

# News and Views

Newsletter of the Divine Providence Province



## VOCATION, CONSECRATION and COMMISSION

The month of February reminds us Catholics of the feasts of the **Presentation of Our Lord** and of **Our Lady of Lourdes**. These two feasts have been attributed to the **World Day for Consecrated Life** and **World Day of the Sick** respectively. This February 2nd Mother Church celebrates the 22nd World Day for Consecrated Life with the theme taken from the message of Pope Francis for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, reflecting on the three aspects of every vocation: **listening, discerning and living**. In October 2018, the Synod of Bishops at the 15th Ordinary General Assembly will discuss the relationship between young people, the faith and the Vocational Discernment. Therefore, the quite indication we could perceive is that the Church is more concerned with the life and vocation of every individual irrespective of their status quo (priests/religious/laity), power and authority. Though the day is dedicated to consecrated people or religious men and women, it is

made clear that every human person on earth has a specific gift and a vocation from God, *to be consecrated and commissioned*. Hence, our Holy Father, on the ascent of his Papacy, thrilled us with an Apostolic Exhortation "**Joy of the Gospel**" which constantly resounds in us to remain ever happy and joyful human persons in the proclamation of the Gospel. We are to be mindful of the voice of God, His encounter through the mystery of the Incarnation, in our troublesome situations and to witness His Word and encounter by our way of life leading to a fuller happiness.

**Listening:** *God doesn't call us in a thundering situation or in the external noisy world. His voice comes to us in a personal, contemplative way. Rather being enclosed within ourselves, away from our own little world and stories, we must view things with the eyes of faith and should keep ourselves open to the surprises of the Spirit. Nowadays it is unbecoming and most difficult for human persons to listen to the promptings of the Spirit. The present world is bombarded with more noise and information which prevents us from pausing for a fruitful reflection and a taste of contemplation.*

**Discerning:** *Each of us as individuals can discover our vocation only through spiritual discernment. It is a process by which a person makes fundamental choices in dialogue with the Lord and listening to the voice of the Spirit. Hence, it is certain that the Christian Vocation has a prophetic dimension with a message of conversion, hope and consolation. There lies a great need of discernment and of prophecy that helps us fight against the temptations*

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*"Woman, behold your son."*

Jn 19,26

of Ideology and negativity. Resisting these temptations should help us to realize where we are and to what we are called to carry out our mission.

**Living:** *Each one of us is called - whether to the lay life in marriage, to the priestly life in the ordained ministry, or to a life of special consecration - in order to become a witness to the Lord by our complete and generous 'yes.'*

Having contemplated deeply, willing to discern thoroughly we shall strive to become full pledged witnesses by our way of life in this modern and technocratic world. Recognizing Jesus Christ as the light of the world, we the religious are called to reflect the light of Jesus by encountering Him and avoiding self-reference. There is also a need for an ongoing renewal without worrying and perplexing about our routine way of spiritual life. We shall long for the crystallization of our

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founder's prophecy in remaining loyal and faithful to one's own vocation by crossing our borders. It is high time to think of moving from *conservative mode* to *missionary mode*. As we have celebrated our 4th DPP chapter with the theme "*Deepening our Charism and Intercultural Communities*," the key of the Chapter was Missionary Vocation, meaning not only to depart from the space of oneself but also having the sensitive pedagogy of the face of the other. I stress this strongly after my recent visit to the Solomon Islands (Jan 4th–26th). I find, at present, persons who are comfortable in their own culture, remaining attached to their native nation which leads to the diminishing of their prophetic zeal.

The **26th World Day of the Sick** on February 11th has the theme Jn 19,26-27. This gives us a message that Mary's maternal vocation to care for the Church and humanity is handed on to us by Jesus Himself on Calvary. May we entrust to the intercession of Mother Mary all those in pain and sorrow physically and

mentally. So that She may help every member of the Church to live with love the vocation to serve life and health. May Mother Mary heal our wounds and sustain us in listening, discerning and living our vocation as Servants (Missionaries) of Charity.

