

Student Leader Retreat

Friday, October 14 – Saturday, October 15, 2011

Abbey of the Genessee

Directions to the Abbey of the Genessee: From NYS Thruway I-90 (East from Canisius): Exit I-90 at the Batavia exit (make a left at the light after the exit), take 63 South to the River Road intersection (turn left at River Road) (21.4 miles after exiting I-90) in Piffard. Continue to 3258 River Rd. | Piffard, NY 14533

*(*People who are driving themselves are responsible for the cost of gas and tolls)*

You will need to bring the following to the Abbey: layered clothing, toiletries, sneakers for outdoor trekking, journal or paper/pen, slippers (if you want), your planner, a watch and/or alarm clock, your journal from your previous trip (optional)!

You will **not need to bring:** towels, bed linens/blankets unless Sarah has specifically asked you!

Menu:

Dinner – 3 soups (potato cheddar, lentil curry, pasta bean (Lu)), bread from the Abbey, salad bar, and cookies (pre-made dough)

Breakfast – French toast casserole, fruit, spiced cider, coffee

Lunch – taco bar – corn shells, tortillas, beef, lettuce, sour cream, salsa, queso, tortilla chips, rice

Dinner – Spaghetti parm, garlic bread, salad (leftovers from Friday)

Snacks – brownies, chips, dip, hummus, peanut M&Ms, pretzels

Drinks – 2 gallons cider, pop, lemonade

Goals for Retreat:

1. Student leaders should be able to articulate our vision and values and expectations of them
2. Student leaders should feel comfortable leading reflection
3. Student leaders should know the logistical needs of organizing their specific teams

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14

OPENING LOGISTICS

3:00—Lu will drop Sarah off at Budget Buffalo. Lu and Sarah will load the vans (1 from Budget and 1 from Campus Ministry) with food and supplies.

3:45 – Meet at the Library Circle Entrance near the Visitor’s Parking Lot for departure with all your stuff.

4:00 – Departing from Library Circle.

5:30 – Arrive at the Abbey of the Genesee and settle in. Lu and Sarah begin dinner prep.

5:45 – Icebreaker by Sarah

5:50 – Welcome by Sarah and Lu

6:15 – Head to Compline

6:35 – Compline

7:15-7:30 – Finish dinner prep

7:30 – 8:15 – Eat dinner (volunteer for prayer)/light clean up

VISION

8:45-9:30 – Vision and Leadership

- Hand out binders and talk about the retreat
 - When I call your name, talk about a favorite memory from a past trip.
- Volunteer to read a “Prayer for Perspective”
- Goals for the Retreat
 - Be able to clearly articulate our visions, values and expectations of you
 - Feel comfortable with reflection and helping others lead it
 - Understand the logistics surrounding different sites
- Why do you think immersion trips are integral to a Jesuit education? Or, how have you understood more about what it means to go to a Jesuit school because of your immersion trip? (go in a circle and have everyone offer a thought)
- Read from “Vision Behind our Trips”
- Go over “What we Expect from Leaders”
- Review “Practical Advice from Past Leaders”

SPIRITUALITY AND REFLECTION

9:30 – An overview of Spirituality and Reflection

- Why do YOU think reflection is important?
- Why do WE think reflection is important? (Led by Sarah and Lu)
- What were some of the most memorable reflections from a past trip?
- Go over the general format for reflections by reviewing “Leading your Team in Reflection”.

9:45 – Sample reflection

- Opening prayer (choose volunteer)
- Highs and Lows from your last trip
- Intercession—pray for one another as leaders
- Reflection Activity – “Draw your Relationship with God” – everyone gets a blank piece of paper and some crayons/markers. With calm music in the background, everyone takes a good 10 minutes to draw their current relationship with God. The point of this exercise is to be honest and vulnerable with one another. You might draw you and God skipping through a field of flowers (meaning you are good with God right now) or you on one side of a closed door (meaning you don’t even know how to begin a relationship with God). After we draw, we then take turns sharing with the group about where we are at.
- Closing prayer (choose volunteer)

10:45 – Toolbox for reflection

- Review “Questions to Spur Good Reflection”
- Review “Highly Recommended Reflection Exercises”

11:00 – Games or rest! Lu and Sarah finish cleaning / prep breakfast

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15

7:30 – Lu finishes breakfast prep

8:00 – Breakfast (volunteer for prayer)

9:00 – Icebreaker by Lu –*Short icebreaker*

- Everyone take 5 minutes to jot down three questions that would really allow them to get to know someone deeply. Nothing superficial here!
- Then partner up with the person you know LEAST here and ask each other these questions.
- Afterwards, you will be reporting back to the group about your partner.

