

staying connected

a publication designed for alumni of Catholic full-time volunteer programs
brought to you by the St. Vincent Pallotti Centers

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Staying Connected to *Life-Long Learning*

Sounds like we're trying to sell you an infomercial kit with tapes and books, huh? What do we mean by life-long learning? Perhaps you're thinking it's something for retirees? Or maybe you're so fresh from school that you can't even think of opening another book?

Well, you might be surprised to find out that what we'd like to encourage more than anything is an attitude... a way of being. To be a life-long learner implies an openness of mind and a curiosity that enlivens us. It means being open to what life has in store for you. It means cultivating a spiritual ability to trust in God.

The volunteer experience opens us up to a new kind of learning. Many of us come to volunteering after at least 16 years of schooling, where learning meant classrooms, books, teachers, rules. In service we learn things that can't be learned in the classroom. How does the volunteer experience of learning affect the decisions that face us now and in the future? How does that experience guide us in our decisions regarding post graduate education or new passions? And finally, how can the volunteer experience and the skills acquired because of it aid us in remaining curious, passionate and enlivened by life itself?! Read on...



Mary Cassatt, *Woman Reading in Garden*, 1880;
Art Institute of Chicago

Everyone knows about Einstein, Leonardo Da Vinci and Socrates. But what about these women as life-long learners? See how you do identifying them: *Mary Cassatt, Artemisia Gentileschi, Hildegard of Bingen, Catherine of Siena, Madame Curie, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Willa Cather, Hatshepsut.*

If you recognized all 8 and were not a Women's Studies major place your name at the end of the list. If you got 7 out of 8 and were not an Art or History major, you deserve to take a bow.

Tips for being a life-long learner

✓ Always ask questions. The more thoughtful the better. For example, pose yourself and others open ended questions instead of those answered by a yes or no. Think about it: what's the difference between "Did I make you mad?" and "If you are mad at me, what was it that bothered you?" You'll likely get a lot more out of the second open-ended question than the first.



✓ Know yourself and reconcile with your past. Get to know what makes you tick, what kind of personality you have and why (hint: this is a LIFE-LONG task). If you are more in tune with yourself and past experiences you will have less internal static, be a better listener and more able to use that knowledge and wisdom in creative ways. In fact the older you become the more adept your brain becomes at integrating everything in creative ways. (Notice how most great leaders and visionaries are usually not 16 year-olds!)

✓ Practice mindfulness. Be ever mindful of your surroundings, emotions etc. (A great resource for practicing mindfulness is author Anthony DeMello.)

✓ Think outside of the box. Train your mind to seek new questions and answers. Challenge yourself by exploring new points of view or tapping into new sources of information. Read newspaper editorials. Ask yourself: What do I want to learn about? What or who can help me get there?

✓ Collaboration. Seek out fellow learners to stimulate your appetite for knowledge. For example, you could join a book club or some other group.



✓ Have no fear. Sometimes reaching out to learn something means going to the next level of personal growth. Sometimes fear of the unknown holds us back. It doesn't have to!

Former Volunteers as Life-long Learners: Should I go back to school??

"Once, when I was seeking the advice of a friend and talking to him at some length about what needed to be done in the world, he interrupted me and said: "Don't ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive, and go do that, because what the world needs is people who come alive." —Gil Baile

The decision to pursue graduate school is one that many formers toy with at some point or another after volunteering. Many formers, having had the experience as a volunteer of learning in oftentimes radically new ways, express the desire to further that learning in the context of a formal, classroom setting of some sort. With so many interesting things out there, how does one ever choose the right program and then actually get in to it? And once accepted, how does one pay for it?



In this section, we hope to offer you some insights that may be helpful to formers who are now considering "the graduate school option."

Top Five Tips for Formers Contemplating Graduate School:

- 1.) Take time to discern whether or not graduate school is the best option for you at this point in your life. Graduate school is a big investment of time and money!
- 2.) Start early. Begin researching programs one year before applications are due so that you are not rushed into a decision under pressure.
- 3.) Make a budget for yourself—include application fees, testing requirements, visits to schools, etc. Given your budget be realistic about how many schools to which you can apply.
- 4.) Talk to current and former students of the programs in which you are interested. Find out what they have to say about the program you are considering.
- 5.) Visit the schools you are considering. Talk to professors and sit in on classes to get a feel for the program and culture of the school environment. Note the way you are treated by school staff on your visit. More than likely, this is how graduate students are treated at that school.

