

# SHARED VISIONS

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Volume 21, Number 4

— A publication to assist in the spiritual formation of lay volunteers — presented by the people who bring you **Connections** —

## Taking and Leaving

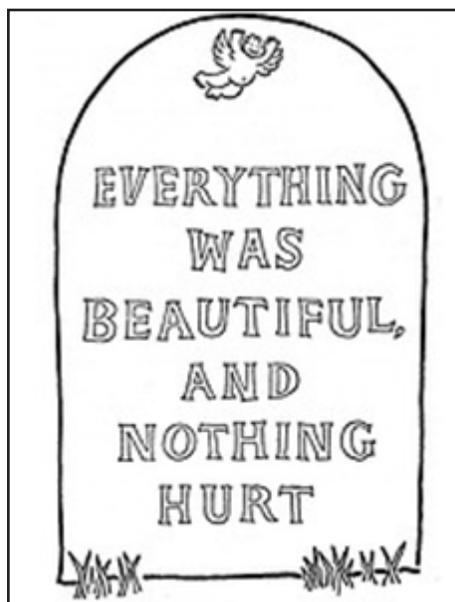
Books make any move intimidating. A few weeks ago, as I began the process of leaving seminary and accepting my new position as Program Director of the Pallotti Center, all I could do was stare at the shelves, wondering how all those books were going to fit in boxes, which would then have to fit in my car for a long trip to my new, barely DC-metro area apartment.

One by one the books came off the shelves, old memories really.

The Merton collection I was obsessed with during my college years, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, which I read during my volunteer year, three Vonnegut novels in one collection that I have read over and over.

In the course of a week the books, papers, DVDs and clothes made

their way to new places. Anytime one makes a move, there are always questions about what to take and what to leave behind; what to give



away and what to throw away.

I would argue that this taking and leaving extends beyond physical things to our psyche. As humans, created in God's grace and given free will, we possess the ability to define our experience.

Serving as a Catholic volunteer in mission involves a deepening commitment of faith and thinking about systemic issues that many in our society ignore.

This experience may involve suffering as we die to old habits, thoughts and opinions. Experiencing pain, though unpleasant, is instructive if we follow the source of the pain and come to a deeper realization of the world as it is.

We are more thankful for blessings when we have been humbled by losses, for we appreciate the positive happenings in our life relative to hurts and challenges.

This final issue of *Shared Visions* is geared toward those who are transitioning out of full time lay ministry, with an eye to those who may be staying on another year.

The final issue of the year features a reconciliation themed article and community

activity to help you process the transition out of community life.

Also featured is an international mission profile as well as review of Aurelie Hagstrom's book *The Emerging Laity*.

Lastly, we include a few thoughts for volunteers continuing



Thomas Merton

to live ministry and a tool kit to help you stay connected to the St. Vincent Pallotti Center!

*In March, the Pallotti Center welcomed Adam Brown as its new Program Director. Brown was a Gateway Vincentian Volunteer in St. Louis, Missouri in 2006-2007.*

**In this issue...** Page 1: Taking and Leaving // Page 2: Mending Fences, Moving on and Community Give and Take Activity // Page 3: Special International Mission Report // Page 4: Hagstrom Book Promotes Collaboration // Page 5: Tools for Transitioning from Volunteer Service and Living Ministry, Changing Lives

# Mending Fences, Moving On

As you approach the end of your time of service, or if you simply want to reenergize your community as you move into another year of volunteering, it is important to address lingering issues that may be clouding your living situation. It is easy to push problems aside and just try to remain civil to a community member you may be struggling with, but it is only through challenge and adversity that you are able to grow and learn about yourself during your time of service.

Especially if you will not be living with the same people after this year, it is important to reconcile yourself with your community in order to walk away from this experience with a positive outlook and to be able to appreciate the gifts you received from your community members.

In Matthew 5, Jesus gives us the Beatitudes on which to reflect. He offers beautiful words that inspire us to do better in our lives. These words may have even been your inspiration for doing a year or more of service. Following his teaching on the Beatitudes, Jesus reflects on anger, adultery, divorce, retaliation and loving your enemies. In each of these teachings, Jesus tells us that not only do we need to have a relationship with God through prayer and action, but also, and just as important, we need to be in relationship with our brothers and sisters.

