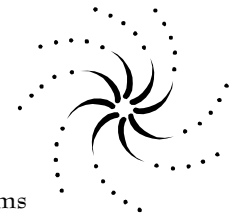


Staying Connected



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

Volume 7, Number 2

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Staying Connected to ... Travel and Journey

As someone who has volunteered, you set out on a journey which for many becomes a life-long pursuit. In this regard, you are a work in progress, on the way, *homo viator*, a person en route. Here are a few ideas and exercises intended to be tools for your journey. **Bon Voyage!**

Is Life's Journey taking you many places? Would you like to *Stay Connected* to your volunteer service no matter where you go?

If so, we can send you *Staying Connected* via e-mail (in PDF format), so that no matter where you go, you won't ever miss an issue. Just drop us a line at stayingconnected@pallotticenter.org

What's Your Travel Style?

Travel can be a great aid for your ongoing growth and development. But it takes reflection and discernment. We encourage you to consider your "travel style" and hope you find this survey interesting and helpful.

Background: Many formers have limited travel experience while others have traveled extensively to volunteer, go to school, and visit family and friends. Regardless of the extent, each person has a personal approach to travel which sometimes is unarticulated but is always important. Some use travel primarily to escape the daily grind, while others eagerly search out new cultures. Some avoid the local people; others seek them out. Here is an unscientific survey and suggestions to help you discern your travel style and discover new possibilities.

Survey Directions: For each statement, answer with a 'Y' for **yes** or an 'N' for **no**.

1. I enjoy seeing the world through my own eyes rather than using local guides. (___)
2. When I travel I like to begin each day with a clean slate and then do what comes naturally. (___)
3. Most foreigners know some English so I don't need to learn other languages. (___)
4. To decide on a travel schedule beforehand takes the fun out of a trip. (___)
5. For me, the whole point of a vacation is to avoid everyday life and veg out. (___)

6. When I travel, I do not prefer to follow guidebook suggestions for where to eat, stay, etc. (___)
7. When overseas, I prefer to stay in American hotels/communities. (___)
8. The best trips are those for which I have no expectations. (___)
9. My primary purpose for travel has little to do with learning about the people or place I'm visiting. (___)
10. Before a trip, I rarely read about or study the destination. (___)

Scoring: The survey generates two sub-scores, each of which can be illustrated along its respective sub-score line below, namely on the: 1) embracing/escaping continuum, or the 2) spontaneous/planning continuum. Give yourself 2 points for each 'yes' answer to questions 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9, a zero for each 'no.' Then add your points for your sub-score for the first continuum, and mark your score on that dotted line below. Then give yourself 2 points for each 'no' answer to questions 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10, and zero points for each 'yes.' Add these five for your total score on the second continuum and mark your score on that line below.

- 1) Embracing _____ Escaping
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 2) Spontaneous _____ Planning
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(continued on page 2)

Calling All Travelers...

Are you looking for ideas for your next adventure? Need help planning your next trip? Check out these resources.

The Travel Guides You Can't Do Without

Frommers, www.frommers.com - Don't forget to sign up for their free newsletter!

Lonely Planet, www.lonelyplanet.com - To talk with other travelers, visit their online forum, "Thorn Tree".

Let's Go Travel Guides, www.letsgo.com - Check out their Alternatives to Tourism chapter found in each guide.

www.familytravelguides.com - Travel tips covering everything from safety to what food to pack.

World Travel Sites

World 66, www.world66.com - "the travel guide you write"

The Backpacker, www.thebackpacker.net .

Journey Woman: The Premier Travel Resource for Women, www.journeywoman.com .

Pilgrimages / group travel sites

Catholic Travel Centre, www.gocatholictravel.com

- Specializes in religious, group travel.

A & E Travel, www.aetvtravel.com - Tours/pilgrimages that mirror A & E programming from the History Channel. Choose from a theme, location, or create your own.

Student Travel sites

STA Travel, www.statravel.com - Includes volunteer abroad and work abroad resources as well as hostel info.

www.studyabroad.com .

-- Want to stay connected to travel, but don't always have the time and/or money to do it? Here are some ways you can take advantage of online resources as a means of exploring the world.

Travel stories / travel writers

Global Travel Writers, www.globaltravelwriters.com .

Bill Bryson is a renowned travel writer. To find out more, check out www.randomhouse.com/features/billbryson/flat/home.php .

Travel TV Shows

PBS features several travel themed shows.

