



FR. PEDRO ARRUPE, SJ WRITING CHALLENGE



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THE ZIMMERMAN FAMILY FOUNDATION
& THE JOHN TEMPLETON FOUNDATION

WHAT IS THE PEDRO ARRUEPE, SJ WRITING CHALLENGE?

The *Pedro Arrupe, SJ Writing Challenge* is an opportunity for students to express in writing what principle or personal ethic is a driving factor in their lives.

It is meant to publicly recognize young people who reflect upon and write about their personal beliefs and values through the lens of their Jesuit Catholic education.

GOALS

- Build the Arrupe Jesuit writing community
- Encourage students to explore their Jesuit Catholic identity through self-examination and writing
- Improve narrative writing skills
- Recognize exceptional writers within the Arrupe Jesuit community

THE PEDRO ARRUE, SJ WRITING CHALLENGE AWARDS BREAKFAST

WELCOME & PRAYER

Fr. Tim McMahon, SJ

BREAKFAST EMCEE

Michael O'Hagan

PRESENTATION OF FINALIST AWARDS

Nicky Schifano

PRESENTATION OF WINNERS

Kimberly Smith

READING OF ESSAYS

Student Participants

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO
THIS WRITING CHALLENGE, ESPECIALLY:

ESSAY READERS

Barb Astuno
Viviana Bracamontes
Beth Brin
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Amy Coleman
Stephan Graham
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Beth Mittelstaedt
Maria Orozco

Lara O'Shaughnessy
Debbie O'Dwyer
Linda Rowan
Amorette Sanchez
Kim Smith
Stuart Thomas
Megan Turilli
Eve Vaccaro
Beth Zoellner

CHALLENGE SPONSOR

The Zimmerman Family Foundation
John Templeton Foundation

WINNERS AND PRIZES

1ST PLACE

Anne Zimmerman Scholarship

Karina Ferrer, *Class of 2019*

2ND PLACE

The Zimmerman Family Scholarship

Juan Madera, *Class of 2019*

3RD PLACE

The Zimmerman Family Scholarship

Juno Padilla, *Class of 2016*

FINALISTS

Aaron Najera, *Class of 2018*

Lorena Delgado, *Class of 2018*

Adriana Guadana, *Class of 2017*

Omar Ronquillo, *Class of 2019*

Monica Coria, *Class of 2017*

Adrian Sanchez, *Class of 2019*

Alina VonBerckefeldt, *Class of 2019*

Waleska Rivera, *Class of 2019*

Patrick Gutierrez, *Class of 2017*

Carla Romero, *Class of 2017*

PROFILE OF THE ARRUPPE JESUIT GRADUATE AT GRADUATION

Open to Growth
Religious
Intellectually Competent
Loving
Committed to Justice
Work Experienced

ESSAY PROMPTS BY GRADE LEVEL

NINTH: AWARENESS OF GOOD WILL/KINDNESS/LOVE

When you reflect on your life so far, think about how you have been impacted by acts of generosity, compassion, care, service and love. At the time, you may not have recognized these acts as God's good will/kindness/love in your life. Describe an event or occasion when you've experienced good will/kindness/love in your life.

TENTH: DISCOVERY OF SELF

Based on your first two years at Arrupe Jesuit, how would you define what it means to be a man/woman for others? Describe how you have personally grown into this definition since coming to Arrupe Jesuit.

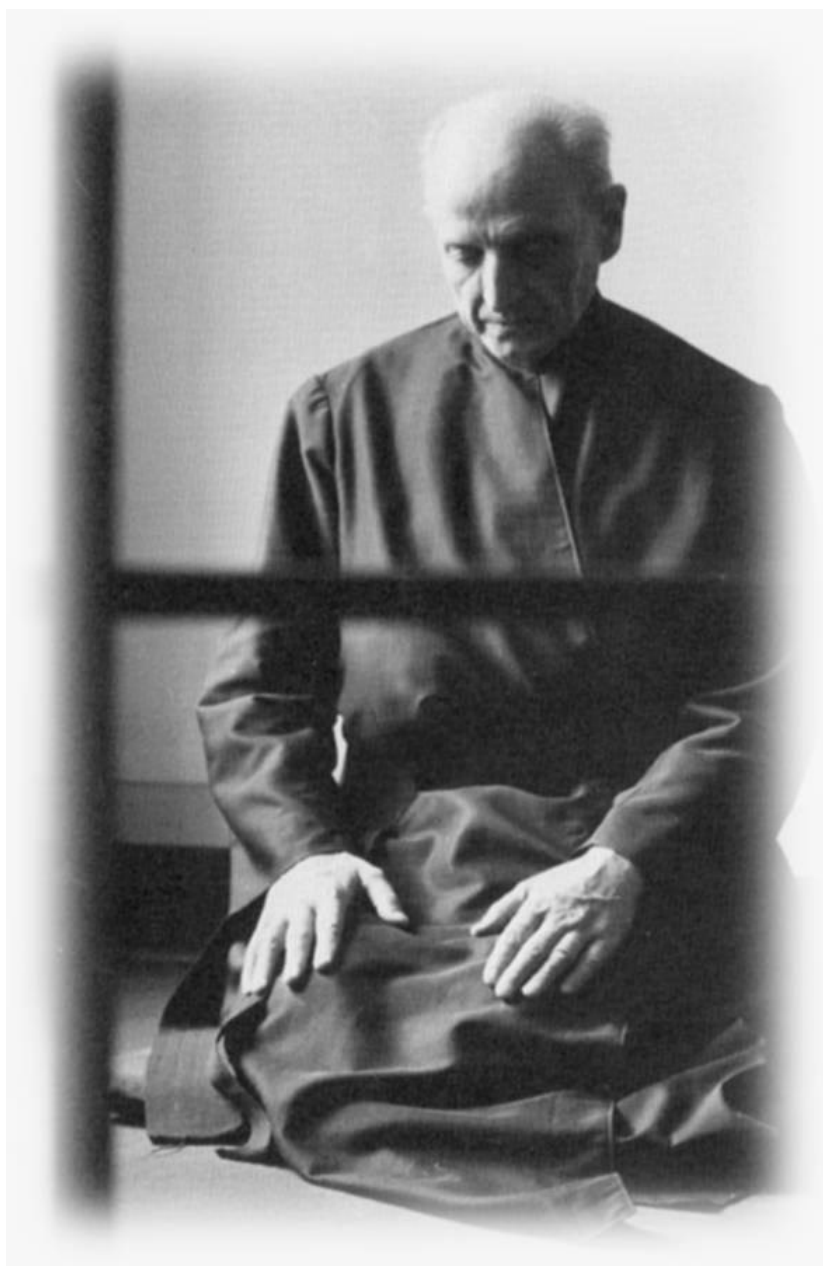
ELEVENTH: CHOICES

While a student at Arrupe Jesuit, there have been moments when you have faced difficult decisions. Describe a situation or event in which you have made a choice that best reflects you as a man or woman for others. If you did not make this kind of choice, what might you have done differently?