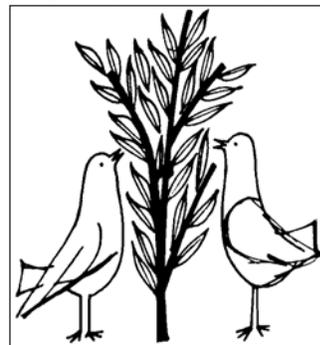
Specifically, in Matthew 5:23-24, Jesus tells us that in order to be able to serve the Lord, you need to make right with your neighbors. You cannot be free unless you reconcile with those who you have done wrong, and forgive those whom have done wrong against you.

Jesus says: "Go and be reconciled, then come and offer your gift." How true these words are for us in our daily lives. If you can't be at peace

in relationships with friends, family, community members, clients, co-workers, a person you sit near on the bus, or a complete stranger half way around the world, how can you, then, offer yourself in service to others?

What good are you really doing at your job or in your community if you approach situations with disdain, anger, or indifference?

How do you find that inner peace to be able to give yourself to your work, clients, friends and family back home, and roommates?



You can find that inner peace through God and prayer, but also through letting go of the hurt and brokenness that pervades your life and heart, and asking for forgiveness for what you did against your neighbor. Once you make right with your

brothers and sisters, you are able to help and serve others and yourself.

It is crucial to take the step of reconciliation in your community life. You need to address remaining problems in order to be able to move on from this experience or continue to grow with those you are living with during your time of service.

Once you take the time to confront issues, you can be at peace with that problem and move on from your entire volunteer experience or continue on in your community life with a sense of freedom from that issue. Once you reconcile yourself to your brothers and sisters, then you can go and offer your gift to the world.

## Community Give and Take Activity

This exercise is aimed at helping your community focus on taking the next step, whether that be the closure of moving on or reenergizing for another year of service.

Either way it is important to acknowledge the beauty and humanity inside each community member.

This exercise is designed to allow structured time for community reflection in order to prepare to say farewell. It may

also be used as an opportunity to refocus community energies for another year of service.

Sit in a circle. Each community member takes a turn on the "hot seat" as you go around the circle. When it is a particular person's turn, other community members will have the opportunity to share a kind word, funny story or an insight involving the person on the hot seat.

If no particular memory comes

to mind, you might share a sense of the person that you will carry with you into your post-volunteer life or into your next year of service.

After saying what he or she would take from the person in the hot seat, each community member will have the opportunity to give a gift to that person such as organizational skills for grad school, luck in finding a job or an apartment, etc.

See **ACTIVITY** pg. 4

## In 2010, Crystal Catalan was at a crossroads.....



After having completed a year of domestic mission work with Cabrini Mission Corps in New York, she still felt a deep pull in her heart, calling her to continue serving in mission. This time she would be staying with Cabrini but returning to the Philippines, her ancestral home.

"I felt that I wanted to experience something more stable, and actually be with people for longer periods of time," said Catalan, who had been on two week mission trips to the Philippines in previous years. "Long-term mission work has always been in my heart, but it took some time before I was able to take the leap and go for it."

Catalan is part of a growing number of long-term Catholic lay missionaries who have committed to more than one year of international mission work after first completing a year long mission program.

"It may sound dramatic, but my initial year of mission provided

me with the 'go' signal," she said. "There was no hesitancy in my decision because it felt like the obvious next step for me. My heart guided my way, and my faith and previous mission experience supported that move."

Rhegan Hyppio, program director at Franciscan Mission Service, served as a long term missionary in Brazil and Bolivia with FMS and in Haiti with Response-Ability before working in her current capacity.

She said many former volunteers feel called to continue a life of mission after they finish their short term service commitments. Long term programs provide a concrete yet challenging way for former volunteers to grow in understanding of their call to serve the universal Church.

"While on mission we connect with people who witness to us through their faith and remind us that we are all called to be missionaries by virtue of our baptism," she said. "Most of our

returned missionaries go on to work in fields that serve civil society and some choose to remain overseas."

Halfway through her current mission stint, Catalan has been blessed with an inner calm regarding her choice.

"I know that this is where I am supposed to be right now, because I have peace within myself, and in moments of desolation, there is a strong grace and consolation that always follows.

"While we are each called to mission in different ways, I was called to leave my comfortable home in California so I could spread the love of God, be a living witness of God's love and walk alongside the poor in the Philippines."

