

News and Views

Newsletter of the Divine Providence Province



XX (20th) General Chapter of the Servants of Charity

In the beautiful Alpine hills of the Lombardy region of North Italy, at the Casa Don Guanella in Barza, the XX General Chapter of the Servants of Charity was conducted from April 8th - April 28th and whose theme was "Charism, Interculturality and Prophecy." The setting was fitting as the house was, and continues to be, a house for formation of novices and many confreres, throughout the years, have spent some of their most memorable times in this house. It also serves now as a place of formation for those preparing for perpetual profession as well as a local spirituality, pastoral and cultural center.

The chapter opened on the evening of April 8th at the motherhouse in Como with the celebration of the Eucharist by Bishop Oscar Cantoni, bishop of Como, in the shrine church of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. This was followed by a dinner where chapter members entered into the spirit of fraternal communion which marked the chapter. The chapter fathers gathered in the morning of April 9th in the chapter hall and the initial acts of the chapter began with the reading of the convocation letter by Fr. Alfonso Crippa, Superior General, the singing of the Veni Creator Spiritus and then his opening remarks. This was

followed by the election of the two moderators and two secretaries for the chapter. Br. Franco Lain of the Our Lady of Hope Delegation in Africa and Fr. Mauro Vogt, provincial superior of the Cruz del Sur Province in Brazil, were elected as moderators. Fr. Alessandro Allegra of the St. Joseph Roman Province and Fr. Francesco Sposato, a member of the Sacred Heart Province of N. Italy, were elected as the chapter secretaries. As is the custom, the two youngest confreres attending the chapter became the tellers or observers for the chapter and they were Fr. Tiago Boufleur of the Cruz del Sur Province and Fr. Jude Anamelechi of the Our Lady of Hope Delegation. This day also was inspired with a reflection given by Bishop Paolo Martinelli, a Capuchin friar and auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Milan as well as episcopal vicar for men religious in the archdiocese, whose theme was "The Intercultural Characteristics of the Christian Experience."

There are significant and essential acts of the General Chapter which mark it and one such act took place during the next morning and part of the afternoon with the presentation of the report of the Superior General. Fr. Alfonso gave a panoramic view of the life of the entire congregation and the chapter members, in various groups, had an opportunity to discuss the report and present to the chapter assembly their findings. In

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New General Council

the midst of this work, the report of the various provincials and delegate superior were also presented.

The chapter itself takes on a certain rhythm and a multitude of tasks are assumed by the chapter fathers. These are done in view of the General Chapter being "a singular moment of revision and discernment by which we strengthen our religious family according to the Gospel and in harmony with the times and directives of the Church" (Constitution n. 112) and whose "primary task...is to guard the charism of the Founder and whatever constitutes the spiritual patrimony of the Institute with fidelity in order to render them operative in its life and apostolate." (Constitutions n. 113) In order to fulfill the spirit of these directives, duties of the chapter such as the report of the General Treasurer and a discussion of and presentation by the various workgroups on the report took place. In addition, the formation of five commissions among the

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XX Chapter Fathers

chapter fathers helped also to realize the direction given by the Constitutions. These commissions were: Charism, Consecration, Ecclesiastical Life and the Guanellian Family; Fraternity, Interculturality and Prophecy; Vocation Ministry and Initial and Permanent Formation; and Economy, Governance and Animation and Organization of the Congregation. The commissions worked diligently in establishing inspiring principles, identifying lines of action and developing motions and proposals for presentation to the chapter assembly for voting at the end of the chapter. Finally, as part of this essential work, revised texts of the Regulations were presented for review and possible modification and these texts were also voted upon and, with the outcome of the vote, will now be included as revised regulations.

Unique and special moments are welcomed during the General Chapter and this was reflected in a presentation given by Fr. Mario Aldegani, Superior General of the Josephites of Murialdo on the theme of the chapter; an overview given by Sr. Neuza Giordani, Vicar General of the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence and Dr. Antonio Valentini, president of the Guanellian Cooperators of N. Italy and Switzerland on the mini-chapter of the Guanellian family which took place in Rome from November 10-12 of last year and, on that same day, a visit to the Cathedral of St. Lawrence in Lugano, Switzerland where the body of Venerable Aurelio Bacciarini is buried; and the Eucharistic Liturgy celebrated by Archbishop Mario Delpini, Archbishop of Milan.