Here are a few:

Globe Trekker, www.pilotguides.com/tv_shows/globe_trekker .

GlobalTribes, www.pbs.org/kcet/globaltribe - "GlobalTribes is a PBS series that combines the spirit of travel with a meaningful exploration of global issues."

(continued from page 1)

Interpretation and Suggestions: To identify your Embracing/Escaping score, use only the odd numbered questions. If you scored 8 or 10, look up the word 'xenophobic' and then ask yourself: What benefits do I get from avoiding learning about other cultures? What might I be missing? If you received a 0 or 2, ask yourself: Where does my openness to other cultures come from? Family upbringing? Personal experiences?

To identify your Spontaneous/Planning continuum, use only the even numbered questions. If you scored 0 or 2, look up the word 'anticipate' and then ask yourself: What benefits do I get from being spontaneous? What am I missing by not doing more planning? If you received a 8 or 10, ask yourself: Where does my planning ability come from? Family upbringing? Personal experiences?

For further reflection: The two pairs of opposites above, 'embracing-escaping' and 'spontaneous-planning,' are but two of the many tensions you can use to discern your travel style. Here are a few more to help you evaluate your preferences.

- Am I more into the history of travel destinations or their present situation?
- Do I prefer traveling with companions or exploring by myself?
- Am I more into nature and camping or into cities and hotels?
- Are my travels more about tourism? Religious exploration? Other reasons?

Join the Network of Former Volunteers!

There are some 40,000+ former volunteers from Catholic-based lay volunteer programs out there. What better way to build on your volunteer experience than to establish contact with other former volunteers! That's why the Pallotti Center invites you to become part of our **Network of Former Volunteers**. Our purpose for setting up this free resource for formers, and for recently converting it into a nationwide listserv, is to provide former volunteers and lay missionaries with an easier method of sharing information and supporting one another.

Whether you have just finished your term of service or you have been a former volunteer for years, the Network can assist you in linking with other former volunteers who live in your area, served where you served, work in your field, or share similar interests. Through the Network, you can lend and obtain assistance in relocating to a new area, be linked to social gatherings, discussion or prayer groups, and connect with employment leads and contacts.

Formers share a special bond based upon their unique experiences as full-time volunteers. Meeting and networking among formers is a great way to incorporate your volunteer experience into your post-volunteer life. We'd love to help you do that – so join the Network of Former Volunteers! Go to http://www.pallotticenter.org/Former/network_of_former_volunteers.htm to sign up today!

Journey Through Journaling

The average person can set out on a journey for many reasons, such as visiting friends/family, vacationing, graduating, emigrating to a new country, changing jobs, etc. But sometimes journeys are based less on external events and more on the traveler's interior vision. For example, when travelers search for meaning, fulfillment or wholeness, their trip becomes a quest. When they head for a sacred place, their journey becomes a pilgrimage. But there is also another type of journey.

According to the Trappist monk and author Thomas Merton, "Our real journey in life is interior; it is a matter of growth, deepening, and of an ever greater surrender to the creative action of life and grace in our hearts."

- How would you describe your 'real journey' in life?
- What seems to stir your heart and engage your creativity?
- What are some ways in which you experience buoyancy or grace in your life?

The ancient philosopher Confucius noted, if you are on an interior journey, it "does not matter how slowly you go, so long as you do not stop." This quote highlights the importance of staying directed toward a goal, no matter what the process of getting there may look like. Try to free yourself from the pressure of societal expectations that you should achieve your goals based on society's benchmarks.

- What, then, is the overall goal or direction toward which you are headed?
- To what extent are you comfortable with this direction?
- If you want to change, in which direction would you go?

Questing With Questions

Asking questions can help you to focus on your quest. What are the questions that you find yourself coming back to? Write them down along with the responses you've come up with to the questions included here.

To what extent...

- ... are you asking questions about your own spiritual development? Who are you called to become? What are you called to do with your life?
- ... are your questions about relationships? Career choices?
- ... are your questions philosophical, about life-after-death? God? Evil? Human suffering? Hope?

Further thoughts: Do you have the feeling you are making your life's journey alone or do you feel you have company? Sometimes journeys go better when there's a guide. Do you have one? Several? Jesus said: I am the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). To what extent is Jesus contributing to your journey, quest or spiritual pilgrimage? Journey on!