*Fr. Soosai Rathinam*

## February Calendar of Fr. Provincial

- 2**      **Chennai:** World Consecrated Day/Candlemas - DGMS
- 2-3**   **Chennai:** Superiors and Treasurers Meeting
- 5**      **Keela:** Michael Patty - Marriage Mss
- 11**     **Thennur:** Parochial Feast Mass
- 16**     **Departure for Manila**
- 17-18** **Manila:** Annual Assembly of Confreres
- 19-22** **Manila:** 16th DPP Plenary Meeting
- 23**     **Legazpi:** Provincial Visit
- 25**     **Return to India**
- 27-28** **Chennai:** Regency Brothers Gathering

## Guanellian Family Mourns the Loss of German Procure



The Guanellian Family of the Divine Providence Province is sad to announce the passing of German Procure Gero Lombardo, who was received by the Lord on January 12, 2018. Mr. Lombardo was born in Sicily on March 7, 1936, and had a great devotion to St. Louis Guanella

based on his upbringing in the Catholic faith and his original plan to become a priest. During his young life, he was a seminarian for the Servants of Charity, but eventually he chose a different path. He left the seminary and became a successful businessman manufacturing and selling irrigation equipment throughout Europe and the Middle East. When he retired, he used his business connections to support the missions of the Servants of Charity, and obtained donations for charitable projects in Africa, the Philippines and India. In 2013, he also worked with the General Council to bring two Servants of Charity priests to Pforzheim, Germany to begin "Missione Cattolica Italiana" in his home parish; Holy Family.

According to Provincial Treasurer Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, Lombardo had a great sense of humor. "He was my cousin and was four years older than me. We both grew up in Naro, Sicily during WWII. I remember that his family home was on top of a hill, and his house was destroyed during the bombings. His family had no farm because they lived in town, and as a result, they became homeless and deprived of the essentials of life. He grew up knowing poverty, and that's why he was so driven to help others in the world in his later years. Because of his irrigation business, he traveled and met people all over the world; including Africa, the Middle East, South America, and Asia."

Recent projects included raising funds for a Community Center in the new Solomon Islands mission, financial support of SdC theology students in the Philippines and India, the Good Samaritan Pharmacy project in Quezon City, and a drinking water project in West Tanzania. Mr. Lombardo provided the Divine Providence Province with monthly updates for many years, and his presence will be missed throughout the Province.

He leaves behind his wife Ingeborg and his children Luca and Fabio. Eternal rest grant unto him, and let perpetual light shine upon him. St. Louis Guanella, pray for us!

## The Roots of our Faith

By Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC



It is very important to go back and seek the roots of our faith. Just as the Apostles never forgot the moment in which Jesus touched their heart, we also must turn our memory to those that have helped us on our Christian journey. Sometimes they were simple and close persons who initiated us in the life of faith. The believer is one who fundamentally remembers. Therefore, one cannot believe without memory, and faith is nourished and fed by the memory.

Moreover, the Lord is God of our parents and grandparents. He is not God of the last moment, a God without the history of the family, a God who, to respond to every new example, must discard those who came before us as old and ridiculous.

The history of the family is never out of fashion. The clothes and hair of grandparents will seem old, they will make us laugh when we look at the brownish photographs, but the affection of our parents, who gave all of themselves so that we could be here and have what we have, are a lighted flame in every noble heart.

Therefore, it is necessary to always remember that, to progress in the faith, is also an exercise in returning with the memory to fundamental graces. One can progress going back, going to seek again the treasures and experiences that were forgotten and that many times contain the keys to understanding the present.

The truly revolutionary thing is to go back to our roots. To better understand the concept, a personal anecdote of Pope Francis during the Spiritual Exercises can help. Not understanding the preacher, he called to mind a prayer that his grandmother had on her night table: "Pay attention because God is looking at you, remember that you will die but you don't know when." At that moment, he was unblocked and went forward in prayer, the memory helped him, confided the Holy Father.

To go back to the sources of a memory, the Pope suggested a passage of the prophet Jeremiah and another of the prophet Hosea, in which they speak to us of what the Lord remembers of His people. For Jeremiah the memory of the Lord is that of the beloved bride of his youth, who was then unfaithful to him. For Hosea, the memory of the Lord is that of the coddled and ungrateful son. Today as then, the infidelity and ingratitude of Pastors has repercussions on the poorest of the faithful people, who remain at the mercy of strangers and predators.