Former Volunteer Friendly Graduate Programs and Scholarship Info

International Development

- ☐ Fordham University International Political Economy and Development Program, Arrupe Fellowship

Web: www.fordham.edu/iped/arrupe.html

Theology

- ☐ The Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley (JSTB), The Lilly Scholarship Email: admissions@jstb.edu Web: www.jstb.org
- ☐ Aquinas Institute of Theology Email: aquinas@slu.edu Web: www.ai.edu

Religious Education/Pastoral Ministry

- ☐ Boston College, The Loyola Scholarship Email: irepm@bc.edu Web: www.bc.irepm.html

Education

- ☐ Creighton University in Omaha, NE The M. A. G. I. S. Program (Master of Arts in Education) Web: <http://puffin.creighton.edu/edu/M.A.G.I.S/index.html>
- ☐ Saint Mary's University, The Remick Fellowship Program in Winona, MN Contact: Kathleen M. Flanagan, Ph.D., Director Email: kflanaga@smumn.edu Web: www.smumn.edu



Administration/Other:

- ☐ Marquette University, Trinity Fellows Program Contact: Carole Ferrara Email: carole.ferrara@marquette.edu
- ☐ University of Notre Dame MSA Program Contact Kimberly Brennan Email: brennan.53@nd.edu Web: www.nd.edu/~msa
- ☐ Villanova University, Graduate Internship E-mail: barbara/haenn@villanova.edu Web: www.campusministry.villanova.edu (under program directory, choose graduate internships)

Online Financial Aid Resources:

- ✓ Notre Dame Graduate Fellowship Database—www.grad.nd.edu/gfd ✓ Finaid—www.finaid.com
- ✓ Fastweb—www.fastweb.com ✓ College Net Financial Aid Information—www.collegenet.com
- ✓ Institute of International Education—www.iie.org ✓ Hispanic Scholarship Fund—www.hsf.net
- ✓ The Scholarship Page—www.scholarship-page.com ✓ Free Scholarship Search—www.freschinfo.com/index.phtml

Another Financial Aid tip:

Look on websites of the professional associations in your field. They often can be a source of financial aid for graduate students.

Content for this article was contributed by former volunteer Allegra da Silva.

~ Spirituality ~

THE SEARCH FOR THE DISCOVERY OF GOD'S
TRANSFORMING PRESENCE IN OUR LIVES

Life-long learning is an inside job...

Thanks to the Holy Spirit

Most of us have heard of the value of mental imaging. Olympic athletes regularly meditate on and picture themselves achieving records. Career coaches promote positive thinking for their upwardly mobile clients. But there's also a deeper and more spiritual aspect of this personal skill, namely, that faith encourages personal openness to the Holy Spirit and, by implication, to life-long learning.



Picasso, Blue Dove With Yellow Sun

For the past two thousand years, the people of the Judeo-Christian traditions have found it very fruitful to think of God's spirit as a source of inspiration and as intimately promoting human wisdom. Several Old Testament writers spoke of wisdom as person-like, almost divine, a "she" created "before all other things" (Ecclesiasticus 1:4). The book of Wisdom, attributed to Solomon but actually written in the first century before Christ, describes wisdom: "She is a breath of the power of God, pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty... a reflection of the eternal light..." (7:25-26). This "breath" recalls the "ruah," God's spirit or breath which at the dawn of creation hovered over and calmed the chaotic waters (Genesis 1:2).

Christians are also very familiar with the Church's birthday story, better known as Pentecost Sunday, when the Holy Spirit as a wind inspired the frightened disciples and transformed their chaos into confidence so they could then tell the story of Christ (Acts 2: 4). Simply put, they were enlightened and re-created in God's image.

Variations of this image of the Holy Spirit as enlightening people have prevailed down through the centuries. Christians affirmed that the New Testament writers were uniquely inspired to write the gospels and epistles. Similarly, saints such as Francis and Clare were inspired to care for the poor, Thomas Aquinas to defend the truth, Thomas More to confront error and Jean Baptist de LaSalle and Elizabeth Ann Seaton to found schools for the disadvantaged.

This fits with what Jesus told the disciples, that he could not teach them everything during his three years with them but after his death he would send his Spirit to teach them all they needed to know. The Father "will give you another Advocate to be with you forever, that Spirit of truth... he is in you" (John 14:15-17). Was it only to the twelve apostles Jesus promised the Spirit? John's gospel said Jesus promised the Spirit to "anyone who loves me" (John 14:21).

Our faith encourages us to be seekers of the truth, not simply religious truths but all truths, not simply during our school years, but for our entire lives. The Spirit of God lives inside each person prompting us to be hungry to learn. What a positive and empowering image.



Recent research suggests that being
"curious" is associated with greater ability to
have closer personal relationships.
Does this fit with your experience?
Why might this connection be true?
Does it inspire you to action?



