

# SHARED VISIONS

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

## The Pallotti Center Says Goodbye

by Adam Brown,  
Program Director

The psychologist Carl Jung coined the term synchronicity to describe the experience of two or more events that are unrelated that occur by chance and are observed to occur in a meaningful way.

An example would be expressing interest to a friend in buying a car, and then later that day receiving a call from a second friend who has decided to sell his car.

I experienced a moment of synchronicity recently while preparing a short summary of college programs catering to those who have completed post-graduate volunteer service.

I did a quick Google search to complement the list of programs that I already knew about. What popped up was a long list of programs, complete with a table of contents

from our Pallotti Center website. While I had seen the document before I had forgotten that it existed.



**Change is a part of growth. The Pallotti Center announced recently that we will be closing in June. Enjoy this last issue of *Shared Visions*, and always remember your role as apostles.**

The information was simply comprehensive. It was everything I was looking for, and required only some fact checking to complete my story.

The Pallotti Center to me personally and professionally has been a connector, providing ways to those serious about serving God and the Church to find vehicles to do so.

Like many of you, I first discovered the Center through the *Connections*

book. I vaguely remembered the book when I came to work here, nearly a year ago and received a

big shock late one night when I was laying out *Connections 2012* at the office.

While walking around in the back room, trying to clear my head I came across the *Connections* book we had at my campus Newman Center my senior year of college.

In that moment I remembered a long forgotten memory of flipping through the book while trying to plan the next

step after graduation.

That night *Connections* connected me to my past and my present simultaneously. It connected a young idealist with a seasoned realist, someone who wanted to be something with someone who had become something.

Often in my own life I have discovered that valuable resources are not missed until they are gone. So, I believe it will be with the Pallotti Center. Over the course of 27 years of service to volunteers, this organization completed the mission for which it was originally created. There are other organizations that will fill the void.

Ultimately, however, it is the Holy Spirit, not anything that we do, that completes the work that Christ begins in us. In this final edition of *Shared Visions*, we complete the Pastoral Circle.

See **GOODBYE** pg. 5

# Pallotti Center Remembered:

## A look back on nearly three decades of service

Of the Pallotti Center's 28 years of service within the Church, it was the middle 20 years of which I had direct experience. So, important as the first four and last four years of the Center have been, akin to an airplane's take off and landing, I can best speak directly to the middle



**Andrew D. Thompson**  
**Former Director**

two decades.

When I first arrived at the Pallotti Center National Office in Washington, DC in 1988, full-time Church-based volunteer service was a little-known and little-used opportunity. From its beginning in 1984, the Pallotti Center had established six offices across the United States. They distributed the Center's annual Connections booklet of Catholic full-time volunteer and missionary opportunities and did various kinds of promotional outreach to publicize these relatively new ways to "be Church" in the world.

I had literally come from across the street where I had taught at The Catholic University of America for a decade and then worked on campus with several research centers for another half a decade. In the late 1980s and 1990s, the Pallotti Center was actually a network of six fully staffed offices, located in dioceses that typically had a high density of colleges, such as Boston, San Francisco and Washington, DC.

Probably some folks saw our work as similar to that of the first disciples who followed Jesus' directive to "put out into the deep" (Luke 5:4), into the waters of the Sea of Galilee, to catch fish (people) – that is, to win converts to discipleship. So they may have seen Pallotti Center employees as primarily recruiters of candidates for lay volunteer and mission programs.

I never thought of our work primarily in that way. I was convinced that we were responding to Jesus' direc-

tive to go to where the "fish" were, not to "catch" them in recruitment nets but to engage with them where their hearts were, inviting and supporting them through transformative volunteer experiences. And where were they, these "fish" we sought? Not simply geographically on college campuses. Where were their hearts?

Many potential candidates were newly learning about volunteer service, struggling with the decision whether or not to sign up and which program to possibly join. During their year(s) of service, volunteers faced the challenges of living in community with people often quite different from themselves. Although most were recent college graduates, some were shocked at the diversity of values within their peer group. The majority strove to embrace simple living, develop a balanced spirituality and see the poor as

persons hungering for justice, and not as objects of charity. Others, a minority, wanted to expand their skills and experience another part of the country or other cultures.

Upon completing their term of service, many alumni of the volunteer and missionary programs found that their new challenge was to find a meaningful job and discover a community of people who shared their values and understood why they had volunteered. They also wanted to continue living a life of service without losing their own identity, and to strike a balance between work and life.