Former Volunteer Sightings in Chicago & Milwaukee

Here's what some formers have told us about: Milwaukee

Parishes formers like include **Three Holy Women** (see threeholymen.org for details), **Ss. Peter and Paul**, at 2490 N. Cramer, and **St. Benedict the Moor** at 924 W. State, whose Community Meal for the homeless and hungry is largest and oldest in Milwaukee; to volunteer elsewhere, visit volunteermilwaukee.org. // Milwaukee's **Irish Fest** is the biggest in the world; learn more about this and many other festivals at summerfest.com and onmilwaukee.com. // The Racine Dominicans have a tremendous variety of retreat opportunities at their **Siena Center**; learn more at racinedominicans.org. // **The Downtown Bookstore** at 327 E. Wisconsin has tons of books in good shape at cheap prices. // **Alterra on the Lake**, at the foot of Lafayette Hill, is a cool coffee shop with a great view of Lake Michigan. // **The Up and Under** at 1216 E. Brady has open mic on Thursdays, and **Hot Water** at 1st and National has free dancing every night. // **The Gig** (Wright St.) and **The Uptowner** (Humboldt) are great local pubs with cheap beer.

Chicago

Opportunities to meet like-minded individuals include the **Eighth Day Center**, 8thdaycenter.org; the **Young Nonprofit Professionals Network**, ynpnchicago.org; and intentional communities like the **Stone Soup Co-op**, at 4637 N. Ashland, and the **Su Casa Catholic Worker House** at 5045 S Laflin St. // For worship, formers recommend the **Sheil Catholic Center** at Northwestern U., **Old St. Pat's** downtown, and the **Taize Prayer at Ascension Catholic Church** in Oak Park, each first Friday at 7:30. // The Jesuits' **Charis Retreats**, jesuits.net/charis, are well regarded, as is the the Racine Dominican's **Siena Center** (see above). // For volunteer opportunities check out the **Friends First Mentoring Program** at Mercy Home for Boys and Girls, mercyhome.org; the **Interfaith Youth Corps**, ifyc.org; and npo.net, which also lists job openings. // Neighborhoods formers like include **Lincoln Square**, **Hyde Park**, **Ukrainian Village**, and **Wicker Park**. // For events and other Chicagoland info, go to metromix.com and chicagoreader.com.

Look for our Profile of **The St. Louis/Kansas City Area** in the Next Issue of *Staying Connected*
If you know of resources in the St. Louis/Kansas City area that no volunteer should be without, let us know!

staying connected

In This Issue:

A survey to help you reflect on your travel style, resources for all sorts of travel plans, former volunteer sightings in the Chicago/Milwaukee area, and more!



The Saint Vincent Pallotti Center
for Apostolic Development
415 Michigan Ave., N.E.
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AFFIRMING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES NOURISHES YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Anyone who has volunteered across town or across an ocean probably crossed into another culture. One key to your personal development is whether or not you recognized the new culture's different values, expectations, expressions of faith and ritual celebrations. How could you not, you ask? Well, by denial, for instance. The idea that "deep down, we're all the same," although partly true, can also be a mantra for minimizing significant differences between cultures. The person who emphasizes "we're all the same" is vulnerable to missing important cultural differences and would be less likely to affirm the values of one's own and the other's culture.

On the other hand, leaders, by recognizing the differences, are better poised to evaluate, negotiate, and decide how to adapt and work within the new culture. Remember, leadership is all about awareness, decision-making, and implementation. Here are some ideas to help you explore ways of building on your early experiences, or, if needed, challenging yourself to grow in new directions. Either way, you'll be making an important difference.

- As a former volunteer or missionary, think back on your initial cross-cultural experiences. List some of the cultural differences that initially struck you.
- How did you respond to the cross-cultural challenges? Did you tend to minimize or recognize the differences? Or, for you, was it a mix of each?
- To what extent have you revised your thinking or made any new decisions about the people of the culture you encountered? About yourself? How did your perspective change?
- When you reflect on your current work and/or social experiences, which of those, if any, support your becoming more comfortable with other cultures? Which, if any, provoke a feeling of discomfort? What are the contributing factors?

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

The St. Vincent Pallotti Center for Apostolic Development Editors: Andrew Thompson, Jennifer Taylor and Mark J. Torma Production Editor: Mark J. Torma
Advisors: Kristelle Angelli, Anita Saira Morawski and Joan Smith. E-mail: stayingconnected@pallotticenter.org Webpage: www.pallotticenter.org

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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, St. Louis and Oakland, CA. 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.