TWELFTH: CARRYING IT FORWARD

Look back over your time at Arrupe Jesuit. You've had opportunities to be a man or woman for others; additionally, you've been impacted by men and women for others both within and outside our school community. Now, envision how you will carry forward what you've learned from others and about yourself. How will what you've learned about being a man or woman for others impact how you live your life after Arrupe Jesuit?

THE PEDRO ARRUIPE, SJ
WRITING CHALLENGE
WINNING ESSAYS



1ST PLACE

KARINA FERRER

CLASS OF 2019

"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Ac.20:35)

This Bible verse shows the importance of generosity because not only does it state that it is our duty to be generous to those who are less fortunate than us but that it is also more rewarding to give rather than to receive. The greatest reflection we see of generosity through God's love is when he sent his only begotten son to die on a cross for the salvation of our sins. This may be one of the most significant examples of generosity ever manifested to us. In a world where we now lack love or at the least respect for our neighbor, seeing an act of generosity or compassion helps restore my faith in humanity and society. Demonstrating these acts of kindness to those around us is important; it's what the Lord teaches us to. He made us out of love in order to love others. As shown in Mark 12:31 "love your neighbor as you love yourself" we ought to show the same love we have for ourselves to the people around us.

Not so long ago I had an experience that has impacted me as a person and helped shape who I am today. I participate in church activities a lot and always try to help. One day they announced that there was a volunteer opportunity at the Samaritan House which is a homeless shelter for women. I jumped at the opportunity to help. I would only participate for one day and did not grasp how difficult it would be. That Wednesday afternoon I went to the Samaritan House. When I showed up to the place there was an abundance of people lining up around the building. I was starting to feel scared and intimidated. The women looked serious and mad. We were let into the building and told to serve plates of food to the women as they came in so they could have dinner before they went to sleep. My heart was beating fast as the women started coming in. I felt sweat trickle down my neck and I had not even started working yet. I served plates and gave them to the next woman in line. I was in such a hurry that I didn't even look up. Everything was so quiet, the silence made me start to feel uncomfortable and awkward. When I finally looked up I saw this woman with the most sorrowful eyes I have ever seen in my life. She was the last person in line; she was in her twenties but looked so exhausted and spent. She carried herself as if she was carrying the weight of the world on her shoulders. It looked as if the world had taken a young woman, chewed her up, and spit her out into the darkest depths where there is no light so she walks the world blind. There was not one thread of happiness in this woman's face. Her eyes met mine and I simply smiled at her and asked her how her day was. Her face dimly lit up like a weak light bulb. She smiled back and told me her day was fine. After she left with her food to the cafeteria tables, I followed behind her and saw countless faces just like hers sitting there. All of them carried the same exhausted expression of the weight of the world on their shoulders. I went from table to table and talked to as many of the women as I could. I watched multiple of those dim light bulbs faces and light within them as well.

At that moment, I felt something that I had never experienced in my entire life. I felt like I actually did something. Even though it was as simple as smiling at someone and showing them I cared I know I made a change because I was able to distract these worn out souls from the troubles they were experiencing in their lives. Some of these women were going through serious hardships like getting their kids taken away, losing everything, and facing addictions. For me to be able to get their minds off of that for even two minutes is a great feat. That experience is something that I'll carry with me for the rest of my life. This moment was so meaningful for me because from this I learned that I want to keep doing something to help people in need. I want to become a social worker when I grow up and place the children who are taken away from their mothers in safe homes until the mother can get back on her feet to take care of her children in safe conditions.

This moment has forever impacted me and shaped the young woman I am today. I learned that the simplest acts of kindness like smiling at someone and showing them you care could help aid them from the troubles of their own lives. I carry myself always telling myself that I never know the hardships one could be battling in their own lives so I should be kind to as many people as I can. Since that day, I try to be kind to everyone through simple acts such as a smile. Compassion has formed a very important part of my life. I learned the importance of compassion and how meaningful it could be if shared with those around us. We can transform humanity one act of kindness at a time.

2ND PLACE

JUAN MADERA

CLASS OF 2019

Generosity is something difficult to be accomplished. Lack of generosity is the reason that many people feel empty inside. A simple generous act can fill that emptiness. Generosity is an important characteristic to have because it does not only fill you with happiness, but you can make someone smile and fill them with happiness as well. Doing generous acts will not only help a person, but it will help you have a healthy lifestyle as well! God's love fills an emptiness in your life. He fills the vacancy with love. Generosity is also an act of kindness that helps you fill that certain emptiness. When there is a dark cloud over a person, generosity is the sun that kicks that black cloud out. It fills the emptiness with happiness. When you show a person that you care about them, it fills them with happiness, hope, and love; it makes them feel like they matter.

The air was bitter while the little droplets of ice were coming down to their destination. I laid on the couch. My eyes were feeling heavy and droopy. The world in front of me began to fade away. The drool was slowly falling from my cheek. Slam! "Son! Hurry!" my dad screamed. I woke up super quick and I ran outside with a shortness of breath and hit some walls along the way. "What is it?" I asked. I looked outside and saw ice all over the driveway. I did not see anything else out of the ordinary. I was curious to know what happened. I followed my dad in between two cars and there was an elderly woman on the ground. "Help me get her up and into the car" my dad said to me. I did

what I was told to do. I heard her cry and I knew she was afraid. She muttered, " God bless you." She was soaking wet due to the ice and water puddle she had fallen into. We carried her as if she was the Queen of England. We sat her in the car seat. I rushed back inside and brought her a blanket and some water. We helped her get warm and I asked her, " Do you want us to take you back home or call an ambulance?" She was still weeping but managed to answer and said, " Can you please take me home. I'll be fine." I replied, " Yes ma'am." While we were taking her back home she kept telling us. "God bless you guys." She said, " You guys are true American citizens." We carried her all the way to her front door and she said, " Thank you so much!" We then went back home with joy knowing that we were able to help her.