Nearly all of the Pallotti Center employees previously had themselves served as volunteers or lay missionaries. Because they had lived through these struggles first-hand, they taught me what it was all about. We were not simply publishing the Connections Directory but were helping with the candidates' initial discernment process. We were not simply writing and publishing the quarterly Shared Visions newsletter but were nurturing spirituality, survival skills and professional

competencies. Nor were we simply helping the alumni find jobs but instead we were networking with meaningful employers, fostering the formation of welcoming communities of young and older adults, finding and recommending vibrant parishes, and nurturing life-long skills through our Staying Connected newsletter and What's Next Network publications. Our website, email listserv, and overall online presence were not an ad for the Pallotti Center but rather an interactive service for volunteers – prospective, current, and formers. One of our goals was to help the alumni connect with one another, strengthen their bond with the programs where they served and nurture their values and spirituality.

Several dynamics made all this possible and, in a sense, made it easy for us to accomplish. One was the incredibly supportive partnerships which the lay volunteer and lay missionary programs offered the Pallotti Centers. Many of our best practices came from the suggestions made by our board of directors and by the staff of several of the more than

100 programs listed in our Connections Directory. They made our work fruitful because they generously gave us so many practical ideas for how we could make the best use of our resources to support their volunteers and missionaries before, during and after their service.

Remember, the lay volunteer and missionary programs were the very sources from which the Pallotti Center drew its 75+ staff during the Centers' 28 years. For most of my years there, all staff members had volunteer-service background, balanced between work in the USA and overseas. Typically, we also benefited from having a Spanish-speaker on staff. Because these generous employees typically came to the Pallotti Center directly from the volunteer programs, the program directors deserve a lot of the credit for having done a fine job screening and training the young adults who became our employees.

I can't adequately describe how fine these Pallotti Center staff members have been and the talent they shared in their efforts on behalf of the Catholic volunteer service movement.



**The original SVPC logo**

They were the wind beneath the Pallotti Center's wings – and beneath my own, too. Because of their own talents, smarts, skills and service experiences, they made sure that our vision kept a focus on the clients out in the field, the poor who hungered for justice, those suppressed by dictatorial government regimes overseas and the folks scraping by in the inner cities and rural areas here at home.

The Pallotti Center staff members, working together with many former volunteers and missionaries, got the job done by clear writing and creative desktop publishing, by speaking credibly at campuses on behalf of volunteer programs, by spreading the news at Sunday liturgies across the country and through the Internet, and by partnering with the staff of diocesan Mission Offices, of Young Adults, Catholic Charities and campus ministers.

The Pallotti Center staff, like the alumni and staff of the lay volunteer and mission programs, did not have to talk about laity playing an increasingly stronger role in the Church. They lived it.

As they gained experience, they were actually modeling that vision and providing leadership in dioceses, parishes and organizations, both in the non-profit and for-profit worlds. Years later, they continue to embody divine presence at work in the Church and in the world.

In addition to superb staff, board members, partnerships with programs and other organizations, there was one outstanding force making the Pallotti Center's contribution possible. That force was faith supported by an effective religious charism, specifically the charism of St. Vincent Pallotti (1795-1850).

In January of 2012, the Church celebrated the beginning of the year-long 50th anniversary of his canonization in 1963, during the Second Vatican Council. The Pallottine Fathers and Brothers of the Immaculate Conception Province, headquartered in New Jersey, have been passionate about promoting lay men and women in service and leadership roles in the Church and society. Their founder, Father Vincent Pallotti, often asked the question: What reality or need must we address today? He was careful to avoid duplicating what others were already doing, and he skillfully set up partnerships with other organizations

to read the signs of the times and meet the needs for today as well as to plan for tomorrow.

In 1835, despite his diplomacy and his close and personal relationship with Pope Gregory XVI, Father Pallotti and his collaborators were the new kids on the block. Known as the "Union of Catholic Apostolate", they had to make their case that they were not duplicating others' good works, nor treading on others' apostolic turf. Such a challenge was normal and to be expected. Similarly, in the 1980s, the Pallotti Centers' six offices had to distinguish themselves



**From left to right: Former staff members Andrew Thompson, Stacie West, Colleen Lawler Tejada, Alicia Brooks, Julia Strukley and Mike Goggin.**

from existing Church networks and show that they were team players. In time, it became clear that the Pallotti Center's primary focus was to meet the needs of the individual volunteers and missionaries. Other organizations were already primarily addressing the needs of the lay volunteer programs and of the vowed religious missionary orders.

By the early 1990s, the directors of the lay volunteer and mission programs told us they wanted us to provide published material and to build networks which supported the spiritual and personal development of their candidates and alumni. As trust grew, we worked with national organizations and together collaborated on projects supporting volunteers, missionaries and programs. We saw each other as partners in our common efforts. That was the same cooperative spirit which Father Vincent Pallotti promoted in Rome in the 1830s and 1840s. He accomplished it by building bridges among the Church's organizations and communities. For example, each January, he successfully gathered thousands of people into an eight-day celebration of Christian Unity which included the various Catholic non-Latin liturgical rites. In his own ministry Pallotti softened rigid boundar-

ies. He worked with Rome's rich and poor alike. Even when French soldiers militarily occupied Rome and deported Pope Pius IX, Fr. Vincent had been able to minister effectively to hospitalized French troops.