This is a fitting point to note that the General Chapter and its members were continually spiritually nourished throughout the chapter with the liturgical celebrations. Daily Mass celebrated by many of the chapter fathers as well as Eucharistic adoration and benediction along with the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours were rich times for its members and helped to sustain them in the work of the chapter.

In a sense, the zenith of the General Chapter is reached with the vote taking place for the Superior General, Vicar General as well as the 3 remaining General Councilors. These are historic moments in the life of the Congregation and this chapter proved to be no different. The election occurred on April 25th and it was prepared for by a personal hour of reflection and adoration in the chapel as well as Eucharistic Benediction with the chapter fathers.

The members then returned to the assembly and the following were elected as the new leadership of the Institute of the Servants of Charity: Fr. Umberto Brugnoli, Superior General; Fr. Nicola (Nico) Rutigliano, Vicar General; Fr. Soosai Rathinam; Br. Franco Lain; and Fr. Gustavo De Bonis. The composition of this council is certainly one that is historical in nature with, for the first time, a general councilor from India and a religious brother being elected; representation on the General Council from three nations - Italy, India and Argentina; and five continental mission experiences within the General Council - Europe, Asia, Africa (where Br. Franco has served for 25 years), South America and North America. One can say that this Holy Spirit led effort responded to the theme of the General Chapter, "Charism, Interculturality and Prophecy" and the motto of the General Chapter, "Rooted in the Charism for the Universal Mission."

The General Chapter ended as it began with a Eucharistic Liturgy taking place, on April 28th, at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Como and celebrated by the newly elected Superior General, Fr. Umberto Brugnoli. The General Chapter proved to be a prophetic witness to the charism of the Institute; a reflection of the growing inter-cultural nature of the Congregation; and a living out of a fraternal and family spirit so desired by our holy Founder, St. Louis Guanella. May God continue to shower his blessings upon the Servants of Charity! Mary, Mother of Divine Providence, pray for us! St. Louis Guanella, pray for us!

Mary's Song By Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC

If we read closely we can discover that Mary teaches us much about ourselves and the world we live in through her song: the Magnificat. (Lk 1,46-55).

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord.

Mary begins with a spirit of gratitude. How often are our prayers dominated by our personal petitions and intercessions, but little time for expressions of gratitude. Mary tells us through the Magnificat that while petitions and intercessions can certainly be a part of our prayers, we need to pause and give thanks as well.

My spirit rejoices in God My Savior.

Mary rushes to meet with her cousin, Elizabeth to share the joy. The Magnificat is a song of the upside down reign of God. While we tend to think of it in terms of power, prestige and wealth, Jesus indicates that the kingdom of God is within us. So Mary shares amazement that God chose to share the work of salvation with a woman of such low estate. She teaches us to recognize the image of God in all people.

For God has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

Being lowly is not regarded as a key to happiness. Yet the beatitudes remind us that the poor may be happy if the kingdom of God is in them. In Mary's womb God became man. Now she teaches us through her song, about God's loving regard for all.

From this day all generations will call me blessed.

This line is the crucial moment in Mary's acceptance of her role as the mother of our Savior. The rest of her life is oriented toward the building of the Kingdom of God. Christians for centuries have turned to her for help.

For the Almighty has done great things for me.

Mary praises God for the wonders He has worked on her behalf and on behalf of her people. Mary teaches us that God works in and through us and encourages us to pray that God may even use us as He used her.

And holy is God's name.

Our Lady of Grace teaches us that those who experience God and attempt to explain it are like blind lions searching for springs in the desert. Mary proclaims in the Magnificat that God's name is holy and within her womb the Holy One has become incarnate. For generations of Christian tradition, Mary has been loved and trusted by those who invoke her help.

God's mercy is in every generation.

Our Faith has laws but it also has mercy. St. Nolan tells the story of a thief who seeks Mary's intercession as he

is about to die in the gallows. To the crowd's surprise he is cut down from the gallows and is found to be alive. A witness claims that the thief could not fall because standing beneath the gallows was a beautiful lady holding him up by his feet.

God has shown the strength of His arms.

This portion of Mary's song is sung not only for herself but for all people. She is telling us that we dwell in the protective shadow of the outstretched and loving arms of the Heavenly Father.

God has scattered the proud in their conceit.

Mary directs in this part of her song to pray to God that we may be saved from the pride and arrogance that cloud our understanding of a loving God who embraces all people.

God has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has lifted up the lowly.

God supports the humble and the poor, and takes action against the powerful. Mary reminds us of the greed of the few who are filled with self-interest and have often created a class of poor. She teaches us to walk in the pathway of compassion.