This experience has changed me as an individual. I react to problems differently now. This has helped me become a better person. Every time I see someone struggling with anything, I try to do everything in my power to help them and put a smile across their face. I learned a lot from my dad. He has taught me to be humble. He has taught me that even though we are struggling, there are people that are struggling much more than us. We need to help in every way that it is possible. My dad has helped many people without even thinking about it twice. I want to be like that because then I can also make an impact in my community with my generosity. This experience means a lot to me because I know we helped someone and we did not need any reward to do such a thing. It was also a father-son bonding moment because he taught me that a simple act of generosity has no price. It only brings happiness.

I have changed since this moment greatly. It has opened my eyes to the world of generosity. It has impacted me by being able to react to a moment of struggle and to help the person in need. It has also impacted me in a positive way. It helps me perform acts of service around my neighborhood without any reward. Since this experience I have shown acts of kindness. For example, I will take the snow off the driveway of my grandparents and relatives. I feel great when I help people and it's just an amazing feeling when I help someone. It opens my heart and it fills me with happiness.

3RD PLACE

JUNO PADILLA

CLASS OF 2016

As I scoop the remaining soup from the gargantuan pot into a tiny empty bowl, I wonder if this will be enough to fill an empty stomach? I have been in this situation numerous times, yet I cannot escape the thought in my head. I am volunteering at the Soup Kitchen where the hungry can eat. Each person grabs their bowl with a grin from ear to ear, which causes my smile to naturally form as well. It is a humbling moment. I can say I am fortunate for the things I have. No iPhone, pair of Jordans or even a Playstation can top the gift of feeding the hungry.

"You got this! Just try to apply the trig function to solve for theta." It is my job as a student tutor to encourage my peers to be the best that they can be. The student breaks down the S.O.H., C.A.H., and T.O.A. to find the missing angle in the triangle. A new found confidence is visible by the deep sigh the student takes. I feel a sense of pride fall upon my heart because my skills and abilities are being used for a greater purpose. Yes, that deed feels like I am doing something right. Every tutor session after this memorable one urges me to live a life in the service of others.

Next, I am in my math class. I am called to the college counseling office. Although I am nervous, I came to realize what impact an a man or woman for others can have. My Daniels Fund finalist interview is within a couple weeks and I have no suit. Mrs. Augustine, my college counselor, tells me a benefactor unknown to me has donated one hundred dollars so I can buy a suit of my choosing. I have no idea who this person is; I can only assume that he/she does not know me either. As a result, I become more grateful for being surrounded by men and women for others at Arrupe Jesuit High School.

After attending Arrupe for the past four years, I have multiple anecdotes of times when I witnessed people being a positive presence for others. In the words of Fr. Pedro Arrupe, they were a "man or woman for others." I realized that when people are in need, I must work for the bigger cause as opposed to just my own personal achievement. The Soup Kitchen showed me people who were humans just as I was, that were in need of my helping hand. Every tutoring session that I lead teaches me the value of my skills and abilities. In essence, I was created for a deeper purpose: to use my talents in service of others. I envision myself becoming as benevolent as the person who donated money for my suit. It is my job to carry these lessons past Arrupe Jesuit High School to make Fr. Pedro Arrupe proud in heaven.

May 27, 2016, is the day that I will be able to call myself a graduate at graduation. Arrupe has lead me to be open to growth, religious, intellectually competent, loving, committed to justice, and work experienced. Starting May 28, I will continue to share the lessons I have learned with my community. The college that I attend can be certain that they will receive a persevering student with an affable heart. Every day that God blesses me with health and new opportunities, I must capitalize on them to be a presence for those who can use my help. Rigorous courses and late nights are on my itinerary for the next four years and I cannot wait for the challenge. By using an engineering degree to provide for my family and the chance to work with and for others, I can show God how obliged I am for my blessings.

In order to be an illustration of God's love, I must see the goodness in all people. I must go to college and become a member of society who lives an ethical life. I can do this by treating everyone with respect, disseminating love around my community, and using my knowledge to make a difference in someone else's life. Using the expertise of a mechanical engineering major, I plan to travel abroad and build mechanisms in impoverished communities around the world. If I am to have a fruitful life, I want to share the fruits of my labor. I am adamant that in my future I will be a man who responds to the injustices on his corner, within his city, in our amazing country, and within the world we live in.

FINALIST

AARON NAJERA

CLASS OF 2018

During my time at Arrupe I have learned the values that transform students to become men and women for others. The values that make a man for others are taking initiative, having compassion, and having a drive to do the right thing. I have learned these values during my Freshman year and Sophomore year. Here at Arrupe having initiative means that you should do something when nobody else is willing to. Compassion is when you witness someone's suffering and have the motivation and desire to help. Helping others with initiative and compassion is the true definition of being a man and women for others.

During my freshman year I was like any typical freshman. I did not want to get involved in anything and did not really like to be with people that I did not know. I was originally not the type of person to go and help other people. My freshman year there was difficult incident that taught me the importance of helping those around you, even by just offering a simple smile. I learned how to have compassion towards other people in their times of need. This particular event also taught me how to take initiative during hard times.

This event occurred during my freshman year while My family and I were eating dinner. This consisted of my mom, sister, and grandmother. After dinner my grandmother left to the living room and not long after that she began to have a stroke. We immediately called an ambulance and rushed her to the hospital. At the hospital I watched my grandmother forget who my family and I were. My family and I stayed at the hospital with my grandmother for six months, watching her undergo months of rehabilitation. I always wanted to help but it seemed like I couldn't do anything to help her. I saw that the only people that helped her were the nurses and the doctors. After the stroke and many months of rehabilitation she was still left with disabilities. She could not speak like she was able to before and she lost the ability to move half of her body with full capability. During this time my grandma went through so much and had so many people there to help her and our family.

During the time my family and I spent at the hospital with my grandmother we spent a lot of our time in the hospital lunchroom. There I had the pleasure of meeting many new people who had encountered similar traumatic events like my grandmother's. Everyday that I visited my grandmother I would also visit the people I had met in the lunchroom. I was happy to be able to bring these people some joy so everyday I would show them magic tricks and card games. I would sit with them and simply talk to them and make them feel like they were not alone. I was happy to help in any way that I could, even if it was just by bringing smiles to people.

