



THE ST. VINCENT PALLOTTI CENTER

Inspiring volunteer service,
strengthening faith and community

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MORE ABOUT OUR MISSION AND LOGO:

The Pallotti Center's mission is to work with individuals before, during and after their volunteer and mission service. The three images in our logo - the heart, handshake, and infinity cross - generally correspond with all three phases, but each image also reflects a specific aspect of each of the phases.

- For the “before” phase, the **heart** represents the love which serves to motivate the volunteer and mission service. The love is the epoxy which not only strengthens the resolve of the prospective volunteers and missionaries, but also helps them live together in a harmonious community.
- The “during” phase is represented by the **handshake of collaboration**, the characteristic spirit prevailing among current volunteers and missionaries during their period of service. This spirit of equality and partnership animates the way volunteers and missionaries work with others, with respect for each person, where there is no hint of being condescending toward anyone.
- The “after” phase is represented by the **infinity cross** which expresses the dynamic outward direction, whereby the former volunteer or missionary takes God's love and spreads its effects throughout the four corners of the earth. This is called reverse mission, when the alumni return home, sharing their expanded vision wherever they go.

The "What's Next?" Notebook

May 2010 Edition

A Former Volunteers' Guide
To Living Through Times of Transition



This notebook addresses issues regarding the post-service stage of volunteering. It is a recommended tool for volunteers and missionaries concluding their terms of service.



THE ST. VINCENT
PALLOTTI CENTER

The people who bring you the *Connections*
Directory of Volunteer Opportunities

www.pallotticenter.org

Find the Help You Deserve

Go to: www.pallotticenter.org

Our website is filled with helpful resources and links specifically designed for former volunteers... like you!

There, you will be able to get in touch with other former volunteers, find out about housing opportunities, and sign up for the **Job Bank**. Nurture your idealism by reading the *Staying Connected* newsletter for former volunteers, or find out about great resources in the **Resources in Your Area** section... anywhere in the U.S.! Become a member of the **Network of Former Volunteers**, and learn about upcoming events for "formers" too! More detailed information about these resources can be found on pages 26 and 27.

The mission of the St. Vincent Pallotti Center is to inspire volunteer service through Catholic-based organizations. We support prospective volunteers during their exploration of service opportunities, strengthen the personal and spiritual development of volunteers while they serve, and assist former volunteers to stay connected to their ideals and their communities. The Center takes its inspiration from St. Vincent Pallotti (1795-1850), who believed passionately in the laity, in each person as being an image of God and as called to have a missionary heart.

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The "What's Next?" Notebook occasionally uses language which reflects its Roman Catholic origins and traditions. We encourage those not familiar with such terms, e.g. "parish" or "laity" to translate them into the broader Christian context, such as "local church-based community" and "the non-ordained and those without religious vows," respectively.

Patient Trust in Ourselves and in the Slow Work of God

Above all, trust in the slow work of God.
We are, quite naturally, impatient in everything
to reach the end without delay.
We should like to skip the intermediate stages.
We are impatient of being on the way
to something unknown,
something new.
And yet it is the law of all progress that it is made
by passing through some stages of instability,
and that it may take a very long time.

And so, I think, it is with you.
Your ideas mature gradually. Let them grow.
Let them shape themselves without undue haste.
Don't try to force them on
as though you could be today what time
-that is to say- grace
and circumstances
acting on your own good will
will make you tomorrow.
Only God could say what this new spirit
gradually forming within you will be.

Give our Lord the benefit of believing
that his hand is leading you,
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself
in suspense and incomplete.
Above all, trust in the slow work of God,
our loving vine-dresser.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.

ABOUT THE PALLOTTI CENTER (continued...)

Also, we provide former volunteers with an opportunity to connect through the *Network of Former Volunteers*. Through this national Network, which operates in the form of a listserv, former volunteers from the many programs can be connected in order to 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. If you are moving to a new area and want to meet formers who are living there and/or get help finding a job or a place to live, the Network can help. The Network is very helpful in finding a psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually supportive group of people who have had similar experiences and share an interest in service, spirituality, social justice, etc. For new former volunteers who are looking for someone who has been through the transition experience and who can share some of their wisdom and tips, the Network is the place to find them. You can add yourself to the Network by contacting the Pallotti Center (formervolunteer@pallotticenter.org or 877-VOL-LINK) or by filling out the Network form in the "Former Volunteers" section of our website, www.pallotticenter.org. We also provide local interactive listservs in these areas: California; Washington, DC/Baltimore, MD; Philadelphia, PA; New York, NY; and Chicago, IL. You can sign up for these when you sign up for the Network.

The Pallotti Center provides an extensive listing of *Resources in Your Area*. We've compiled a list of monthly former volunteer gatherings, parishes where current and former volunteers attend, retreat opportunities, former volunteers who are willing to be local contact persons for other formers, spirituality centers, peace and justice organizations, local part-time volunteer opportunities, and other valuable resources. Go to www.pallotticenter.org, and click on "Resources in Your Area."

Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions regarding these services.

~ **The St. Vincent Pallotti Center Staff**

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Introduction

Dear Volunteer or Lay Missioner,

Congratulations! You are about to complete or have recently completed your volunteer commitment. Undoubtedly your volunteer experience was filled with both good and hard experiences, times of pain, times of joy and times of growth. You have grown professionally, personally and spiritually. Now it's time to look back on all that has happened and figure out what it all means.