Confirming that a Christian does not forget his roots, the more lucid the memory of the past is, the clearer the future opens, because the new way can be seen and distinguished from ways already followed. Then the faith grows by remembering, by connecting things with the real history lived by our parents and by the whole people of God, by the whole Church. Therefore the Eucharist is the Memorial of our faith, which situates us again daily, in the fundamental event of our salvation, in the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord, front and center of history. Therefore, the invitation to priests is to return always to this Memorial and to actualize it in a Sacrament that is prolonged in life.

Have questions or comments about this newsletter? Email the Communications and Community Relations Office at: [kellyf@stlouiscenter.org](mailto:kellyf@stlouiscenter.org)

*... he called to mind a prayer that his grandmother had on her night table ...*

## Festival of Harvest

Pongal is a four-days-long harvest festival celebrated in Tamil Nadu, a southern state of India. For as long as people have been planting and gathering food, there has been some form of harvest festival. Pongal is one of the most important and popular festivals of the year. This festival of thanksgiving to nature takes its name from the Tamil word meaning "to boil" and is held in the month of Thai (January-February) during the season when rice and other cereals, sugar-cane, and turmeric (an essential ingredient in Tamil cooking) are harvested.

**CHENNAI** - The Tamil festival of harvest was celebrated at the Divine Providence Provincialate house on January 15th. Children of Don Guanella Evening School gathered with their teachers to welcome the guest of honor, Fr. Vellington. He blessed the House and the pongal pot and lit the fire to inaugurate the celebration. As the pongal was cooking, the children performed dances, sang songs and narrated stories. Fr. Vellington spoke about the historicity of the festival in depth in story form with active participation by the kids. As soon as the pongal was ready, it was blessed by the guest and distributed to the children along with sugarcane. (1)

**CHENNAI** - The harvest festival primarily involves thanking the sun God for the bountiful harvest. In remembering this history the Don Guanella Major Seminary Community celebrated Pongal festival on January 16th. To make the festival joyful Fr. Samson, Superior of the DGMS community, celebrated the Indian rite Mass which brought the holiness of the trinity amidst each one of us on this special day. Sisters from other communities also participated and made the festival a memorable one. (2)

**CUDDALORE** - The Evening School Children were very happy to celebrate Pongal on January 20th at the St. Joseph's Seminary Campus. St. Joseph's Seminary confreres arranged all the details to make the program meaningful. The children participated in the program with their parents. The parents cooked Pongal and shared with everyone. Then some traditional games like pot breaking were organized, traditional dances performed and singing resounded. The parents participated in the Rongoli competition. The best three designs were chosen and awarded. The program ended with a thanksgiving prayer. Everyone departed with sweet sugarcane. (3)

**KUMBAKONAM** - Guanella Nagar Parish commemorated the feast of the Three King's and Pongal together. Fr. A. John Bosco celebrated Holy Mass. In his homily he taught that the Wise Men after worshipping the child Jesus offer him gold, frankincense and myrrh as gifts. Then he asked, "What do we have to offer Him after finding Him?" Epiphany lifts our eyes from the family celebrations and demands that we should include in our vision "all the ends of the earth." The Holy Mass was organized by our Guanellian sisters and parishioners with creative ideas. After Mass all received the three King's sweet pongal. It was sponsored by Mr. Moses of Perumpandi. (4)



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4

## Benefactor's Day

*"He who lends to the Poor, Lends to God."*

**CUDDALORE** - St. Joseph's Seminary celebrated Benefactors' Day January 26th to show gratitude to



the generous donors. The event began with a prayer service followed by the message delivered by Fr. Francis Assisi, Rector. He also thanked the benefactors for their presence and for their constant support in all that we do. Fr. Visuwasam, Community Superior, celebrated solemn holy Mass to give them spiritual food. Following Mass the benefactors gathered to share a delicious meal. To add more beauty to the day, brothers performed a colorful cultural program and as a token of love gave each benefactor a gift.

## Republic Day

**CHENNAI** - Don Guanella Major Seminary community celebrated Republic Day on January 26th. The day began with a Eucharistic celebration. Fr. Francis SdC presided over Mass, bringing blessings of the Lord on that auspicious day.

After Mass the National Flag was hoisted by the chief guest, Fr. Wellington SdC.