This formed me into being a man for others because during a time when my family needed me I felt like I could do nothing to help them. I felt useless, powerless. From that moment on I have never wanted to feel that way again and I have focused my energy on helping those around me. Based on the support my family received during our time of need I learned how to have compassion

for those who have problems. I witnessed everyone around me help my grandmother without asking for anything in return. They had so much compassion towards her. I saw that when there was a problem everyone took initiative to come and help. I aspire to be like all of these compassionate and giving people filled with initiative and the drive to help others. Throughout my life I will strive to always help anyone in need regardless of what I get in return because I have learned through my experiences that having compassion and being willing to help truly demonstrates what being a man for others means.

FINALIST

LORENA DELGADO

CLASS OF 2018

Being the youngest of my family there are a lot of expectations my parents have for me. I have been raised within the Catholic religion and since the age of five I have been an active member of my church. Having the opportunity to come to a Jesuit high school has truly been an honor for me; it is a joy I have been looking forward to. Coming to a Jesuit school does not only provide me with the opportunity of obtaining a good education but also helps me in fulfilling my religious needs and getting educated about other religions to help me grow as a person. Arrupe has a very powerful motto of being "Men and Women for Others." Throughout the years I have seen my brothers become more involved with the community and church and I too would like to give back to my community. Being a part of Arrupe Jesuit provided me with the opportunity that I've been seeking for many years.

Before attending Arrupe, I would never take the time to think of what others might be going through or question what I could do to make others' loads lighter. I remember there was an instance in my first year of middle school when a classmate's mom was in intensive care because something went wrong when she was in labor. I remember my classmate was struggling and was going through a very difficult time since her mom was in the hospital and her newborn sister was in intensive care as well. I remember I would feel pity for her and wanted to share her pain and do something to help her but at that instance I didn't know how to approach her or what to do. Many times we are faced with difficult situation in which we find it complicated to take action. We are constantly afraid of portraying the wrong message to the individual in conflict and sadly we choose to become bystanders and to view their struggles and problems from a safe distance. Ever since I become a member of the Arrupe Jesuit community I have learned that many times we must offer a helping hand and the simple action of lending a shoulder for comfort is everything that an individual needs. We all have conflicts in this life but Arrupe has also demonstrated to me that we have even more friends and family in unexpected places that will always be there to help us overcome those obstacles. Being those friends and family members who are present unconditionally is what makes us men and women for others.

Arrupe has provided me with the knowledge and understanding that I should offer my time and service to a person in need. My freshmen year here at Arrupe was difficult for me. I would see that just about everyone knew at least one person from their previous school but it was a fresh start for me. Having to make new friends wasn't very hard here at Arrupe since everyone is nice, caring, thoughtful, loving, and compassionate; all ingredients to being men and women for others. The environment here at Arrupe right from the start was very welcoming. The staff, ASC, students, and counselors were all just a big family that looked out for one another. Seeing this environment around me urged me to be like the people surrounding me, to be a woman for others. Arrupe has transformed the way I now look at society. I had always been within classes where educational success had to be demonstrated by competitions and constant rivalries between classmate in order to demonstrate who truly was "smarter" and a "better student." Arrupe has changed my view and attitude towards what it means to be a community; now I understand that a community is a place where everyone is there to support and help one another achieve their goals. Arrupe does a great job demonstrating how having a diverse community provides different perspectives that I had ignored given the fact that I had never truly been open to others' opinions. Since my freshmen year here at Arrupe I have become more thoughtful of others and their needs.

Before coming to Arrupe I would always hear my brothers mention being "men and women for others." At first I was confused at what this phrase really meant. My freshmen year I took it very literally and tried to really embrace the meaning of being men and women for others. Now I realize that it's the small things that count. It is as simple as opening the door for somebody, smiling or saying "good morning," or even being there for someone that makes you a man and women for others. It is here at Arrupe that unconsciously we become men and women for others since it is part of the system. I dearly hope that in the future I grow as a person and become more self giving to fulfill my mission of following God's steps and become a woman for others putting myself last as he did.

FINALIST

ADRIANA GUADANA

CLASS OF 2017

Choices come with a decision that requires a degree of thought. They face us everyday whether we like it or not because it is a part of one's life. An instance which has defined me as a woman for others was when I was in Washington, D.C for a law camp.

Being a student at Arrupe Jesuit High School every student is taught and encouraged to be "men and women for others". Arrupe said, "Today, our prime educational objective must be to form men-and-women-for-others; men and women who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ - for the God-man who lived and died for all the world; men and women who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors; men and women completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for others is a farce." Learning

about this specific ideology has impacted me in countless ways and has led to have a great impact on the way I live to present day and the choices I make.

The summer before my Junior year of high school, I was accepted into a law camp hosted by the Hispanic National Bar Foundation in Washington, D.C. As I toured national monuments such as The White House, The Supreme Court and the Department of State, with 37 other students from across the country, I quickly realized that D.C. was very fast paced, unlike anything I had ever seen. People rushed in different directions, desperate and anxious to get to their next destination. Along our numerous stops, talks, and subway rides I tried to catch a glimpse of the actual demeanors in people's faces. I noticed that each one had a very distinct look, some with fear, others with anger and others completely lost in their own thoughts.

Prior to entering The White House, we ate lunch at a cafe. Being a vegetarian, I struggled to order a full meal. Although I had previously stated that I had this dietary restriction in my application, my request was not taken into consideration at this particular place. I was disappointed; I was given a peanut butter and jelly sandwich to sustain the amount of hunger I had. "Oh well," I thought, "at least I have *something* to eat." I watched everyone indulge in their meals and soon it was time to leave. We exited the luxurious cafe and out of the corner of my eye, I spotted a man that was sitting down, crouched over, somehow bleeding from his chest and portraying a desperate need for help. Glancing around, I saw that absolutely nobody was taking the time to help this needy man out. They acknowledged the man and continued on with their days. I looked at my counselors and saw that they too had seen the man yet they kept us as far away from him as possible. I was mixed with emotions- angry that nobody had helped him and afraid that if I went to go help the man I would get in trouble and would have to face consequences. I frantically looked around to see if any other student would be willing to go with me but saw nothing but bored and careless looks. Before I knew it, I was striding across the patio towards the man. From that moment on, I didn't have a clue what the reactions people around me had and I didn't let fear overcome me. My only desire was to aid the man. Immediately after I approached, he extended one of his arms and wrapped it around my neck. "Thank you," he uttered, "You have no idea how much time I've been bleeding here". I bent down, placed his arm around my neck and took him to a nearby bench. I made sure he sat down and turned around, only to see the crowd of law camp students and counselors rushing over. I asked if anyone had tissues or napkins handy. Fortunately, there was someone that did and with a water bottle I hadn't finished from lunch we managed to clean his wounds. Afterwards, we made sure the man was stable enough to continue on with his day, having a nurse fully clean his wounds. He thanked us and we continued on touring.