*It's never too late to start connecting to international mission! For more information on long term mission opportunities visit [www.pallotticenter.org](http://www.pallotticenter.org) and click on the "Connections" link in the upper right hand corner.*

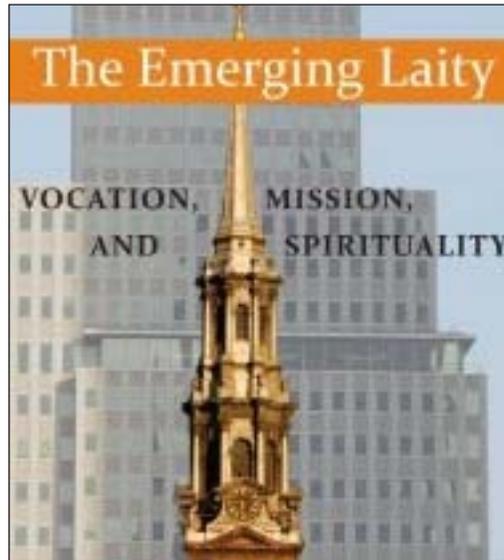
# Hagstrom Book Promotes Collaboration

All through the year, we have written on the theme of "Living Ministry" here in *Shared Visions*. For further reading on this topic after you complete this year of volunteer service, we recommend the book *The Emerging Laity: Vocation, Mission, and Spirituality* (Paulist Press, 2010) by Providence College theology professor Aurelie A. Hagstrom. At only 122 pages, it's a quick read but one that you will be able to reference for years to come.

In the latter chapters, Hagstrom delves into the mission and ministry of laity in the Catholic Church today. This makes her book especially relevant to current volunteers approaching an upcoming transition. The good news this book brings to lay people trying to figure out their place in the Church is the idea that being called to mission no longer derives only from the sacrament of holy orders, but more universally from the three sacraments of initiation, especially confirmation.

People who are familiar with Pallottine spirituality often think of St. Vincent Pallotti (1795-1850) as a man ahead of his time because he often spoke of each man and woman as being called to be an apostle while also emphasizing the need for collaboration among clergy, religious and laity. Pallottines will hear many echoes of the

founder in Hagstrom as she writes about the universal call to holiness and true collaboration in mission between the laity and the hierarchy.



Hagstrom also takes up the question of what counts as ministry. The author correctly points out the theological significance of the term "ministry" was lost following the a trend in parishes to turn every activity into a ministry.

*Christifideles Laici*, a 1988 exhortation from Pope John Paul II tried to more precisely define what is and is not ministry. Hagstrom believes the Church was not trying to curtail the movement of the Holy Spirit but to assure that lay ministry would enjoy the same dignity as ministry performed by the ordained.

Hagstrom also reminds us of a document that emerged from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in late 2005 called *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry*. If you are giving any thought to continuing your ministry as a lay person working for the Church, you would benefit from reading our bishops' collective current thinking on the topic of lay ecclesial ministers and how they are to collaborate with bishops, priests, deacons and other lay people.

"No other bishops' conference around the world has provided such a resource that combines a theology of emerging ministries with the Second Vatican Council's theology of the Church," Hagstrom writes.

In addition to considering the theological foundations of lay ministry, the document considers the discernment of suitability for lay ecclesial ministry the formation and authorization of these professional lay ministers and a discussion of policies and practices in the workplace.

Implementation of the document is left to the discretion of the ordinary (bishop) of each diocese at this early point, but many dioceses are using the document as the benchmark for how clergy and laity should function together for the good of the Church's shared ministry.

## ACTIVITY (from pg. 2)

These "gifts" are to be sincere and from the heart. This is not a time for backhanded comments. Use the activity as a positive way to celebrate your time together. And of course, there must be some stories you would all like to share involving the things you choose to give or take. Tell your stories and share with your community. Be sure to allow this activity plenty of time so everyone can have an opportunity to share.

## THE PALLOTTI FIVE

Things you can't leave mission without...

1. Learning how to cook for more than 10
2. Lots of pictures from your year
3. Becoming more environmentally friendly
4. Signing up for the job bank
5. The spirit of faith based volunteering

## Tools for Transitioning from Volunteer Service

Completing your term of volunteer service? The Pallotti Center offers a variety of free re-entry resources to former volunteers, available through our website: [www.pallotticenter.org](http://www.pallotticenter.org) (click on "Former Volunteers").\* Here is a brief summary of the resources for you:

**NETWORK OF FORMER VOLUNTEERS** The Network is a listserv of former volunteers all over the U.S. and the world. Former volunteers can use the listserv to find others who have volunteered in their area, program, or field of interest; to find and share advice, or leads about housing, jobs, or graduate study; to promote social justice interests; and to schedule gatherings of former volunteers in their area.