It is also time to look forward and ask yourself, "What's next?" and "What do I want now: More training? A new vocation? A return to my previous career plans? How do I incorporate my volunteer experience into the rest of my life?"

This "What's Next?" Notebook is designed to assist and guide you as you make some of these decisions. There are several resources available to you as you set out on the next stage of your journey. This booklet will point you toward many of these resources, and perhaps give you some new ideas.

This time of transition contains exciting opportunities for creativity and growth. You have the freedom to make decisions that will alter the rest of your life. With prayer, careful thought and thorough preparation, it can be a very rewarding time. The Pallotti Center staff, along with the staff of your volunteer program, is available to assist you in this transition.

We suggest you contact us by phone at 1-877-VOL-LINK or visit us on the web (www.pallotticenter.org) to learn about our **Job Bank**, our **Network of Former Volunteers**, and our free publication *Staying Connected*, which is written specifically for former volunteers and covers issues of post-volunteer life.

Thank you for the contributions you have made as a volunteer. May the next steps of your journey be rich and rewarding for you. Blessings to you!

- The Pallotti Center Staff

How to Use "The Notebook"

We suggest that you use the Notebook in this way.

- 1) Familiarize yourself with the contents of the booklet.
- 2) Work through the information about "**Transitions**" (pp. 2-4).
- 3) Give yourself two solid hours to complete "**A Re-Entry Self-Evaluation**" (pp. 5-8).

Utilizing the "What's Next?" Notebook will provide you with an excellent opportunity to focus your thoughts and give you some new ideas before you begin the practical work of re-entry.

ABOUT THE PALLOTTI CENTER



Who We Are: The St. Vincent Pallotti Center for Apostolic Development was established in 1984 to develop lay volunteer ministry. The Center is named after Saint Vincent Pallotti, founder of the religious order of Pallottines, who believe that all people are called to be apostles.

What We Do: The Pallotti Center connects individuals with volunteer programs across the country. Our annual *Connections* publication lists information on almost 100 volunteer programs both in the United States and overseas. These programs involve people like yourself in using your gifts to help others in need. If you're considering volunteering again, contact us and we'll send you a free copy of *Connections*, or check it out online at www.pallotticenter.org.

For those volunteers "in the field" we provide *Shared Visions*. This free publication nurtures the spiritual formation and skills of volunteers and missionaries. You can check out past issues on our website, www.pallotticenter.org, in the "Current Volunteers" section.

For former volunteers, we produce the *Staying Connected* newsletter. This free publication is intended to help "formers" stay in touch with the values and ideas encountered while volunteering. Each issue focuses on an aspect of volunteering and how this can apply to life after service. You can add yourself to the mailing list (either online at our website, www.pallotticenter.org, by calling us at 1-877-VOL-LINK, or by emailing us at stayingconnected@pallotticenter.org) or read it online at www.pallotticenter.org/StayingConnected.

Looking for work? The Pallotti Center's Job Bank might be the thing for you! The Job Bank, another free service for former volunteers, consists of a starter kit containing articles, resources, and strategies for career discernment and job searching and a weekly email of job announcements we send to interested former volunteers. You can sign up for the weekly emails on our website (www.pallotticenter.org, click on "Job Bank"), by calling us at 1-877-VOL-LINK, or by emailing us at jobbank@pallotticenter.org.

Getting Involved in Your Community

In all your “busy”ness in the Church, don’t forget to get involved in your local community! Christian voices and Christian commitment are greatly needed in every community -- in the political arena, in the school system, in hospitals, in nursing homes -- everywhere.

How can you get involved?

Keep up with social issues. Find out what you can do to promote justice in your town. What issues affect ethnic, racial, and sexual minorities? What is being done to assist the poor, the elderly, the disenfranchised? What is being done to promote respect for life and respect for the family? How are children being cared for? How can you help make a difference in your town?

What about helping out in non-Church related charities in your area? You could contact your local Volunteer Action Center, Hands On chapter, or Volunteer Clearinghouse. Many cities and counties have centers which can be contacted for local referrals. You can also find opportunities at www.volunteermatch.org.

Finally, what can you do at the most basic of local levels-- your own neighborhood? What can you do to pull the neighborhood together, to assist others in becoming committed to peace and justice as a neighborhood? What about starting a neighborhood cooperative -- buying food in bulk and then dividing it among the participants? How about taking on some charitable project as a neighborhood?

It all makes a difference.