I think it could well have been St. Vincent's heritage of building confident partnerships and his creative spiritual imagination that encouraged the Pallottine Fathers and Brothers to initiate and support the Pallotti Centers. Thereby they helped bring thousands of lay men and women into roles of service and leadership within the Church and society. Because the Pallotti Center will be closing its doors in 2012, it is the care and support of the individual volunteers and missionaries that will need additional attention from each of us, in the years to come.

On behalf of the Pallotti Center employees and all they served, we together thank the Pallottine Fathers, Brothers, and in different ways, the Pallottine Sisters and lay collaborators, who supported this vision for a vibrant life of faith. With time, memory of the Pallotti Center and its contributions may fade a bit. But the contributions made by all will ripple into the future, pointing back to Christ as our starting point and expanding outward to a new heaven and a new earth (Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21:1).

## New and Notable Books

1. *Catholicism: A Journey to the Heart of the Faith* by Robert Barron, Doubleday Books, 2011.

2. *Praying Our Lives* by Eleanor Bernstein, Ave Maria Press, 2012.

3. *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today*, by Stephen Bevens, Orbis Books, 2011.

4. *Let Us Be What We Are: The Joys and Challenges of Living the Little Way* by Clarence Enzler, Ave Maria Press, 2012.

5. *Catholic Theological Ethics Past, Present, and Future* by James F. Keenan, Orbis Books, 2011.



# Grad School for Service Junkies

If your term of service is coming to an end you may be wondering what to do next. After having moved to a different place, deepening your faith by coming into contact with the poor and marginalized, and begun to question your values on a deeper level, you may be feeling doubt about the next phase of your life. On the other hand, your service may have confirmed the path you are on and helped you to make a deeper commitment to your values. In either case, graduate school is a course of action frequently taken by volunteers after they have completed their term of service. The following graduate programs from five universities cater specifically to former volunteers who have completed a term of full-time service. More information is available at our website (<http://www.pallotticenter.org/docs/graduate-programs.pdf?m=ra>).

**Villanova Campus Ministry Graduate Internship Program** (<http://www.villanova.edu/campusministry/internships/requirements.htm>)

Each academic year (late spring semester), the Center for Pastoral Ministry Education awards four Graduate Internships in Campus Ministry and selects candidates from among applicants accepted into a Graduate Degree Program at Villanova. The Internship spans two years of academic and ministerial work (including at least one summer of academic work) and offers many opportunities for development personally, spiritually, academically, and professionally. The Campus Ministry Graduate Internship Program seeks mature Catholic men and women who are committed to offering assigned ministry in a First Year Residence Hall setting.

**University of Dayton Campus Ministry Graduate Assistant Program** ([http://www.udayton.edu/ministry/about/ga\\_program.php](http://www.udayton.edu/ministry/about/ga_program.php))

Nine Campus Ministry Graduate Assistants serve the campus community through the Center for Social Concern, Residence Life Ministry, Retreats and Faith Development, Neighborhood Ministry, Campus Liturgies, and the Program for Christian Leadership. The Graduate Assistant in Campus Ministry is a regular candidate for the Masters of Theological Studies or Pastoral Ministry degree program. Academic work toward either of these degrees is a two year program (including 2 summer sessions). Assistantships are granted each year for a maximum of two years.

**University of Notre Dame Alliance for Catholic Education** (<http://ace.nd.edu/>)

The ACE M.Ed. intensively prepares teachers by integrating graduate level coursework with an immersion teaching experience. Throughout their two years teaching in under-resourced Catholic schools, ACE teachers earn a cost-free Master of Education degree from the University of Notre Dame. Upon graduation, they are eligible for state licensure as a teacher. ACE teachers spend two summers living and studying with the larger ACE community at Notre Dame. The centerpiece of the summer program is an innovative teacher-preparation curriculum, taught by select faculty and experienced practitioners, combined with a supervised field experience in local public and Catholic schools.

**University of Notre Dame ECHO Program** (<http://echo.nd.edu/>)

Echo apprentices are mature, faithful, and committed young adults who not only live together but also create community together by sharing the joys and challenges of their daily lives and the faith that unites and sustains them. Human and communal formation in Echo offers apprentices the opportunity to participate in several different kinds of community—the M.A. Theology community, the larger Echo community, an intentional faith community, and a diocesan and parish community—while deepening their capacity for personal growth, healthy relationships and a life-giving community experience. Echo apprentices pursue a General M.A. in Theology degree in consultation with their academic advisor. The course of study includes a cluster of courses that focus on catechesis and catechetical study. The program seeks to provide adequate training in the basics of Christian doctrine as well as adequate training in the sophistication of theological reflection.

