



Serra Club of Arlington, VA
Minutes for Tuesday 09 September 2025 | Luncheon Meeting
The Portofino Restaurant | Arlington, Virginia



GUEST SPEAKER – Sr. Julia Darrenkamp, F.S.P.

Sister Julia Darrenkamp belongs to the order of the Daughters of St. Paul and can be found at the Pauline Books and Media store on King St. in Alexandria. Sister grew up in Lancaster, PA and was raised in a Protestant household. When she was 13, she and a friend visited the local library, and she stumbled upon books on the lives of St. Bernadette (Song of Bernadette) and St. Maria Goretti. She was drawn to them because they were her own age and lived heroic lives. She decided she wanted to become a saint just like these young saints (She is still working on that as she missed making it at 24 as St. Therese did, nor at 32 as St. Catherine of Siena, and missed again at 59 as St. Claire did. She is now setting her sights on 95 as St. Jerome managed).

Following the revelation at the local library her friend's mother took them to Philadelphia to a Pauline Sisters bookstore. The sisters advised her to pray three Hail Mary's each day for guidance. She became determined to convert to Catholicism.

Her parents and grandparents were raised as Protestants (Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran and Evangelical). When she announced she wished to become Catholic they expressed their opposition, and her grandmother actually cried wondering where she went wrong. She announced she would boycott the Evangelical church from then on. Ironically, her maternal grandmother had taken a job as a cleaning lady at Old Saint Mary Catholic Church and had become Catholic herself just six months prior. Her grandmother got her started with taking instructions and she celebrated her first Communion on January 1st, just two weeks after her grandmother died unexpectedly. Her parents never did convert. She and her friend Christine both became Catholic and joined the same convent. Sr. Christine currently resides and serves in Boston.

Sister Julia just celebrated her 51st anniversary since joining the convent. She recently wrote a book on a daily devotional to Mary. It should be published next year.