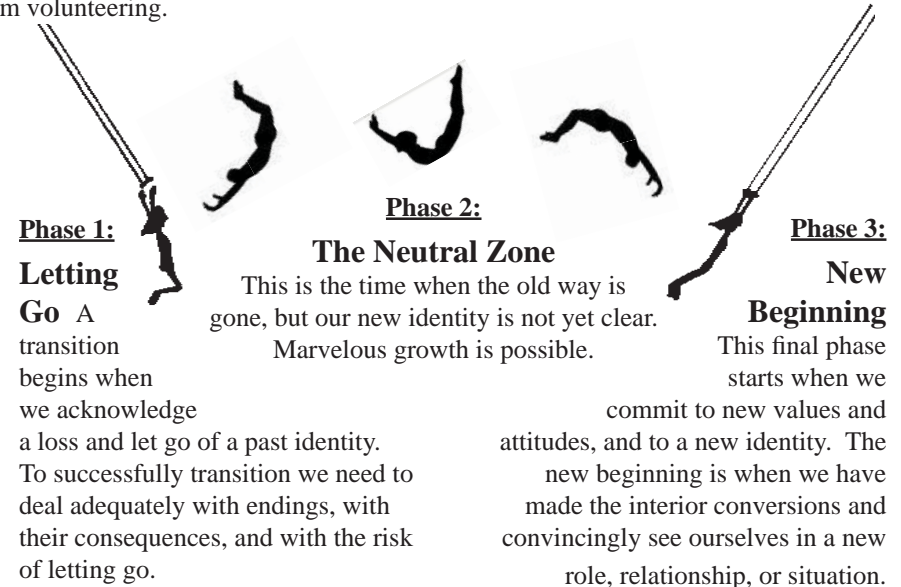
"I hope that you come to find that which gives life meaning for you. Something worth living for - maybe even worth dying for. Something that energizes you, enthuses you..."

Ita Ford

Letter from El Salvador to her niece
Ita was killed in El Salvador Dec. 2, 1980

Transitions

Leaving a volunteer placement and community is a major transition. William Bridges, a renowned transitions expert, presents a framework for understanding transition that may be helpful to you in understanding and making your transition. He makes an important distinction between change and transition. Change occurs outside of us, e.g., leaving a volunteer community or starting a new job. Transition is the internal adjustment we make as change occurs. Each change we experience must be accompanied by a transition in how we think and feel about ourselves, others, our priorities and actions. Below we present Bridges' ideas about the three phases of transition, and suggest skills you may find helpful in making the transition from volunteering.



A Closer Look...



...at "Letting Go"

What's at Risk: Failure to let go could...

- lead to a subsequent disabling, chronic, or unexplainable sense of loss.
- foster the development of unhealthy attachment to living in the past.
- delay consideration of new possibilities.

What's Possible: Letting go...

- allows us to better handle the grief caused by the loss/change.
- helps us, following a loss, to face the uncertainty of the Neutral Zone.
- gives us a chance to grow in new ways.
- allows us to more aptly consider the new possibilities in the Neutral Zone.

Suggestions for Letting Go:

Develop a clear picture of what is actually going to change.

Be honest about what you are really losing, including losses that are obscured by the obvious loss.

Allow yourself time to grieve.

Discern ways to compensate for the loss.

Define clearly what's over and what's not.

Mark or celebrate the ending.

Honor the past rather than denigrate it.

Give yourself a piece of the past to carry forward.

Be open to new understandings and values connected with the new beginning to which you are transitioning.

...at the "Neutral Zone"

What's at Risk: During this time...

- old weaknesses can re-emerge.
- we can become stagnant in self-doubt.
- instead of pursuing new possibilities productively, we may expend our energy by simply coping.

What's Possible: This is a time when...

- through creativity, we can experience breakthroughs, rather than breakdowns.
- we can break out of the false belief that whatever is, is right.
- discovery, innovation and personal enhancement are most possible.



Suggestions for the Neutral Zone:

Recognize that the journey from one identity to another is hard and takes time.

Expect ambiguity and confusion.

Resist premature closure on a decision.

Understand that this is a time of enormous change that needs to be managed.

Ask questions, seek new solutions and new identities.

Be creative; explore new and unusual ways of getting things done. Use both sides of the brain; shift perspectives.

Re-define / Re-orient yourself; use the uncertainties of the Neutral Zone as opportunities for creative growth.

Give yourself realistic, short-term objectives; keep track of good ideas.

Embrace setbacks and losses as entry points for new solutions.

- Get involved in a prayer group. Choose from groups for young adults, charismatic groups, social justice-oriented groups and others. Find one that suits you and your prayer style, or start your own!
- Join or form a Bible study group in your parish.
- Find out what is happening on the ecumenical scene in your area. There is nothing like praying together to unify various Christian groups. You may decide to explore other prayer groups. The wisdom of other traditions can enrich your Christian spirituality.
- Contact the Pallotti Center to receive *Staying Connected*, a publication for former volunteers to reflect on issues and concerns about post-volunteer life, values and choices.
- Find a spiritual director. Often vocations directors or young adult ministry staff will have information on spiritual directors available in your area. This may be a priest, religious or lay person. A spiritual director must be carefully chosen: his or her style should suit yours, and she or he must be able to challenge you in such a way that you grow by spending time with the person. It can be a difficult search, but certainly a rewarding one.

Participating in a Faith Community

In the Catholic Church, many activities go on at the diocesan level and many more go on at the ecumenical level. Why not find out what your diocese has to offer?

Important sources to check out are the Office of Young Adult Ministry, Catholic Community Services (or Catholic Charities), the Office for Engaged or Marriage Encounter, the Christian Family Movement, and whatever else catches your eye.

You might want to check out other Christian denominations in your area. What are the Lutherans doing? The Mennonites? The Episcopalians? The Presbyterians and the Methodists? Keep an ear open; ask your friends who are involved in other churches. Very often, work for social justice and peace is done on an ecumenical level.