Brothers gave inspirational speeches as a tribute to the freedom fighters, rekindling our national zeal amidst each one of us. To close the program, the national anthem was sung.



## Alumni Gathering

**CUDDALORE** - Don Guanella Boys Home was delighted to see its former students. Around 30 former students participated in the Alumni gathering on January 28th. Fr. Visuwasam welcomed the participants. Then the students began reminiscing about their experiences. They are all very grateful to all the Guanellian



Fathers and Regents of DGBH and all those who supported them while they were studying here. Then they shared 'Bread and the Lord.' After lunch, the current students of DGBH animated a program. The program was appreciated by the alumni and they advised the students to make use of all the opportunities that are available in DGBH. They added that it is because of the opportunities and good training of the fathers that has helped them become successful.

## National Youth Conference in India

**CHENNAI** - On Sunday January 28th, local youth animator Fr. Prakash and the Guanellian Youth Movement held a youth conference at Don Guanella



Major Seminary for forty members from various communities. The conference began with a prayer service and welcome by Fr. Prakash. Representatives from each community lit the kuthuvillaku before Fr. Francis gave his talk. In his address he mentioned the basic qualities for the Guanellian youth, emphasizing that they must be rooted in the love of Christ, the love of our founder and they should have merciful hearts. He also spoke about the Guanellian family spirit that all those participating in the charism and the spirit of our founder are brothers and sisters. He also gave examples on how to lead a meaningful, authentically Christian life even as a youth. Mrs. Maris shared her views on physical health care, focusing on the functions of the brain and the heart. After lunch, Fr. Kulandai, Provincial Councilor, spoke about the Guanellian youth as a special call, therefore they belong to the Guanellian family and must adopt the spirit of our founder. He gave each participant a certificate. Fr. Samson reminded them that GYM is a special vocation and each

one must be committed and persevere. He also shared his personal experience with them which was enlightening for all.

## Birthday Celebration

**LEGAZPI** - The Servants of Charity community celebrated the birthday of Legazpi's mayor, Noel Rosal, on January 2nd. The celebration began with Holy Mass to pray for his administration that he will lead the city with prosperity and peace, helping the poor, the least and the last. After Mass, the community, residents and elderly who attended were invited to breakfast with Mr. Rosal.



## Road to Renewal

**MANILA** - The word 'vacation' triggers or motivates people by the way we derive its meaning. Venerable Aurelio Bacciarini Theologate organized a three-day vacation at Bataan for the Theology students, Fr. Rajesh, and Bros. Mauro and Khiet during the 1st semester



break. These were days of not just rest and relaxation, but also a time to evaluate the first semester of Seminary life and a moment to grow in fraternity. Everyone shared their views, experiences and opinions about their life in the Theologate in the past months and suggested how to commit oneself in forth coming days. The days were filled with joy, happiness and hope and helped everyone to rejuvenate the Guanellian Spirit and passion for life.

## Pilgrimage: Worth the Walk!

**MANILA** - "No matter how long the journey is, it pays off when you reach the destination. It's worth the walk." January 10th was indeed a walk to remember. The postulants and aspirants of the Servants of Charity Seminary embarked on a 15 Kilometer pilgrimage, a tradition for the seminary. The seminarians walked all the way from the formation house to four different Churches. First, they stopped at Santo Domingo Church, home of Our Lady of La Naval, and after

reciting a short prayer, continued walking to Quiapo Church, the Basilica Minore of Nuestro Padre Hesus Nazareno. While there, the seminarians prayed and went to confession. A five minute walk from Quiapo is Santa Cruz Church, one of the baroque Churches in the country established by the Jesuit order in the early 17th Century. As they continued walking, they reached their final destination: the Minor Basilica and Metropolitan



Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, informally known as Manila Cathedral. The Episcopal see of the Archbishop of Manila is located in Intramuros, the historic walled area within the modern City of Manila.

Every destination was indeed an encounter with the Lord. The street sweepers, the homeless, the beggars and the ordinary people whom they met along the way were Jesus in disguise, giving the seminarians an opportunity to practice charity and compassion. The journey may have been tiring but it was all worth it. Realizing that despite the struggle and pain, there was also joy; not just in giving but also because their companions were unified by their fellowship with Christ. Having found the purpose of the pilgrimage by means of walking as a labor of love for God, they learned that their spiritual experience was an arduous but worthwhile journey of discovery in their faith.



