



The Serra Club of Arlington
Minutes for Tuesday 4 June 2024 | Luncheon Meeting
The Portofino Restaurant | Arlington, Virginia



GUEST SPEAKER – FATHER MICHAEL NUGENT, PAROCHIAL VICAR, ST AMBROSE, ANNANDALE, VA

Introduction: VP for Programs Meredith Hinkle introduced Father Michael Nugent to the membership. Father was born into a closely-knit Navy family and spent eight years in faith formation in Catholic schools in Virginia Beach. After graduating from the University of Virginia, Father worked in New York City at an investment banking firm.

Subsequently, Father moved to Arlington, VA and became very active in service at St. Agnes Catholic Church. After four years of discerning within the Diocese, Father entered St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in 2016 and the Pontifical North American College in Rome in 2019.

Father Nugent was ordained on June 3, 2023 and is currently the Parochial Vicar at St. Ambrose Church in Annandale. He is co-sponsored by the Archdiocese for the Military Services (AMS) and will serve as a Navy Chaplain after serving for at least three years as a priest in the Arlington diocese.

Speaker Highlights: Father Nugent began by thanking the Serrans, asserting that he was there at this moment because of their prayers for his vocation.

Father related a beautiful story about his time at the North American College in Rome when he was working with the Missionaries of Charity. He lost his wallet that contained all his most important documents, his ID, and his funds. As the story unfolded, Father relayed how his search and the ultimate return of his wallet by the bus driver (who called the Angelicum on the third day) reminded him of the opening lines of Psalm 136 ***“O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.”***

When he was working on Wall Street, Father recounted that none of his colleagues or he would ever reveal any failure or weakness. Reflecting on this incident, Father noted that in the eyes of the Lord, “nothing can make Me stop loving you.” Sometimes God works through our failures, our shame, and our weakness. It is there in the hardest things we endure in this life that we find His Divine Mercy. In this life, God is most happy to show us His Mercy and His Love.

In the Christian heart, power is made perfect in weakness, as Paul the Apostle would write. It was no accident that the first Pope was a fisherman – both practically and symbolically a “fisher of men.” The first Apostles were survivors, not unlike men in a team sport who would look to their left and their right for strength and encouragement.

Father Nugent said he felt blessed to be in a place like the Diocese of Arlington, where people prayed for vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. In the future, when called to serve in the Navy as a Chaplain, Father prays he will be there for the right reasons.