Other programs are surely already happening in your parish, and you might want to lend a hand. It is an excellent way to get to know others as well as to make a difference in your community.

- Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion/Lector
- Religious Education (Catechist)
- RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults)
- Youth or Young Adult Ministry
- Parish Council
- Bible Study
- Day Care Program
- Social Justice Committee
- Parish Outreach Programs (may include food/shelter programs, community involvement or organizing, etc.)
- Programs for the Mentally and Physically Challenged
- Music Ministry
- Ministry to the Sick
- Liturgy Committee
- Special Study Groups
- Programs with Immigrants and/or Refugees
- AIDS/Hospice Outreach
- Interfaith Dialogue Committee
- Separated and Divorced Ministry

Ministry to and by your own parish family could be a wonderful way to put your talents and energy to work. Remember that change comes from within. Why not commit to heightening awareness and making change?

Nurturing Your Post-Service Spirituality

One reason people often cite for becoming volunteers is to grow spiritually. The volunteer experience is in many ways uniquely suited to such growth. After the growth you experienced as a volunteer, you may be wondering how you can continue to have access to opportunities for such experiences once you return from your volunteer commitment. Consider the following suggestions:

- Become involved in workshops and retreats offered in your area. Get on the mailing lists of local retreat houses and read your diocesan newspaper or bulletin.
- Find out if a lay formation program exists in your diocese. If not, see if others are interested in pioneering one.

...at the "New Beginning"



What's at Risk: New beginnings can...

- reactivate the old anxieties associated with the ending of the old way.
- trigger memories of past failures and their associated loss of self-esteem.
- frighten us because they call for a new commitment.

What's Possible: We can experience...

- a strong sense of confidence that we know who we are.
- a celebration of having made a successful transition.
- a sense of well-being with where we are in our lives and where we are going.

Suggestions for a New Beginning:

Recognize that, while the start of an external change follows the timing of a preset schedule, beginnings follow the timing of the mind and heart.

Stay focused. Keep in mind the purpose of your transition. Think about the ways the start of the external change is different from the beginning of your new identity.

Give yourself quick successes, even if small, for they are affirming.

Create a mental picture of the new beginning; use symbols of the new identity to reinforce it.

Celebrate the successful beginning at the end of a transition. Reward yourself for having accomplished the transition. Have fun!

One day, I was sitting with Rodleigh, the leader of the troupe, in his caravan, talking about flying. He said, "As a flyer, I must have complete trust in my catcher. The public might think that I am the greatest star of the trapeze, but the real star is Joe, my catcher. He has to be there for me with split-second precision and grab me out of the air as I come to him in the long jump."

"How does it work?" I asked.

"The secret," Rodleigh said, "is that the flyer does nothing and the catcher does everything: when I fly to Joe, I have simply to stretch out my arms and hands and wait for him to catch me and pull me safely over the apron behind the catchbar."

"You do nothing?" I said, surprised.

"Nothing," Rodleigh repeated. "A flyer must fly, and a catcher must catch, and the flyer must trust, with outstretched arms, that his catcher will be there for him."

When Rodleigh said this with so much conviction, the words of Jesus flashed through my mind: "Father into your hands I commend my Spirit." Dying is trusting in the catcher. To care for the dying is to say, "Don't be afraid. Remember that you are the beloved child of God. He will be there when you make your long jump. Don't try to grab him; he will grab you. Just stretch out your arms and hands and trust, trust, trust."

Henri J. M. Nouwen

Our Greatest Gift: A Meditation On Dying And Caring

Returning

A Re-Entry Self Evaluation

Allow us to assist you in evaluating your volunteer experience and in planning for the future. You will discover that the re-entry process is ongoing; it is very likely that the issues that come up as you evaluate your volunteer experience will surface again at a later time. Some of the following questions will assist you in making career choices, and others will assist you in lifestyle and personal choices.

These questions are intended to be thought-provoking and to facilitate reflection on issues that may arise as you complete your experience as a volunteer. We suggest that you record your thoughts and answers in your journal or another permanent location. Find a quiet spot, take your time and enjoy this opportunity to appreciate your experience as you begin to look toward the future.

Questions To Help You With Your Professional Skills

1. What did you do professionally as a volunteer? Write a brief job description, emphasizing tasks done and specific skills required. What skills did you acquire? Specifically, what are you proud of? What did you enjoy?
2. Beginning with your current position, list both volunteer and paid experiences, and skills you gained through those experiences. For example, you may have skills with the young, the elderly, the sick, or the homeless. You may have taught, edited a newsletter, or counseled a client. Which of these skills did you enjoy using? How could you use them in the future?
3. What skills and talents that you developed as a volunteer would you like to continue to develop? How could you do this?
4. If you could create your ideal job, what would it be? What further experience or training would it take? How could you get that training or experience?

Children's Defense Fund, www.childrensdefense.org
25 E St., NW, Washington, DC 20001

NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, www.networklobby.org
25 E Street NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20001-1630

Pax Christi USA, www.paxchristiusa.org
532 West 8th Street., Erie, PA 16502-1343

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, www.usccb.org
3211 Fourth St. NE, Washington DC 20017

Office of Social Development & World Peace, www.usccb.org/sdwp

Catholic Campaign for Human Development, www.usccb.org/cchd

Free social justice information:

Center of Concern- Center Focus

www.coc.org

Blueprint for Social Justice

www.loyno.edu/twomey/blueprint

Houston Catholic Worker Newspaper

www.cjd.org

Woodstock Theological Center - Woodstock Report

www.georgetown.edu/centers/woodstock

Remember that the Christian life is one of action, not of speech and daydreams. Let there be few words and many deeds, and let them be done well.