God has filled the hungry with good things and the rich He has sent away empty.

The Magnificat presents a kind of social reversal and envisions a God who supports the humble and the poor, and takes action against the powerful.

God has come to the help of His servant Israel, remembering His mercy.

In these lines Mary reminds us that a loving God uses us to serve our fellow human beings. That is part of our purpose here on earth as followers of Christ.

According to the promise He has made to our fathers to Abraham and to his children forever.

Mary brings us back to the great drama of salvation. She reminds us that we are not alone in our spiritual quest, but we are surrounded by the examples and prayers of the saints.

Mary's Song has echoed over two thousand years of history. It is just as alive today as on the day she first spoke them to Elizabeth. The Blessed Mother of our Lord tells us that the presence of God remains in our midst when the poor are filled, the lowly are given dignity, the arrogant are confused, and enemy parties are reconciled. To these ends may we continue to join in singing "Mary's Song" forever.



Know the Founder through His Works

CUDDALORE - Charism school was offered at St. Joseph's Seminary April 4th-6th on the topic, "To Know the Founder through his works." Classes were filled with Fathers, Brothers and Sisters. Fr. Soosai Rathinam, Provincial Superior, opened the event with a talk. In his inaugural address Fr. Soosai quoted the words of Pope Francis, 'Be Evangelizers and Street Preachers,' provoking the gathering to become missionary disciples, which was the original intention of the Resurrected Jesus. Fr. Ronald, SdC, expounded on the meaning and intentions of CASA in the words of Fr. Guanella. The second day of the gathering was initiated by Fr. Amalorpavanathan, SdC, with the theme, "The Guanellian Mission: Source, End, Recipients and Projects'. He has deepened on the apostolic mission entrusted to Guanellians. Fr. Praveen Jeba Kumar SdC highlighted that the poor are the reason of our existence and specified that fragility, weakness and state of abandonment prove one to be poor. Next, Fr. Gnanaraj SdC presented the tireless efforts and early struggles of the founder in drafting the statutes of the Servants of Charity congregation. The third day began with Sr. Annammal, DSMP, speaking on the topic "From Noah's Ark to well defined Categories: (disabled people, elderly people, and children)." Fr. Vincent SdC dealt with the topic "The Guanellian Family: priests-Nuns and GC, GLM and GYM." The final day was led by Fr. Francis explaining the topic "Pastoral care in the Guanellian Mission: Stations - Missions and Parishes." Fr. Amal Raj, SdC and Fr. Arockia Raj, SdC conducted quizzes throughout the school.

Annual Retreat

YERCAUD - Nearly 26 priests went on a five-day retreat at Yercaud April 16th-21st. It was a time of renewal and healing. The serene climate of Yercaud provided a pleasant atmosphere



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to stay with the Lord. Fr. Peter Jeyakanthan guided the retreat and the reflections. The talks and liturgical services helped in revitalizing the relationship with the Lord. With spiritual strength and vigor the retreatants returned to their communities to grow better for the Lord.

A Bountiful Harvest

CUDDALORE - Ps 65:9 says, "Take care of the earth and water it, making it rich and fertile. It provides a bountiful harvest of grain, for God has ordered it so." The hard work of the confreres of St. Joseph's Seminary provides a bountiful harvest of Paddy.



The Brothers entered the field to harvest and worked hard for two days. They divided the hay and rice to store them separately. It reminds us of the Bible verse, "the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few."

11th Annual Day Celebration

CHENNAI - On Monday, April 23rd the Don Guanella Major Seminary campus was filled with joy from the Don Guanella Evening School children as they celebrated



the 11th Annual Day. The event, which celebrates the conclusion of the 2017-2018 academic year, started with welcoming of the Chief-Guest, Mrs. Ananthi Srinivasan

M.A. B.Ed from

Singaperumal Koil. The chief guest encouraged the children to be filled with hope, to strive to work hard in order to succeed in their motivations. The program included performances by the children such as dances, songs, and poetry reciting. Each child was presented a wall clock and those who won performance competitions were awarded prizes. Fr. Francis, vice-rector, and Fr. A. C. Periyannayaga Samy and the brothers who organized the event attended. Dinner was served to the participants to close the event. May DGES continue to "Give Hope through Education."

Recognition Day

LEGAZPI - Thirteen children from the Feeding Program at Sagrada Familia, who are enrolled in Bogtong Elementary School, were given an academic award for the 2017–2018 school year on April 4th. Parents and children were very happy about their accomplishments. Congratulations to both the parents and students....Keep up the good work.