Former Volunteer Sightings in ARIZONA



Parishes

- All Saints Church 1534 North Recker Road Mesa, AZ Tel: 480-985-7655
- St. Michael's Mission Church, St. Michael's, AX Franciscan Friars, 100 year old mostly Navajo Church, very warm, with small museum.
- St. Thomas the Apostle Church 2312 East Campbell Avenue Phoenix, AZ 85016-5597 Tel: 602-954-9089 Fax: 602-956-3454 Email: st_thomas_apostle@diocesephoenix.org Web: www.mylordandmygod.org
- Young adult group growing. Active parish with great music.
- St. Matthew's Church Phoenix, AZ Many JV's go there.
- St. Timothy's Parish Mesa, AZ Active parish where the LifeTeen movement began.
- St. John Vianney Parish, Congregation of the Holy Cross Pastor Rev. John Herman, CSC 539 La Pasada Blvd. Avondale / Goodyear, AZ 85338 Tel: 623-932-3313 Web: www.stjohnvianneyparish.com Many active ministries with Mexican population, other exciting outreach activities.
- St. Gregory's Parish The Pastor Rev. John Dougherty, CSC (former director of Andre House Catholic worker) 3424 N. 18th Avenue Phoenix, AZ 85015 Tel: 602-264-4488 Email: st_gregory@diocesephoenix.org

A Holy Cross Associate Program is currently based out of St. Gregory's.

Communities

- Maggie's Place P.O. Box 1102 Phoenix, Arizona 85001 Tel: 602-257-4648 Email: Maggiesplace2@juno.com Web: www.maggiesplace.org
- Part time volunteer opportunities available. Three staff members are currently training to run a marathon to raise money for Maggie's Place, any formers that enjoy running and would like to join in are welcome! Contact staff member and former JV Jennifer Rodgers to organize a former volunteer gathering Email: jenjenrodgers@hotmail.com
- Andre House Catholic Worker P.O. Box 2014 Phoenix, AZ 85001 Tel: 602-255-0580, 602-252 9023 Web: www.andrehouseaz.org
- Holy Cross Brothers sponsored Catholic Worker. Serves the homeless through programs, services, education and pastoral care, such as soup line, houses of hospitality. Also, masses, discussions and social gatherings centered around the house.

Retreat Centers

- Franciscan Renewal Center 5802 E. Lincoln Drive Scottsdale, AZ 85253 Email: Casa@thecasa.org Tel: 800-356-3247
- Beautiful grounds, mariachi band during mass, "Fr. Rusty is great".. A Community of Faith Through Liturgy, Retreats, Education, Counseling, Social Justice, Spiritual Direction, Meetings & Conferences, in the Tradition & Hospitality of St. Francis of Assisi
- Sacred Heart Retreat Center Gallup, NM Tel: 505-722-6755

Cafe Fiat

- Café Fiat PO box 2323 Phoenix, AZ 85002, Tel: 602-518-6433
- Café Fiat will be a coffee house that nurtures the seeking of truth through healthy relationships with others and the exploration of ideas, with a vision to celebrate the culture of life through speakers, music, literature, art, and community. Location will be in central/eastern Phoenix and it will open in summer 2003. Volunteers are needed to help with renovating the structure. There will be regular music events, speakers, visual art from local Christian artists, special areas for young children and group meetings. If you or anyone you know is an artist, musician, speaker or has any gift to share and would like to contribute to this venture, or have any questions contact Cafe Fiat.

We are grateful to all who contributed information to this section.
Thanks for helping us support other former volunteers!

Visit our on-line community of former volunteers on our website, www.pallotticenter.org! Click to the formers section where you can find lists of resources for the entire country, and add more ideas of your own... anytime!



The Saint Vincent Pallotti Center
for Apostolic Development

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Staying Connected is printed on recycled paper. Please do your part by passing on your copy to another former volunteer or by recycling the paper. Thanks!

Curiosity and Leadership

Consider how they are connected by reflecting on the following quotes.

"What characterizes a good leader? Curiosity, empathy, practical intelligence and courage." -Beverly Pearson

-In what ways did you have to use practical intelligence or show courage during your time as a volunteer?

-Everyone knows about individuals having an I.Q., where 100 represents average intelligence. What do you think is your "CQ," your "curiosity quotient?" About which persons, things or ideas are you currently curious? Given that empathy is "walking a mile in another's shoes," for which persons or groups have you been feeling empathy lately? Why that person or group? To what extent does your empathy begin with your curiosity about how another person feels?

-Can you think of some times as a volunteer in which your curiosity was piqued? How do these experiences continue to guide you today?

"One thing life has taught me: if you are interested, you never have to look for new interests. They come to you. When you are genuinely interested in one thing, it will always lead to something else." -Eleanor Roosevelt.

-In what ways did your volunteer experience lead to a special interest that you have today? Where have those interests brought you in the time since your volunteer experience?

-What is the difference between your being "interested" and your being "genuinely interested" in something?

-Make a list with two columns and enter in each those things or people in which you are merely interested and those having your genuine interest.

"The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing." -Albert Einstein

-What questions struck you during your volunteer experience?

-What questions are you mulling over or struggling with now?

-What's your opinion? What kind of role does curiosity play in peoples' lives? In your life?

Staying Connected: Assisting in the continued formation of former lay volunteers.

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Mission: To promote lay volunteer service that challenges laity, clergy, and religious to work together in the mission of the Church. Our goal is to support lay volunteers *before, during and after* their term of service. **Location:** Local Pallotti Centers are in Boston, Paterson, NJ, St. Louis and Sacramento.

The National Office is in Washington, DC. **Inspiration:** The Centers take their 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.