- St. Vincent Pallotti



Participating in Parish Life

As you have undoubtedly discovered, participation in your local parish is the backbone of participation in the Church. The parish is “your” community, in some sense a real family. Like all families, parishes have their problems and disagreements; like families, they also have their times of joy and celebration. They have their leaders and their followers, their doers and their thinkers.

Following is a list of groups, needs and programs which may or may not exist in your parish. Some ideas only need the right person to bring them to life -- and that person might be you.

Promoting Social Justice

Often, volunteer positions are directly related to promoting social justice. Thus, many volunteers return from their experience with a heightened awareness of the social and economic injustices which exist in our imperfect world.

Fortunately, there are several options available to you. Branches of organizations such as Bread for the World and Amnesty International exist in many areas. Some dioceses have Social Justice Offices. Quite a few of the programs run by Catholic Charities or Catholic Social Services are concerned with social justice.

In addition, many parishes have groups which concern themselves with social justice. If yours doesn't, perhaps you could organize one. This can be a way of raising the consciousness of the staff and parishioners of your parish, as well as promoting social justice in your community.

Some organizations which could use your help include:

Bread For the World, www.bread.org
50 F Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20001

Amnesty International, www.amnesty.org
5 Penn Plaza, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10001

Center of Concern, www.coc.org
1225 Otis, NE, Washington DC 20017

Sojourners/Call to Renewal
3333 14th St., NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20010
sojourners@sojo.net www.sojo.net



Questions To Help You With Your Personal Choices

1. How have your personal goals changed or developed since you began your volunteer experience? What are your personal goals now? For the next five years? How can you move toward your goals?
2. What has helped you to grow as a volunteer? How can you incorporate these things into your life once you leave your volunteer placement site?
3. What people supported you as a volunteer? How have they contributed to you? How would you like to acknowledge them? What sort of relationship would you like to maintain with them? How can you best do this?
4. What have you learned about working in a group? How do you work in a group? Are you usually a participant, a leader, or an observer? In the future, how can you use this information about yourself?
5. What have you learned about how you respond to and give criticism? How would you like to grow in this area?
6. How easy/difficult has it been for you to share your volunteer experience with your friends and family? What would you like to share with them? How can you do this?
7. How easy/difficult has it been for you to share your faith with others? What growth have you noticed in yourself in this area?
8. As a volunteer, how have you developed your listening skills? How can you continue to do this?
9. As a volunteer, how have you developed your organizational skills -- both personally and professionally? Have you found structure to be helpful or confining?
10. How idealistic/realistic are you? How has your volunteer experience influenced this?
11. What have you left undone as a volunteer? How can you be at peace with what is undone?
12. As a volunteer, what opportunities have you had to learn more about yourself? What have you learned? How can you continue to know yourself better?



Questions To Help You With Your Lifestyle Choices

1. What have you discovered about success? For you, what is "success?"
2. What have you discovered about your relationship to material possessions and status?
3. What have you learned about your judgments of other people? On what do you base your assessments?
4. How flexible are you? How do you respond to new and unexpected twists in plans? How do you react to unusual or unexpected requests?
5. What have you discovered about your ability to live with others? What did you like? What did you not like? Would you do it again? What would you look for in a community?
6. What have you found out about your need for privacy? What have you found out about your need for personal time (i.e., vacation, retreats, days off, quiet time)? How can you accommodate these needs in the future?
7. What have you learned about your ability to take orders? To give orders? To manage others? To be managed?
8. By becoming a volunteer, you chose a path uncommon to many. How do you feel about being a role model? How do you feel about having your lifestyle under scrutiny?
9. What has it been like to live on very little? How do you feel being on the receiving end of others' generosity?
10. What has being a volunteer meant to you?

Questions To Help You With Your Service Choices

1. What has ministry/service meant to you? How has your volunteer experience shaped this?
2. What have you learned about being a lay person in the Church?
3. How has your volunteer experience affected your relationship with God?
4. How has your prayer life/spiritual journey changed?
5. What place do you want service to have in your future? What do you want to contribute to your community, family, or local church? How can you do that?

Intentional Community

You realize, of course, that you have been living a "countercultural lifestyle" as a volunteer. It may be that you are interested in continuing this experiment in Christian living. How can you go about this?

Catholic adults, young and old, single and married -- sometimes even with children -- are living in small Christian communities and sharing living space. This may be something that you are interested in, too. Community living is a challenge both to establish and to maintain, but the results might be just what you are looking for. Often you can find other interested parties among former volunteers in your community (either through the Pallotti Center's Network, through your volunteer program, or online at www.ic.org). Once you have found a group, you need to make some crucial decisions together. It is very important that you set ground rules and make certain decisions before you move in together. Although misunderstandings will still arise, discussing some issues beforehand could make things much easier in the long run. Issues worth discussing include:

- Division of household tasks
- Common meals
- Common prayer
- Affiliation with some local religious community
- Community time
- Communication
- Guests, new members
- Other house rules and ways to discuss them if problems arise.
- Bills, finances

You can probably think of other issues that may come about -- issues that came up for you as a volunteer. You may need to take into account that some of the issues were already handled for you by those in charge of your program. Think about how you might handle these issues in a community that does not have a program director.