Walk for Jesus

LEGAZPI - With the purpose of allowing Jesus to walk with us in every area of our lives and to join Him on the journey so He can shape us according to His divine plans, the Servants of Charity community attended WALK FOR JESUS with the whole diocese on April 7th. The event began with Mass at the Cathedral. The 45-minute walk from the Cathedral to Our Lady of the Gate parish followed.



Vocation Testimony

LEGAZPI - Mrs. Adda, a teacher and experienced person, was invited by Fr. Sagayaraj to spend time with novices and share her testimony on April 9th. She is now a married woman but she was a postulant of The Handmaid of the Sacred Heart congregation. With that experience, she has firsthand experience about both married life and religious life. She helped novices to



gain a wider knowledge about distinguishing between religious life and married life in discerning the vocation God has chosen for them as their first profession approaches.

Cooking for STEP

LEGAZPI - On April 13th STEP parents collaboratively showed their culinary skills by cooking a variety of nutritious meals with vegetables and poultry products which were served for lunch with their children. This activity, which repeats every term, created camaraderie among parents; allowing them to relax and enjoy each other while working together for the benefit of their children.

Discern the Spirit

LEGAZPI - Fr. Sagayaraj, Novice Master, led a class on Discernment of the Spirit from April 10th - 21st. Through his guidance and the documents provided, the novices learned how to deepen their prayer life, discern their vocation and how to differentiate the voice of God, the voice of evil and the voice of self.



Moving Up Day

LEGAZPI - April 18th marked the moving up of children to another milestone in their life. With good efforts and achievements, regardless of their disability rather than their ability, the children deserved a commendable reward. Everyone received what he or she deserved and no one was left behind. Parents and caregivers were also rewarded for the untiring care and nurturing of the children entrusted to them. Also during the program children showed different kinds of talents from dancing, singing and playing musical instruments to computer skills, cooking, housekeeping, arts and crafts.

Sound of Silence

LEGAZPI - To intensify the Discernment of the Spirit, Fr. Sagayaraj, Novice Master, and the novices went to Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel on April 20th for a half-day of silence to help discern their vocation. The chapel is located on a hill in a quiet, solitary place. The silence helped the novices listen to the voice of God speaking in their hearts, to ponder the will of God before taking a turning-point in their lives, first profession.



Feast of Blessed Clare

LEGAZPI - Fr. Sagayaraj, Novice Master, led the Novices in a Novena April 11th-19th to prepare for the Feast of Blessed Clare Bosatta. Every day they shared one of Blessed Clare's virtues and prayed the prayer for her intercession. On the Feast Day, April 20th, the whole community celebrated Mass with the elderly.



Birthday Visitors

LEGAZPI - Members of Quota International Legazpi visited the children in the Nutrition Program of Sagrada Familia Community once again. Two of the members celebrated their birthdays with the children on April 21st. The children were happy to receive gifts and play games. They were also served a simple lunch with ice cream and candy for dessert.

Air Force Visits

LEGAZPI - A group from the Philippine Air Force came to visit the malnourished children and Sagrada Familia residents. The commanding officer and high-ranking officials accompanied the group who came to HKSF to donate supplies. The group distributed school supplies and hygiene kits for the children and a hygiene kit for the residents.



St. Louis Center Exceeds Standards

CHELSEA - On April 12th and 13th, St. Louis Center experienced its fifth three year accreditation process through the organization known as "CARF," which stands for the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. CARF International is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services in the areas of Aging Services and Behavioral Health, and its representatives spent two days pouring over SLC's policies, procedures, rules and regulations to ensure that all quality standards are being met. At their Friday wrap-up session with senior staff, both representatives praised the efforts of SLC for the new programs and systems that had been put into place since their last visit and felt that SLC is a model agency for others to follow. The final accreditation will occur after CARF representatives have an opportunity to review the reports submitted by the surveyors in Washington, D.C. and accept their findings.



Men's Night Out

CHELSEA - The Randazzo Fresh Markets are comprised of three Italian style produce markets that service tens of thousands of customers northeast of the City of Detroit, and in 2015 when Fr. Enzo Addari of St. Louis Center asked them for help, owners, Nino and Sonny Randazzo swung into action and came up with a new idea for a fundraiser. The "Men's Social Fundraiser" is now in its fourth year, it has grown into a giant hit under a colossal tent behind the store. At least 200 or more men were in attendance on Thursday, April 26th, with Sonny, Nino, and Jack Tocco Jr. greeting friends and customers at the entrance. Italian culinary specialties from Randazzo's adult beverages, a cigar bar, and an espresso bar were amongst the fare that was served. It was a beautiful April evening that hinted that spring had finally come, and men gathered around the warm fire pits outside to smoke their cigars and share jokes and stories with one another to close out the evening. Special thanks to the Randazzo Family



for their tremendous support of SLC and its residential care program.