**Loyola University Chicago M.A. in Social Justice/Community Development** (<http://luc.edu/ips/about.shtml>)

The MA in Social Justice and Community Development degree is an interfaith program that engages students through a values-based perspective. The degree is designed for those aspiring to affect social transformation in local communities as well as to those committed to restoring economic equity, social justice, and ecological health on a national or global scale.

**Marquette University Trinity Fellows Program** (<http://www.marquette.edu/trinityfellows/about/index.html>)

The Trinity Fellows Program is a graduate fellowship program dedicated to developing urban leaders with a commitment to social and economic justice. Fellows participate in a 21-month study/work program while earning a master's degree in one of thirteen fields of study. The program is intended for committed individuals who care about the well-being of others, about issues of social and economic justice, and who wish to acquire experience in the urban nonprofit sector while studying for two years toward a Master's degree.



# Pastoral Action: The End and Beginning

In order to lend authenticity to the Christian experience we are called and required to continue to the process. Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, SJ made this a circle intentionally. In their book *Social Analysis Linking Faith and Justice*, Holland and Henriot say that once one goes through the pastoral circle that “a response of action in a particular situation brings about a situation of new experiences.

These experiences in turn call for further mediation through insertion (experience), analysis, reflection, and planning (pastoral action). Thus, the pastoral circle continues without final conclusion” (9). The pastoral circle never ends. We must be living through the pastoral circle in our daily life.

This remains true for those who are finishing up a year or more and for those who are continuing on for another year or more of volunteer service.

If you are finishing up your year or more of service, how do you take the pastoral circle with you? Continue to analyze your time of service after it is over.

Remember those experiences that shaped and changed you.

Keep in touch with community



members, supervisors, clients, and friends who have a connection to your year or more of volunteering. Call on them when you become complacent or indifferent to the needs of those around you. If you're able, go back to where you volunteered after some time away to reconnect to the experiences

– good and bad – of your term of service. Keep this experience with you, always, as a reminder to stay grounded in your values.

If you are continuing on in your volunteer placement, consider ways to challenge yourself to grow during this upcoming year. Ask for more responsibility at work. Consider spiritual direction. Challenge your community to take the experience to a deeper level.

Try new ways of simplifying your life. Examine your economic and ecological footprint. Take things a step further and deeper than you did this past year. Your volunteer experience, just like the pastoral circle, never ends. You have been changed by this experience and now view the world with new eyes that will never go away.

It is your responsibility to live out the values you have learned in the past year or more of creating community, furthering your relationship with God, simplifying your life, developing a greater awareness of your place in the world, and reaching out to those who need the most help.

## **GOODBYE** (from pg. 1)

In the “pastoral action” section of the circle we find the fruition of what has come before. If we have used the circle correctly, pastoral action is grounded in experience, analysis, and prayer/theological reflection. We are not simply shooting in the dark. We are constructing our decisions based on a firm foundations of values that we believe.

Also in this edition we take a look at graduate programs for the socially conscious as well as five reasons to make a commitment to international service. Thank you as always for reading and for being a part of the Pallotti Center’s mission of forming apostles!

## **Five Reasons to Choose International Mission**

### **1. Expanded worldview**

In his “I have been to the mountaintop” speech, Martin Luther King, Jr. talked about the value of Christian witness is seeing the “I” in the “thou.” This is true for our world today. Do you want to begin to understand poverty? Go to the slums. Do you want to gain a greater understanding why people risk their lives to illegally immigrate to the United States? Go live among the people you are seeking to understand. You will most likely leave the experience transformed, and ready to embark on a new path.

### **2. Greater understanding of the worldwide Church**

Catholicism looks different in different places. While liturgical dancing would be greeted with bewilderment in

many American parishes, it's a vital part of worship in Uganda and other African countries. As the Church moves toward the global South, it is vital to understand the issues that are being grappled with in cultures where the faith is growing.

### 3. Language skills

Often, one of the perks of international mission is getting to fluently learn another language. In a global economy it pays to be bilingual. Combining this with an experience of serving the Church will be looked upon favorably by hiring professionals and demonstrates your passion for committing to difficult tasks.

### 4. Greater self knowledge

Loneliness is often reported as a byproduct of mission experience. One can feel like an outsider in their own culture, but when you enter a culture in which you are literally an outsider it can provide some tough moments. But pain is the touchstone of growth. Being an international missionary will help you to see where you have matured and where you need to grow.

### 5. Extended network of missionaries

You have probably already experienced the camaraderie of having served in mission with either people from other mission programs or alumni from the program that you are currently working in. International mission will enable you to share a common experience with a key demographic of people serving in the church today. It will also give you a distinct connection to a culture other than your own.

## Shared Visions

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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 and physical health, leadership and prayer.



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