Alternatives also are available. You may find such a community already exists. In this case, it is still important to discuss the same issues with members of the community -- interview your community at least as carefully as you would a new job. You can discover already existing and forming intentional communities at www.ic.org.

One such community that may already exist in your town is a Catholic Worker House. Founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, the Catholic Worker Movement has loosely-affiliated communities across the country. For more information contact **The Catholic Worker**, www.catholicworker.org. This website has a directory of 185 Catholic Worker locations throughout the U.S. and overseas.

Choosing a Career



Are you interested in choosing a career? In this section we provide some ideas for working in the nonprofit sector, the for-profit sector, the government and the Church.

Working in the Nonprofit Sector

Nonprofit organizations include a wide variety of organizations – ecumenical, denominational, and secular. These organizations vary tremendously, but they have in common the primary purpose of providing some sort of service to the community rather than to being a profit-making enterprise. They are usually run by a director, a paid staff, and a board of directors, and often have the help of committed volunteers as well. Nonprofits are concerned with issues as diverse as hunger, the arts, domestic violence, and the environment.

Almost any professional skill, talent, or interest can find an outlet in the nonprofit sector. This, of course, varies according to the mission and work of each organization, but almost any skill needed in the fields of social justice or human services can find a place. In addition to this, organizations in the nonprofit sector need good fundraisers, managers, public relations professionals, and, often, volunteer coordinators.

Nonprofits are excellent places to make a difference in the community while learning about an area of interest to you. They are also excellent places for you to learn new skills, while using ones you have already developed as a volunteer. Nonprofits are not just “training” grounds; there are many excellent professional career opportunities and many people have fulfilling life-long careers in the nonprofit sector.

Pax Christi Prayer

Lord, when you broke bread with two disciples at Emmaus you made scales fall from their eyes and they recognized you. Come to us now and enlighten the eyes of our mind to the reality of your risen presence and to the needs of others.

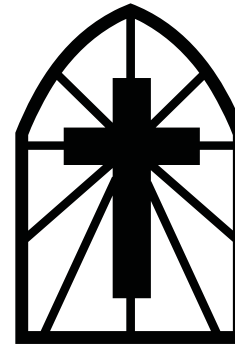
www.paxchristi.org

Pursuit of each of these degrees requires a good deal of time as well as money. Although it may be difficult for lay persons to get financial aid for these programs, it is not impossible. Often research will turn up possible sources of scholarships, including diocesan grants (sometimes available in connection with previous work done in the diocese and a commitment to future work in the diocese).

See www.usccb.org/laity/laymin/faq.shtml.

Information on diocesan seminaries is frequently available through the Vocations Office of the diocese. A list of "former friendly" theology programs is listed in the Former Volunteers section of our website.

Religious Vocations



Some people go into volunteer ministry thinking that it will be a first, experimental step toward a religious vocation or the diocesan priesthood. Others, who originally had no such intentions, leave realizing the same thing.

There are many structures set up to assist you in finding out if a religious vocation or the diocesan priesthood is for you. Your most basic resource is the Vocations Office in your diocese, or the diocese in which you are interested in serving. Your Vocations Office has all the resources you need to

be in touch with religious communities outside of the diocese as well. Vocations Offices may have support groups for men and women interested in the priesthood or religious life.

Every religious community has a Director of Vocations. If you know which community you are interested in, this is the person to be in touch with. Any member of the community can give you the Vocations Director's name and address. Vocations Directors are just as interested as you are in discerning to which life God is calling you -- no matter what that life is.

There are several websites that provide information on vocations and listening to your calling: www.catholicsoncall.org, www.visionguide.org, www.foryourvocation.org and www.religiousministries.com.

Below is some additional information for those interested in theological training. There are several options that exist for lay people who are interested in some type of theological education. Just a few of these are:

Diocesan Programs: Many dioceses have short and longer term programs for people interested in specific topics, as well as for those interested in such things as directing RCIA (The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) or entering the Diaconate, becoming a Master Catechist, or a Spiritual Director. Usually, more information on these programs is available through the Adult Education Office, RCIA Office, or Vocations Office in the diocese.

Catholic Colleges: Catholic colleges often have very practical courses which are offered through the Religious Studies Department. These courses vary from college to college, and may often be taken through adult education or extension programs.

Seminaries: In many cases, both diocesan and non-diocesan seminaries offer courses for enrichment as well as full degree programs for lay persons interested in pursuing a career in the Church. Options on degree programs vary, but generally they include at least two of the following:

M.A. (Master of Arts in Theology): This, like other master's degrees, is an academic degree, a prerequisite for a Ph. D. It prepares one for teaching. Usually an M.A. candidate concentrates on a particular area of theology and gains expertise in that field.

M.T.S. (Master of Theological Studies): Like the M.A., this is usually a two-year course of study. Unlike the M.A., it is usually more pastoral in emphasis and is geared toward the person interested in a specific ministry. It usually consists of a concentration in a particular field of study.