The "What's Next?" Notebook, updated and published annually, addresses issues encountered in the post-service stage of volunteering, and helps to guide your transition out of volunteer service.

The  
"What's Next?"  
Notebook

ed Each issue of *Staying Connected* focuses on an aspect of volunteering (simple living, social justice, spirituality, relationships, etc.) and how that can apply to life after service. It's a free resource for former volunteers.

The Pallotti Center Job Bank aids former volunteers in the search for meaningful and fulfilling work. You can sign up for the weekly Job Bank at <http://pallotticenter.org/index.php?m=jb&action=subscriptionForm>

Pallotti  
Center  
Job Bank

### Social Media

Be sure "like" the Pallotti Center Fan Page on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/pallotticenter](http://www.facebook.com/pallotticenter)), check our blog *Not of Speech and Daydreams* ([pallotticenter.blogspot.com](http://pallotticenter.blogspot.com)), and follow us on Twitter @PallottiCenter in order to stay current on everything happening in the world of full time Catholic volunteer service!

\* *Do you have limited internet access? Give us a call. The Pallotti Center would be happy to send you print materials to help with your transition. You can reach us toll-free at 1-877-VOL-LINK.*

## Living Ministry, Continuing Service

At this time of the year, many, but not all volunteers are preparing to leave their sites and move on. Some volunteers are in longer-term placements. Others may decide to renew their service for another term. While continuing in service is wonderful, it can also be challenging.

The following are some thoughts on living ministry as you continue in service. These ideas can be used for individual or community reflection.

### If things are changing...

Even for those continuing in service, this may be a time

of change. Perhaps some of your community members are leaving, or new members are joining (or both!). Perhaps your placement or geographical location is changing.

These changes may involve a range of emotions, from sadness to apprehension to excitement. Addressing these feelings will make the change process easier, and help you move forward with a positive attitude. Take some time to reflect on things you may lose to change.

Consider using a ritual to mark the end of time with departing

community members or people you may no longer see at your service site (see the activity in this issue or the Resource Center on our website for ideas).

Then, take some time to reflect on any new people, places, or tasks which will soon become part(s) of your volunteer life. How can you prepare to welcome these changes?

**If things are staying the same...** If you are in a longer-term placement and will be continuing your volunteer life as usual, you can still take

See **SERVICE** Pg. 6



**SERVICE** (from pg. 5)  
advantage of this season to  
renew your ministry.

Take time to reflect on your  
service so far. What have  
you done? Whom have you  
encountered? What have  
been the most joyful and most  
challenging experiences?

If you had to choose a word to  
describe your ministry thus far,  
what would it be? Take some time  
to think ahead to the remainder  
of your time as a volunteer. What  
would you continue? What would  
you leave behind? What are your

hopes and fears for the future?  
Would you like to use the same  
word for the remainder of your  
ministry or choose a new one?  
What new experience would you  
most like to have in the coming  
year?

If you decide that you want to  
make some changes, now is a  
wonderful time to begin working  
on them.

All of us at the St. Vincent Pallotti  
Center give thanks for your  
ministry so far and wish you  
blessings as you continue your  
journey!

## Shared Visions

*A publication to assist in the spiritual formation of lay volunteers,  
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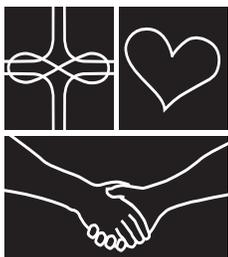
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## The Mission of the St. Vincent Pallotti Center

Our goal is to promote lay volunteer service that  
challenges laity, clergy, and religious to work together in  
the mission of the Church, and to support lay volunteers  
before, during, and after their term of service. The  
Center takes its inspiration from Saint Vincent Pallotti  
(1795-1850), who believed passionately in the laity, in  
each person as being an image of God and as called  
to be missionary.

**Shared Visions'** goal is to explore five building blocks of  
spiritual development: intellectual growth, emotional  
health, physical health, leadership and prayer.



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