## Novices Gain Many Skills

**LEGAZPI** - On January 20th Mr. Pinz facilitated a course for the novices on the subject of Reflexology. After the lessons, the novices were also trained with some basic knowledge about



stretching, massage, blood pressure and other medical skills that will help them in their future mission work.

With practical and theoretical techniques, the subject Special Education was taught by Ms. Ofelia on January 22nd. Because of the classes the novices gained for their own experience and understanding knowledge of special children and their behavioral tendencies. That is precious to the novices because it will help them to encounter special children in effective ways in the future.

Integration with government and others related to social work is an essential element in the Guanellian mission. Mrs. Mae presented Social Work, lessons to the novices, completing the course on January 23rd. During the classes, she shared and showed useful information, tips and procedures to novices in the event they need support from officials. Furthermore, the lessons prepared the novices to offer psychological counseling which can help patients and parents.

## Walking with the Lord

**MANILA** - Christianity has a strong tradition of pilgrimages and a particular value for Guanellians because St. Louis Guanella, a loving mountaineer, walked his holy way of life as a pilgrim towards God. In 1902 he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Later he was declared co-patron of Unitalsi in 2005. To signify the importance of this pilgrim devotion, the theology students of Ven. Aurelio Bacciarini Theologate went on a Walking Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the Black Nazarene in Quiapo January 27th. The Black Nazarene is a life-sized, dark wooden sculpture of Jesus Christ carrying the cross, believed to be miraculous by many Filipino Catholics. The religious veneration of the Black Nazarene is rooted among Filipinos who identify themselves with the passion of Jesus Christ. Many devotees of the Black Nazarene unite their poverty

and daily struggles to the wounds and tribulations experienced by Jesus, as represented by the image. On this pilgrimage, we stopped at Santo Domingo Church and St. Sebastian's Church to pray devotions to Divine Mercy and the Divine Providence of God. Mass was celebrated in the Basilica to honor the Black Nazarene.



## Bible Quiz 2018

**MANILA** - On January 30, 2018, the Servants of Charity seminary held a bible quiz for the second time in ten years; the primary contestants were the seminarians. The event was hosted by Fr. Charlton Viray with the opening message given by Fr. Charles Anthonysamy. The contestants were divided into four groups of five, and were named after the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The first contest was the group competition. Right after the group competition, each group provided a representative for the singles contest. Representatives from the four groups competed in the quiz bee and Gospel interpretation. The over-all champion was Team John, and awards were given for the singles category; the quiz bee, and the best interpreter. The first prize winner in the individual quiz bee came from Team John; Seminarian Michael Adlaon, and the best interpreter was Ren Sarmiento from team Mark.



## Gifts of a Fraternal Visit



**SOLOMON ISLANDS** - The season of Christmas always brings joy to everyone. In the same way the visit of Fr. Soosai, Provincial Superior, to the Noro community brought joy to the confreres. As the Magi travelled so long to find Jesus in the manger to offer Him gifts, Fr. Soosai made a long and courageous journey to bring the gifts of joy, peace and communion to all. His visit to the periphery of the world strengthened and revitalized our community here. His stay in Noro January 5th- 25th was like an exchange of the gifts of different cultures and traditions with the parishioners. He was welcomed by natives in traditional costume and crowned with a flower garland; he felt at home and enjoyed the ambience of the love of local customs and cultures. During his stay, Fr. visited each substation on remote islands in the middle of the ocean, at times sailing over rough sea, to offer special Masses for all the faithful. He addressed the community with inspirational and courageous missionary zeal in the context of interculturality. Fr. Soosai paid a special visit to our beloved flying bishop of Gizo to share the purpose of his visit to the happy isles. Bishop Capelli gave him a warm welcome and kind hospitality. As a token of gratitude, Fr. Soosai Rathinam honored the bishop with a garland made of Indian sandalwood. He also visited Archbishop of Honiara. His presence made us ponder the theme of the XX General Chapter, and to think, pray and act according to the cultures and context of the Solomon Islands.