M.Div. (Master of Divinity): Although this is the degree usually pursued by candidates for the priesthood, many seminaries are making this degree available to lay persons. Usually 2-3 years of full-time study are required, and the successful candidate will have a broad knowledge of different areas of theology and pastoral studies, including Canon Law, Doctrine, Scripture, Liturgy, and Ethics, as well as areas of concentration for the M.A. and more.

Working in the For-Profit Business World

As a returning volunteer, you might have some questions about entering the profit-making arena. You may even wonder if it is possible to live out a commitment to social justice in the fast-paced, upwardly-mobile, competitive world of business. The answer, of course, is "Yes!" Such a commitment is certainly possible for anyone in business.

One way to live out your commitment is to do plenty of research on the company for which you are interested in working. If it is multi-national, does it respond in a responsible way to the needs and conditions of developing countries? How responsible is its use of resources, both human and natural? What are its hiring practices? How responsive is it to the needs of minorities? Does it encourage its employees to contribute to their community? Does it make such contributions itself?

The business world is very much in need of persons for whom these values are important. The Christian commitment you bring to your work will have just as much effect as if you were working in the nonprofit sector or for the Church. Only you can know where God is calling you to live out your vocation.

Working in the Church



It may be that your experience as a volunteer has led you to want to work directly for the Church. How do you go about making such a career move? The Church is a large organization. Within the Church there are many different ministries and different structures supporting those ministries. Below are some of the largest ministries in which to find employment with the Catholic Church.

- Teaching in a Catholic school:

If you want to teach, one way to get a foot in the door is to make an appointment with the principals of parochial and diocesan schools and discuss your qualifications and interest in working in their schools. You can look up these schools in the listings for the local diocese in The Official Catholic Directory (a reference your local parish may have) or on the diocese's website. The National Catholic Education Association (www.ncea.org) also has a job bank on its website.

- Service agencies within the Church:

The best way to find out what social service agencies are in your diocese is to inquire through the Catholic Charities or Catholic Social Services office in the diocese. Again, information about these agencies can be found online as well as in The Official Catholic Directory.

- Youth ministry and other parish ministries:

If you are interested in parish ministry, it may be helpful to locate the Human Resources office of the diocese in which you're interested in working. Once you find out what positions are available, you should contact the person in charge of hiring, which may be someone in the diocesan office or the pastor or administrator of the parish.

You will find that, for the most part, good jobs within the Church are professional positions. You may need further training before you can fill such a position on a permanent basis; you may need a teaching credential, a license to be a social worker, or an advanced degree in theology or pastoral ministry. You may also find that some dioceses are willing to help you obtain the necessary education or training to succeed at the position you find.

Many lay people are creating new jobs within the Church, or taking positions that were formerly held by priests or religious. Sometimes pastors or other supervisors are not used to working professionally with lay persons and do not realize what is needed in terms of salary, pensions, insurance, etc. For this reason, it is important that you are aware of your own needs in this area and can share them with your prospective employer.

Resume, Cover Letter and Interview Resources



Resumes That Knock 'Em Dead and Cover Letters That Knock 'Em Dead, Martin John Yate, Adams Media Corporation, 2008 www.knockemdead.com.

The Resume Kit, 5th Edition, Richard H. Beatty, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003.

The Everything Cover Letter Book, 2nd Edition, Burton Jay Nadler, Adams Business Media, July 2005.

101 Great Answers to the Toughest Interview Questions, 6th Edition, Ronald Fry, Thomson Delmar Learning, 2009.

The Interview Rehearsal Book: 7 Steps to Job-Winning Interviews Using Acting Skills You Never Knew You Had, 1st Edition, Deb Gottesman, Berkley Publishing Group, 1999.

What Color Is Your Parachute? 2010: A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers, Richard Nelson Bolles, Ten Speed Press, 2010.

Working World: Careers in International Education, Exchange, and Development, Sherry L. Mueller and Mark Overmann, Georgetown University Press, 2008.



Monster -- www.monster.com

Yahoo! Careers -- careers.yahoo.com

CareerBuilder -- www.careerbuilder.com

Career Magazine -- www.careermag.com

Resources for Working in the Church



Forward in Hope: Saying Amen to Lay Ecclesial Ministry, Matthew H. Clark, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 2009.

National Association for Lay Ministry - www.nalm.org.
Supporting and educating lay ministers in the Catholic Church.

Pursuing an Advanced Degree

An excellent resource we recommend you use to explore graduate opportunities is Getting What You Paid For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning an M.A. or a Ph.D. by Robert Peters.

You can also go to the Pallotti Center website to get tips on the graduate school option, information on "former friendly" graduate programs and financial aid information at www.pallotticenter.org. Click on the section for Former Volunteers.

Networking:

“Networking” is often cited as the most successful approach to finding a job. The basic idea is to talk to everyone you can think of about your job search and seek information and advice from them. Friends, family, neighbors, old college professors, former employers, your volunteer program director, former classmates (does your college or university have an alumni association in your city?)...all may have information and leads helpful to your job search. In major cities, there are often networking nights for the nonprofit sector. Check out the major local newspaper or free independent papers to see if there are any events like this in your area. Find some organizations that are involved in the work you want to do and call them. Find a contact at the organization and see if you can meet with him or her.