St. Joseph Draws a Crowd

CHELSEA - After six months of planning and hard work by a committee of a dozen people or more, the Italian American Club of Livonia held its 23rd successful dinner/dance fundraiser at its Banquet Center on Sunday April 29, 2018 to benefit St. Louis Center. The day began with Mass in the lower level with Fr. Enzo Addari, SdC. as celebrant at noon, and participants enjoyed a silent auction, mini-bar raffle, and a gift raffle during the event. Led by Committee chairwoman Mary Galasso, Past President of the IACL, more than 200 people were present to enjoy a wonderful gourmet dinner prepared by Chef Nandi. After dinner, guests enjoyed gelato, mini-desserts, homemade Italian cookies, and fruit.

Deacon Mike Martin of St. Mary Parish in Chelsea received the St. Louis Guanella Humanitarian Award for his spiritual work with the poor on the



streets of Flint, and shared a few of his experiences of helping the homeless, bringing people back to the faith and teaching job skills to help them become employable. Following the Guanellian Award, Maria Harris, President of the Italian American Charitable Foundation, presented a donation to assist the needs of SLC. The popular Amici Band performed for the crowd and many people enjoyed dancing. As always, this event is a benefit to defray the expenses of the SLC transportation program.

Coffee and Cookies with Ryan

CHELSEA - Brad Crosier, DCW, is helping Ryan to connect with staff by encouraging him to offer 'Coffee and Cookies with Ryan'. They began this event about a month ago and encourage anyone to stop by St. Joe Hall on Thursday mornings. They'll have the cookies baking and coffee brewing.





May Calendar of Events

- 1 **St. Joseph the Worker**
- 3 **Sts. Philip and James**
- 10 **The Ascension of the Lord**
- 12 **Grass Lake: Mother of Divine Providence Day- PUSJ**
Chelsea: Vocational Retreat for Boys - SLC
Grass Lake: Prayer and Pizza Girls' Group
- 12-13 **Manila: Vocation Seminar**
- 19 **Grass Lake: St. Joseph Day- PUSJ**
- 20 **Pentecost**
- 21 **Mary, Mother of the Church**
- 26 **Anniversary of the Ordination of St. Louis Guanella (1866)**
- 27 **The Most Holy Trinity**
Anniversary of the Birth of Blessed Clare Bosatta (1858)
- 28 **Anniversary of the Baptism of Blessed Clare Bosatta (1858)**
Kumbakonam: First Holy Communion
- 30 **Bangalore: Entrance into Novitiate**
- 31 **The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary**
Anniversary of the First Mass of St. Louis Guanella (1866)

Best Wishes and Prayers to:

- 1 **Fr. Maria Paul, Nov. John Peter M.:** birthday
- 4 **Bro. Vinnarasan:** birthday; **Fr. Arul Raj, Fr. Felicks, Fr. Gnanaraj:** ordination day
- 5 **Fr. Jayasoosai:** birthday
- 8 **Bro. Rajesh Kumar:** birthday; **Fr. Enzo Addari:** ordination day
- 13 **Fr. Stalin, Bro. John Baptist Hoang Luong, Bro. Philip Victor A, Nov. Anthony Samy A:** birthday
- 15 **Fr. David Stawasz, Fr. Pino:** ordination day
- 16 **Fr. David Anburaj, Fr. Arockia Vanathaiyan:** birthday
- 19 **Fr. Ligori, Fr. Visuvasam:** ordination day
- 20 **Bro. Jerome Victor A:** birthday
- 21 **Fr. Felicks, Bro. Melvin Raj S:** birthday
- 22 **Fr. Edal Vinoth Joe:** birthday
- 24 **Fr. Charlton Viray, Fr. Johndass:** birthday; **Fr. Sagayaraj:** feast day
- 26 **Fr. Dennis Weber:** birthday; **Fr. Eduardo Cerbito:** ordination day
- 28 **Bro. Maria Antony Rajan:** birthday
- 30 **Fr. John Kennedy A.:** birthday

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

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.