnessing his friends with frequent visits to Planned Parenthood
- Spoke briefly on his being a liaison to the prisons