



The Serra Club of Arlington
Minutes for Tuesday 01 October 2024 | Luncheon Meeting
The Portofino Restaurant | Arlington, Virginia



GUEST SPEAKER – SISTER MARIE BENEDICT ELLIOTT, F.S.E.

Sister Marie Benedict Elliott, F.S.E. -- Sister grew up at St. Mark Parish in Vienna, VA, and overseas, attended the University of Virginia, and worked in the DC area before entering the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist in 2011. She lived at the Community's Motherhouse in Connecticut for 10 years, where she completed formation to become a fully professed religious sister (in 2021). During that time, Sister Marie Benedict also taught classes and conducted campus ministry at an archdiocesan Catholic high school. Now missioned to her Community in Falls Church, Sister Marie Benedict divides her time between theological studies at the Catholic University of America and serving as Director of Youth Ministry at St. Philip Parish.

Highlights: Sister Marie Benedict summarized her path to becoming a nun, her moments of discernment, her various experiences and reflections. In no particular order:

Prayed to “St. Theresa Child of Jesus” for vocation guidance. Sister Benedict lived the life of a Carmelite nun and continued to pray. She also continued to move into “community with God” and desired for martyrdom. Recognized that everyone has their “calling.” Considered what of a heart of a body, that is, the center of the body. Then recognized that we are the “heart” of the church. The result was finding her desire and a “direction.”

Regarding St. Francis of Assisi: Conversion as part of the process. Praying desire to know God’s calling. What does one need to do to “let go” to follow Christ? Recalled the story of St Francis who heard God’s voice to “rebuild my church.” But shortly discovered that God meant rebuild his “whole church,” not the physical church building. St Francis prayed to know, “who am I?” First to have a Stigmata.

Sister Benedict conveyed to the members a spiritual exercise practiced by the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. This entailed reflecting on “what is your gift to the world?” Then use it to bring the gift of the Eucharist to the world.