Subsequent to this experience, I strongly feel that the perspective through which I see life has improved greatly. Knowing that I wouldn't be comforted with myself throughout the rest of my trip or the coming weeks, I received inner peace and fulfillment when I helped this man. I look for opportunities to be generous, to be a woman for others and a representative of what God wants us to do wherever I may go, knowing that the feeling one receives after doing so is greater than any other one an individual can receive.

FINALIST

OMAR RONQUILLO

CLASS OF 2019

The dictionary defines generosity as “the quality of being kind and generous.” While I mostly agree with that definition, I also think that generosity is not only a quality or trait, but also an act. I believe people must act on generosity. One main reason I think it is important to be generous is because, as a Catholic, it is one of the many ways we can live a moral life. Within many people, including myself, witnessing an act of kindness and generosity makes us feel like we are wanted and loved. Seeing an act like that sparks an emotion of happiness and comfort. These same acts reflect God’s love for us and how he wants us all to show the same love for one another.

One time I have seen an act of generosity was when I was shown a video about the power of words. The video showed an old blind beggar on a street. He had a cardboard sign next to him that read “I’m Blind Please Help.” He received no spare change or money. Later, a fancy looking woman with leather shoes stopped by the blind beggar and changed the words on his sign while he felt her shoes. After that, the blind man received a lot of change because of the sign. The woman came back after a while. The man, feeling the shoes, recognized her and asked what he did to his sign. She simply said, “ I wrote the same, but in different words.” She had written “It’s a beautiful day, and I can’t see it.”

While that video was meant to show people the power of words, one other thing also stood out to me. What also stood out to me was that this was, in a very strange way, an act of generosity and compassion. The woman helped the blind man by changing his sign. Another thing that stood out to me was that changing the sign, to the man, was a huge change while, to the woman, it was 2 minutes out of her routine. It was such a small act that took almost no time and no one else would bother to do. Yet the woman did it out of compassion.

This has impacted me because it showed me that people don’t have to do enormous acts to show generosity. We can all do tiny, simple acts to show our love for others, like holding a door open. From then on I have tried my best to do as many little acts of kindness. This included holding doors open for others, helping with homework, and other miniscule acts of generosity. Arrupe has helped me with this because it has pushed me to be a man for others.

FINALIST

MONICA CORIA

CLASS OF 2017

It is true that while at Arrupe Jesuit there have been moments when I have faced difficult decisions. A situation in which I have made a choice that best reflects me as a woman for others was when I decided to be a student tutor. This was a difficult situation because ever since I was a freshman in high school I wanted to become a student tutor to help those who need extra help; now that I am a junior and have the opportunity to be a student tutor, it was a hard decision whether to apply to become a tutor or not.

One Thursday morning when I was on my way to my corporate study program job, I received an email regarding student tutoring from Ms. Mulligan, who at that time was in charge of the tutoring program. I knew that becoming a tutor was going to be a benefit for me as well as a benefit for other students; I knew it was a big responsibility and that I was committing to a student and to my school. I was going to give up some of my personal time to help someone else succeed. This choice meant time after school and time on Saturday mornings spent at the school I was not sure if I should fill out the application because one of the requirements was having to stay after school and coming to school on some Saturdays. These two requirements made it a hard decision. It was a hard decision not because I was too lazy to stay one or two more hours after school and help study or because I was too lazy to wake up on a Saturday morning and come to school for four hours. This was a difficult decision to make because at that time I was looking for a job outside of school. Committing to a job outside of school would not give me chances to miss days and or be late.

So I had to choose: take the job or get involved in school? I kept asking myself this question. I needed both. I needed the job because my parents were going through a hard economic crisis and my dad was the only one working at my house. With five daughters, expensive bills, and extra payments, I needed to work; I wanted to help him out. As the oldest out of five, it was my responsibility to bring money to our home as well. On the other hand, I needed to get involved in extracurricular activities at school, if I wanted to make the college process easier for my parents and myself.

I talked to my mom about my dilemma and explained to her why I could not become a tutor. My mom's response was, "Do it, you still have a lot of time to work and help us out if you would like to. Do not stop yourself from doing something that it is right." After this answer, I turned in the application to Ms. Mulligan. Two days later, I found out I had been accepted in the Student Tutoring program.

I made a choice that best reflects me as a "Woman for Others" because I gave up a personal problem to help those who need more help with their own struggles. Making this choice affected me in several ways because I learned that there is a lot of people out there that need my help. When I was in elementary and middle school I did not get help with my struggles, I had to find

my own way to complete my homework assignments and my school projects. I tutor students at my current high school, because it feels great helping and being appreciated and being honored. Giving those students an opportunity that I did not receive means a lot to me, given that they do not struggle and will not struggle the way I did.

FINALIST

ADRIAN SANCHEZ

CLASS OF 2019

Generosity and Selflessness can not be fully described through words. They can only be presented through actions and stories and examples. In the past, present, and future, we see small examples and large examples. However, the value of an act of generosity is not measured in how large a scale it is performed, but rather in just how powerful the effects and repercussions are. For example, in our day to day world, one of the easiest and simple things one can do is say "hello." Giving a greeting to a person who quite possibly may receive no attention or are not cared for in their own lives may be a way for them to realize that someone, even if they may be a random stranger, loves them. However, we are not strangers to each other. We are all brothers and sisters, the children of God. We are made in God's image. This means that every good action we do is a representation of the mercy of God and the love that brings races, countries, states, communities, and enemies together. Love always has been and always will remain the most powerful emotion.