## 'Aktion Club' Gives Back

**CHELSEA** - Club President "Lisa" sounded the Kiwanis bell at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday January 25th, and members of the St. Louis Center "Aktion Club" were called to

order. With twenty-five "Aktion Club" members in the room, the term "order" is sometimes only a desired goal, but like many of her peers, Lisa enjoys playing a leadership role as club president, and especially likes "helping other people." That's exactly the role played by the Kiwanis "Aktion Club," which was formed in 1987 by Kiwanis International for persons with I/DD, and now boasts 12,000 members around the world.

According to SLC Program Director and Club Advisor Rick Visel, "The Club allows people with I/DD a chance to give back to the community and demonstrate to the public that people with I/DD have value and can contribute to society." The St. Louis Center club was organized in 2011 and is sponsored by the Chelsea Kiwanis Club, acting as the sponsoring organization. Members of the SLC club assist the parent club at



local events throughout the year, and have helped at Chelsea Kiwanis events such as the Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Chelsea Summerfest, the Chelsea Fair, and the Halloween Costume Judging Contest.

Since 2011, the Club has also sponsored their own fundraisers by selling Christmas cards and hosting a statewide bowl-a-thon at Belmark Lanes in Ann Arbor in 2014. "We've raised nearly \$5,000 during that time, and have used the money to support the Grass Lake Sanctuary for Breast Cancer Survivors, the 'Eliminate Project,' which protects women and babies in Third World countries by providing tetanus shots, and 'Sleeping

Children Around the World,' which provides bed kits for poor children.

During January's meeting, fellow residents "Ray" and "Tony" received lapel pins and were sworn in as new members of the club.



## February Calendar of Events

- 2 **Presentation of the Lord; World Day of Consecrated Life**
- 3 **Manila:** Monthly Recollection
- 4 **Anniversary of the Death of Mother Marcellina Bosatta (1934)**
- 6 **Manila:** Annual Communio
- 8 **Chelsea:** Pasta Dinner with the Priests
- 9 **Chelsea:** Guanellian Cooperators Meeting - SLC
- 10 **Chelsea:** Vocational Retreat for Boys  
**Grass Lake:** Prayer and Pizza Girls' Group  
**Manila:** Guanellian Cooperators' Meeting
- 10-11 **Manila:** Vocation Seminar
- 12 **Grass Lake:** Mother of Divine Providence Day- PUSJ
- 13 **Manila:** Cultural Day
- 14 **Ash Wednesday**
- 17-18 **Manila:** Annual Assembly
- 19 **Grass Lake:** Monthly St. Joseph Day at PUSJ
- 19-22 **Manila:** Annual Assembly
- 22 **The Chair of St. Peter, Apostle**  
**Chelsea:** Securing the Future for Special Needs Families Seminar - SLC
- 25 **Anointing of the Sick of Blessed Clare Bosatta (1887)**

## Best Wishes and Prayers to:

- 1 **Fr. George:** birthday
- 2 **Fr. Kannikai Raj:** feast day
- 4 **Fr. Britto, Fr. T. Anandhan, Fr. Arul:** feast day
- 10 **Fr. Kuriakose:** birthday
- 11 **Bro. Joseph Rajarathnam:** birthday; **Fr. S.A. Lourduraj, Fr. C. Lourduraj:** feast day
- 12 **Fr. Soosai Rathinam:** ordination day
- 14 **Fr. Amalorpavanathan:** birthday
- 15 **Fr. Silvio DeNard:** birthday
- 18 **Bro. Juvie O. Ortea:** birthday
- 19 **Fr. Sagayaraj:** birthday
- 24 **Fr. Chandra Nevis, Fr. Aputharaj:** birthday
- 25 **Fr. Francis:** birthday
- 26 **Bro. Gnana Vijay:** birthday



St. Josephine Bakhita

MIDWEEK  
**Reflections**  
FROM PIOUS UNION OF ST. JOSEPH

In February, the Pious Union of St. Joseph will begin sharing an email offering a **Midweek Reflection**. Reflections will be quotes from the Bible or by Saints offering you a moment of reflection in the midst of your week.

Interested in receiving the weekly reflection to your inbox? Please share your email address with **Kelly Flaherty** at [kellyf@stlouiscenter.org](mailto:kellyf@stlouiscenter.org).