Generally, people are happy to talk to others about their work. Ask each contact you talk to if they can refer you to anyone who may have information about the sector in which you are looking to work. The process can be fun and very helpful in learning about the industry, and often results in good job prospects. Always be sure to thank those whom you contact regarding career information.

Networking resources

- www.linkedin.com
- *Idealist Guide to Nonprofit Careers*: Chapter Four which can be found at: www.idealists.org/careerguide

Help with Resumes, Cover Letters, Interviews

Once you decide what kind of career you intend to pursue, you can begin an active job search. You’ll soon discover that two things are essential: an effective resume and good job interview skills. The list of resources on the next page may be helpful to you in honing your skills. Don’t forget to check with the Career Services Office at your university for tips and assistance with your job search.

Finding a job

Whether you are returning to a field in which you worked before volunteering, or if this is your first job after volunteering and after your education, here are some thoughts and tips that may help you.



Job searching is not quick and easy. It takes time, energy, patience, and discipline. It also requires the ability to tolerate the ambiguity of not knowing where you will end up. The temptation here is to take the first opportunity that comes along in order to end the uncomfortable uncertainty; doing so may limit the options you are considering. Give yourself ample time to research, explore, and search for the right job.

What follows are some resources and strategies for searching for jobs. One bit of advice: before applying for a position in which you are interested, contact the organization to verify that the position is still available. Online postings and newspaper ads are often posted with an ending date that runs even after the position has been filled. Applying for a job entails a lot of effort, so be sure to use your time and resources wisely on jobs that are still available. Also, if you are not readily available to be contacted by both email and phone due to your volunteer circumstances, you should alert the person in charge of hiring to the best method of contacting you.

Newspaper and periodical ads:

Major newspapers have many job postings – so many, in fact, that it can be quite difficult to sift through them to find what you are looking for. Luckily, virtually every major newspaper’s classified ads are available online in a searchable database. Look up the website of the newspaper in the region or metropolitan area in which you are looking for employment. It is much easier than simply scanning the daily paper.

Periodicals are another great resource for job listings, although due to publishing schedules, they do not list as many jobs or as frequently as other outlets. Try to find periodicals that are specific to the industry or issue in which you are looking to work. Examples include *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. They often have specific information on job openings, as well as information on organizations that do the work you are interested in doing.

The Internet:

There are many excellent online resources for job searching. These resources are typically free of charge for job seekers and run the gamut of industries and sectors. In addition to job listings, they offer a wealth of information on the job search process. Follow the links below to a list of different types of resources for job searching on the web. See our lists of general job search web sites as well as our lists of sites specific to nonprofit jobs, government jobs, and jobs in the Church. If you do not have regular internet access at home or in your community, try going to your local public library.

General Job Search Sites



Monster.com -- www.monster.com -- This is an excellent job-search site full of articles and information on job searching. In addition to searching its huge database of jobs, you can post your resume online and setup "Job Search Agents" that run a regular query on the database and email you the results.

Yahoo! HotJobs -- hotjobs.yahoo.com -- Another general job search site with articles and tips on job searching, online resume posting, and email job alerts.

Nonprofit Job Search Sites



DOT ORG JOBS -- www.dotorgjobs.com -- Another site for jobs in the nonprofit world.

Idealist Nonprofit Job Links -- www.idealists.org -- Job postings and links to resources for finding nonprofit jobs. Perhaps the most comprehensive list around.

OneWorld Digest -- us.oneworld.net/jobs/ -- "The place on the internet for jobs in human rights, environment, and sustainable development," this website has many international opportunities.

Opportunity Knocks -- www.opportunityknocks.org -- Has national nonprofit job listings. Also publishes several regional newsletters with job listings.

SocialService.com -- www.socialservice.com -- This is a website dedicated to placing social workers and other social service agency workers. In addition to a searchable job listing database, you can sign up to receive regular emails of social service jobs in a particular state.

Young Nonprofit Professionals Network -- www.ynnpn.org/careercenter -- You can both search and sign up for email delivery of posted jobs.

Government Job Search Sites



Office of Personnel Management -- www.usajobs.gov -- Lists nationwide job opportunities in the federal government.

SearchGov -- www.searchgov.com -- Great portal for finding websites of federal, state, and local government agencies.

Church-Related Job Search Sites



Catholic Charities USA -- www.catholiccharitiesinfo.org -- Has job listings for the national office in Baltimore, MD, as well as at diocesan offices. Check with your local Catholic Charities for other openings.

Youth Ministry Job Openings

- www.nfcym.org/jobs - A list of national job openings for youth ministers.
- www.catholicyouthministry.com/jobs - LIFETEEN's job list

Catholic Relief Services -- <http://crs.org/about/careers> -- A relief agency funded by the U.S. Bishops; posts domestic and international positions, as well as an established fellowship program.

Catholic Jobs--www.catholicjobs.com--A national site for job openings in Catholic organizations and institutions.

The Pallotti Center Job Bank



THE ST. VINCENT
PALLOTTI CENTER

Our Job Bank consists of a starter kit containing articles, resources, and strategies for career discernment and job searching, and a weekly email of job announcements that we send to interested former volunteers. To sign up for our Job Bank, visit www.pallotticenter.org and click on Former Volunteers.