My own personal life has seen much generosity thankfully. And so, I will focus on the time a teacher of mine asked me if I was all right. Of course the first thought that may occur to you is 'What was so important about someone asking if I was all right?' Well it mattered because I had kept a facade on for so many days before and up to that point I was doubting the God I had been raised to believe in ever since I was a child. At that time, I begged God every night for proof either to see him or even to talk to him. I had gotten sick and tired of the usual "He speaks to you in his own way." So, I had come to the conclusion that the only way for me to see God and all of the heaven, hell and purgatory talk was through death. In other words, my desperation to find and meet God had started to drive me towards the guaranteed way to meet him. That day I perhaps had never felt better yet I had never felt more empty and alone. So when my teacher asked me if I was all right, everything crashed down on me. The reality of what I was planning on doing. I smiled, and said "I've been better." My teacher seemed to look right through me and see the pain. I realized then, I had been going in the wrong direction. I was pursuing God by the means of ending the gift of life which he had granted to me. From that point on, I came to the realization that I wasn't alone. So many others around me had the same conflicts or even perhaps had other internal battles filled with waves of thunderous water while they lay in a cold submarine, trying to submerge themselves more and more beneath the waves to escape. I understood from that moment, that moment in which a teacher asked me if I was alright, that I have a purpose: I can help those around me. It was not important for me to find direct evidence of God. What mattered was that when my time came to meet him, I would be

ready. Ready to laugh with him. Ready to love. Ready to back up what I would hope would be an already old soul that is not weighed in years, but in the things accomplished, in the men and women who were helped, in the fact that I was becoming a man for others, and in the fact that it started with the first domino in my row: a teacher that decided to ask if I was alright even if it appeared that I was. God presented himself through the generosity and love that came with that statement. I decided to return the favor. The words "Are you alright?" have always been ones that I continue to direct toward others on a day to day basis.

FINALIST

ALINA VONBERCKEFELDT CLASS OF 2019

It is hard to actually get a full understanding of the word generosity. Just saying it, you cannot help but think, "What does it mean to be generous? What requirements need to be met for an act to be considered generous?" It can get confusing if you think about it too much especially if you think about how to show acts of generosity because it requires more than just being kind. It is being kind and putting some thought into what you are doing. It is not as hard as we think it really is. It can be as small as helping out with the groceries or opening the door for someone walking into a store. However, it is more than just helping with the groceries because your parents told you to. It is more like helping with the groceries without being asked because you know there's a lot to carry and you want to help. You have to put some thought into it. The definition of generous is (of a person) "showing a readiness to give more of something, as money or time, than is strictly necessary or expected." Sometimes I think it is just God's way of saying he is still around and he is thinking about you. He might even be saying "Hello" but I think God is just showing you a sign. It can be hard to see when someone else is being generous to you or when you have experienced an act of kindness at all. Most of the time, you only see them when they benefit your wants or what you think you need at that specific moment. When you get to realize how lucky you have really been all this time, it makes you feel special. Everyone wants to feel like that. It is a feeling you want to have all the time but I think we only get brief moments of it so we do not get tired or bored of the feeling. Maybe God wants us to be able to remember that feeling, and to do that he will give us those moments for a very small time. For example, I was recently speaking with a friend who I have not seen in a long while to see how she has been. Amanda ended up staying at my house for about three days because neither of us had school. The last night she stayed we began our conversation on where we have the most and least confidence. We eventually got to the point where we just poured out our feelings. It had been a very, very long time since I was able to do that without feeling like the other person was not listening to me; I honestly felt as if that was an act of kindness. She listened to me and she did not say anything that would put me off or make me uncomfortable. I was happy and I actually cried and she did not try and walk away or make me feel like I should not have said anything. It felt more comfortable confronting my problems with her than confronting them with myself and I did not feel that I should have kept them to myself. I did not want her to go home. I just wanted to lay there and know she would always protect me even though I knew she could not even if she wanted to. I

experienced a feeling of safety and for a few minutes I believed I was truly happy. This is just all coming back to that sense of some sort of emotion that God wants us to remember and wants us to desire. Being generous can be as simple as just listening to someone and truly listening. It is not just hearing everything they say passively, but really listening and trying to put yourself in their shoes. To truly listen is to try and experience what they are feeling and picture what they are describing. Right now I am looking back on it and I know we were closer than what we used to be; and I hope to get even closer to her in the future! I think to myself, we did not go through the same experiences or the heartaches, but it does not matter as long as you know how to show your support towards each other, and this is just teaching more about how to be kind to your peers and everything around you.

Since starting school, I have really changed and I know it is for the better. I have become more responsible and more caring. I think about my actions and what it means to be dedicated, and I am even learning more about maturity. I would not be as caring or in touch with God if I did not come here. I know for a fact that I would not be this well behaved, not just to show it off, but also for my own good. I would not think about how important my future really is if I was not as motivated as I am right now. Since that talk with my friend Amanda I have learned that you need to have generosity in life especially in high school. You realize how easy it is to be generous and eventually you will get to the point where you will not even realize you are doing it! She also taught me that every now and then I should always check in with friends and family. It does not have to be a long deep conversation but just to see how they have been holding up. Generosity is having compassion for someone. A lot of people I know think having pity on another is the same thing as being generous to another. A lot of people see it as a sign of weakness and many don't want to be seen as weak. Maybe that is why being generous is so hard for some; but if you think of it like it was something with meaning and kindness to it, you would realize you would want the same for yourself, wouldn't you?

FINALIST

WALESKA RIVERA

CLASS OF 2019

Generosity is an act of kindness and giving valuable things to others; I think generosity means to act on the love of kindness and to give to others without expecting anything in return. Generosity is important because God created us to build a strong community that gives to each other. God didn't make us to be selfish and enslaved by materialistic things; when we are only thinking about ourselves it makes us hypocrites because we aren't making changes we are only focused on ourselves and materials. Giving away helps change the world and others' lives. I believe that acts of kindness reflect God's love because it shows how God gives us many chances by forgiving us, giving us opportunities, and helping us see the pure light of generosity in our lives. Generosity to me also means to see, judge, and act because you can see a problem happening, then you can judge it, and then you can act. We can do it because we care about others. You might not care what happens to yourself as long as that other person has what they need. As a Christian, I

believe it is important to see your faith go into action by helping others and working with others.

A time when I saw acts of generosity and kindness was when I volunteered for the soup kitchen. It was another ordinary day like any other. I went to school like any other day doing nothing but getting good grades. But what I had been missing out on was volunteering to help my community. So after school I thought it would be fun to help at the soup kitchen. As we arrived at the soup kitchen there were a lot of people who were homeless and they were not bathed for weeks or months and looked really sad. The soup kitchen was very small and there were worn out tables and chairs, the walls were musty and dirty like they were about to fall but that did not stop anyone from doing their job. As soon as we started preparing the food and handing them out I saw kindness and hope in every person who were helping give food to the poor and from the people who were receiving the food. After the food was passed out to everyone, I thought it would be nice to talk to some of the homeless and as I was making conversation with some of the people I met one person who was sick and he told me about how he was kicked out of the hospital because he couldn't pay. After the homeless man told us that, one of the people from the soup kitchen decided to help him.

I judged this act after the homeless man told me his story, which made me very angry and sad because the hospital's job was to cure this man not throw him out whenever they felt like it. Now I feel like we as people should stand up for others who are in need of a voice to speak for them. After what I had experienced, I felt that giving a meal to someone in need made my day because it made me realize that there are others who don't have a home, who don't have food or other benefits like the hospital and that we should appreciate what we have instead of taking everything for granted. This has applied to some of the teachings I have been taught at Arrupe because this is a catholic social teaching to help and serve the poor; it has made me want to help and serve and give back to my community. This also relates to my experience because at Arrupe I help those who are in need which has impacted my generosity by giving to others without receiving anything in return . I want to strive for something like this to help others and make a difference in other people's lives. I want to be like every person who has strived to accomplish other acts of generosity in their lives because every act of generosity inspires me to do well in my community and strive to help others without anything in return.

This act of generosity has changed me because I have learned to help others by not thinking about it and just taking action and charge. I have changed since the beginning of this year because I have become wiser and more thoughtful of what I should do in God's beautiful creation; I consider how even though we all fall we must stand back up to help others and to be generous and not selfish. This experience has impacted me because I want to make change and if I don't learn I won't be able to make change. This experience has also taught me to be aware of the problems in my community and to prevent future problems from happening. Being at Arrupe has helped me change the way I view the world and how I can make a difference in other people's lives. I see how God's love has impacted us and how we should embrace God's love and do it among others and ourselves. I have shown acts of kindness in my life by giving to others and thanking every person who has helped me succeed and helped me throughout my life. The importance of compassion in my life is to be kind and generous and to succeed in life and to help others.

FINALIST

PATRICK GUTIERREZ

CLASS OF 2017

While here at Arrupe Jesuit High School I have had many instances where a difficult situation stared me in the eye. The situation I will talk about is one I don't mention to anyone because I don't want the feelings that come with it. It was a Thursday afternoon over my summer break when I was making up a work day for CWSP and I was walking home. Now normally I would walk on the street like a normal person but I am involved with what is called "free running" or Parkour. So I hopped over a bridge that fell down to the path next to the Platte River. I was doing my normal routine of analyzing my route to see what obstacles I could jump over or climb on to make my journey faster when I heard a faint screaming. At the time I payed no attention to it until it gradually became louder and my curiosity kicked into overdrive. I looked back and saw four people running my way shouting and pointing "Keep your head up!" They were pointing at the river where all the rapids were speeding and crashing like a test car hitting a wall. I glanced over and saw a man who was swept out by those evil rapids and was getting tossed down river and being dragged under, clearly struggling to not be taken over. My shock continued when the four other people ran past me in a hurry. When the shock broke I noticed the man had somehow gotten himself stuck directly where I was standing in the middle of the river. I looked around and the four people had kept running because they thought the man was still getting swept on down. In that instant without the slightest hesitation I tossed down everything in my hands and jumped in the water knowing he could be swept away at anytime so I had to move fast. (Keep in mind I cannot swim myself and I had a wound on my leg that was fresh and still healing but I jumped in anyways despite the infection I could get from the nasty water or drowning myself.) I grabbed this man's forearm and pulled him closer to me and made my way back. Upon coming back my feet got stuck in the sand and were sinking and I thought "Well damn now we're both stuck." Then the other man who was running had come back and grabbed my forearm and helped me out of the sand that was eating me alive and I pulled the other man to the sidewalk. The paramedics then arrived and checked on the man whose body was beaten up because of all the rocks he hit and because he was a little intoxicated. I looked up and there was a line of people on the bridge who had called the cops and who were watching the whole time.

The cops and other men then shook my hand and called me a hero because they said that man would have drowned. I picked up my backpack soaked and smelling real funky and told them "I'm not a hero it was just what I would want someone to do for me." And I continued my journey to my original location.

Walking away I plugged my ears with loud music and let my mind drift off as my heavy clothes slowed me. From that day I only told one person this story which was my brother because he was curious to why I soaked and smelled funky. I guess it's because I don't want to seem like I'm bragging or "tooting my horn." All of that was my difficult situation because I could have either risked my life and jumped in or I could've just been another bystander and not taken any action. Who knows what would've happened to him or how long whatever was holding him would have held him

there. I feel like this reflects me as a man for others because I don't do the things I do for recognition and all the credit; I do them because my heart and soul tell me to. Also if I was in a bad situation I would want someone to help me with the same intentions as I would for them. I do it because I always put others before me in any situation whether it be family, friends, or even some drunk stranger in need. A situation to which I may have made the wrong choice was when I knew exactly what my school rules are but I decided to break them anyways. Everyone clearly knows how the males' hair is supposed to be cut to look professional and dapper. I decided to grow my hair out long anyway with shaved sides going directly against the rules. For 2 years I let it grow and just kept gaining dress code detentions for having really long hair with unprofessional styles until my final punishment was me getting pulled out of class and given 20\$ in hand and sent off to the nearest barber shop to cut it all off and return back to class. This was not the smartest idea because I obtained that rebellious a reputation here at school when I know deep down that's not me. Right from the get go I could have cut my hair to a school appropriate length and saved so much of the hassle that came with it. It may sound dumb but this was a difficult situation for me because I loved hairstyling my hair because it made me different from everyone you see who are all just copies of each other living the same lives. Cutting my hair made me feel like I was becoming just another copy taking away what makes me stand out. These were both situations in which I made difficult decisions for myself on the inside and in general. One was a good decision and one was a bad decision but both from the 18 year old I am today and that is beyond beautiful in my eyes to see what exactly has molded me and my worldview. These are two difficult situations I have come out of making the good and bad decisions but ultimately molding me.

FINALIST

CARLA ROMERO

CLASS OF 2017

When it comes to volunteer hours for Arrupe Jesuit, the more the better. Service should never be limited to an obligation, but should come forth from the heart as a genuine desire to serve the needs of others. Unfortunately, this has not always been my motivation in choosing service hours. In the beginning of my time at Arrupe, I often chose service hours because I knew that they were required and that they looked good on college transcripts.

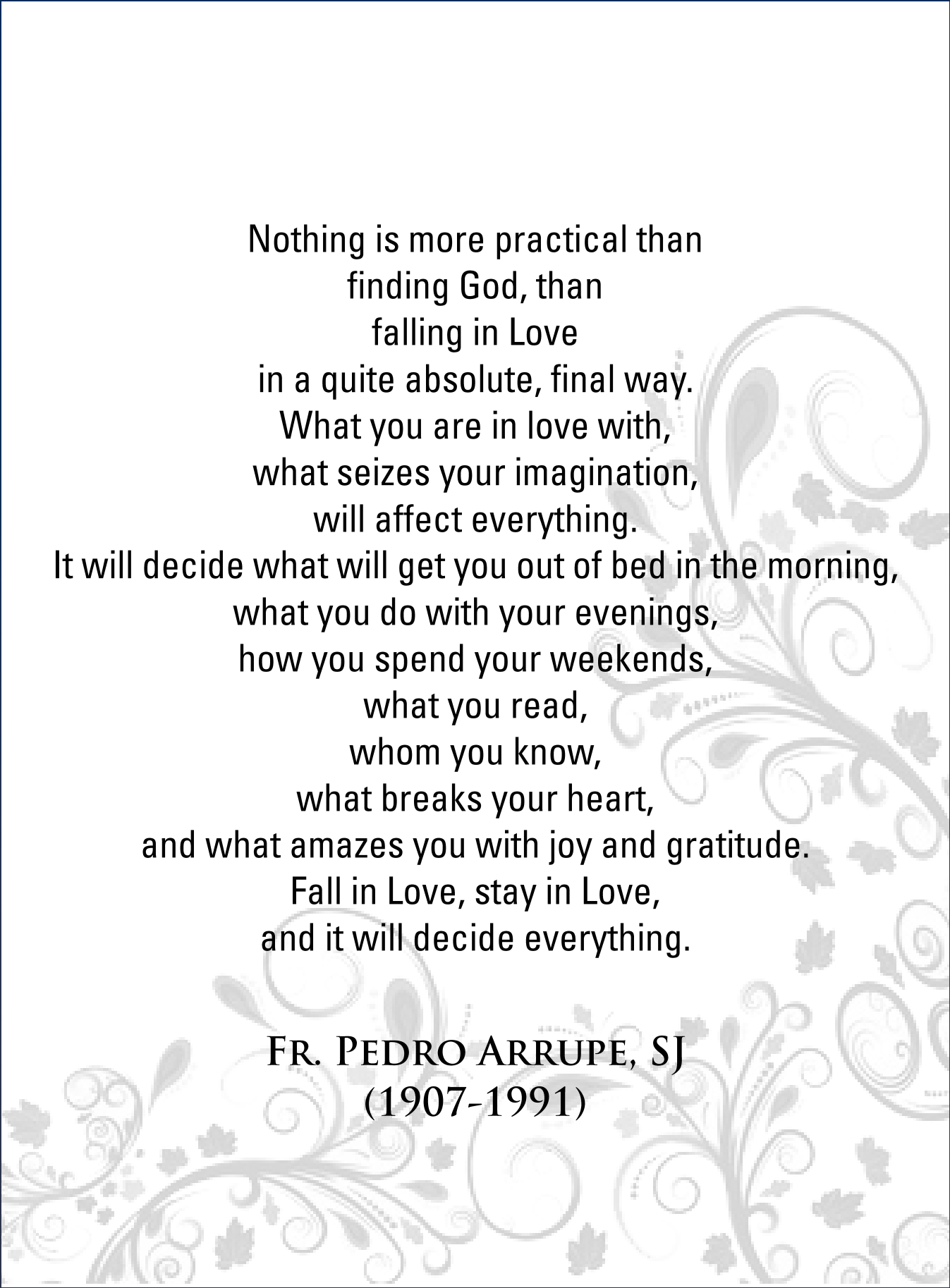
I recall a specific episode about a year ago. I had experienced a rough week at school. It was a Saturday and I was exhausted. I just wanted to spend the day in bed. That same afternoon, however, I learned about a service opportunity at Food Bank of the Rockies. I felt a tug at my heart strings. This would be a good chance to give something back, but that evening my aunt was celebrating the second birthday of her son. My whole family would be there; there would be great food and fun with family. I really wanted to go and spend time with my family. It was a moment of decision, a moment to reflect on what it meant to be a woman for others. I have many opportunities to spend time with my family and relatives. We are very close-knit and celebrate together often. At the same time, I know that there are many people in Denver who do not have the support and

comfort of family and friends. There are many people who are barely making it through life and are enduring times of great suffering. I knew my aunt would be disappointed, but I made the decision to go and serve at Food Bank of the Rockies.

That afternoon I spent hours shuffling through donated food items, arranging meals and packing them in brown cardboard boxes. These meals would be used to feed hundreds of people who go without food on a daily basis. It was a long day, but at the end I felt a great sense of satisfaction. To be a woman for others means that, at times, I will need to sacrifice what I would like to do in order to do what is good for other people. This is at the heart of Christian service: seeing a need and responding from a generous heart.

In conclusion, service of others has not always been a value that came easy to me. I only considered whether this would benefit me or my future when making important decisions. A week ago, my youth minister asked me to help set up at our parish for a school dance. I seized the opportunity to give back. I helped put up chairs, tables and decorations. Afterward, I felt a sense of joy and gratitude. I realized it is more enjoyable to serve with friends than to try to do everything on my own. My time at Arrupe and the values the school has promoted has helped me to realize that genuine service sometime means forgetting about myself and what I may want in a particular moment. Instead, service will often require me to focus on the needs of another person and to try to sympathize with what they are going through. It reminds me of something Jesus said in the Gospel: "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains but a grain of wheat. But if it dies, it bears much fruit."



A decorative background featuring a light gray floral and scrollwork pattern on a white rectangular field, which is set against a dark blue background. The pattern includes stylized leaves, flowers, and swirling vines.

Nothing is more practical than
finding God, than
falling in Love
in a quite absolute, final way.
What you are in love with,
what seizes your imagination,
will affect everything.
It will decide what will get you out of bed in the morning,
what you do with your evenings,
how you spend your weekends,
what you read,
whom you know,
what breaks your heart,
and what amazes you with joy and gratitude.
Fall in Love, stay in Love,
and it will decide everything.

FR. PEDRO ARRUPÉ, SJ
(1907-1991)