VALUES

9:45 –11:30 – Overview of cornerstone values

- Invite students to silently read through the descriptions of our four cornerstone values. (Play soft music in the background)
- Now invite students to flip through their journals from when they went on their trip while reflecting on the following questions:
 - How did I respond to each value during my trip?
 - How did I challenge myself to live each value more fully on my trip?
 - What is a concrete story that can illustrate how I was challenged by or how I got an insight into one of our cornerstone values?
- Each person shares a personal story from their trip. After you share, you come up and light a candle in the middle.

- After everyone has shared, we can read the covenant together. Lu and Sarah will read the short descriptions after each value and students can, in turn, read the bulleted points that follow.
- Review “Deepening the Four Cornerstones”
- Take a few minutes to write down “personal challenges” for each of the four cornerstone values for this year – concrete ways that you will try to live into each of these values more.

11:30 – Lunch prep

12:00 – Lunch

TRIP SPECIFIC LOGISTICS

1:00-2:00 – International Trips

- Leadership Responsibilities
- Weekend Workshops / Monthly Team Meetings
- ANGEL site - Everyone is registered and this will be updated soon. Please be prepared to utilize ANGEL for various readings, handouts and information throughout the year.
- Financial Fun
- Personal Fundraising Ideas
- A Day in the Life
 - Take 5 minutes for each leadership team to put together a “day in the life” during your trip – or how people can expect a day to flow while abroad
- 9 Things to Accomplish Day #1
- What to do in a Medical Emergency
- Action Plan for Emergency
- Advice for your team this year
 - Take 5 minutes for each leadership team to put together a list of advice for your team. This will go into their folders. Give me your papers when you are done.
- Questions for Interviewing

1:00: ASB

1:45: BuffaLOVE

2:15: Syracuse

2:45: NOLA

3:15: Erie L’Arche

3:45: Erie Benedictines

4:15: NYC

2:00-3:00 – Review international trip applications. Lu cleans/preps dinner.

3:30 – Rooms are cleaned and bags packed.

4:00 – Mass at Abbey

5:00 – Dinner, cleanup, packing

6:00 – Depart for Buffalo

7:30 – Return to Canisius

Participants (staying overnight):

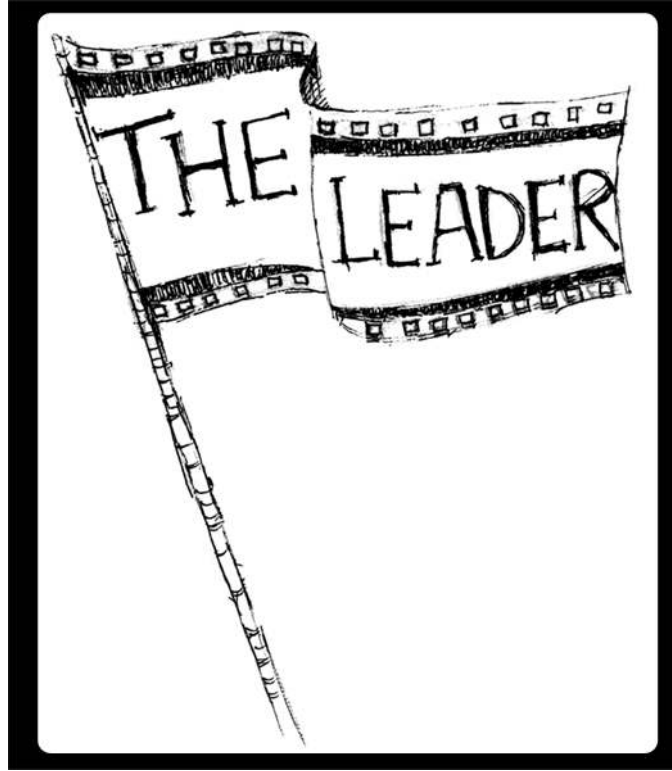
1. Lu Firestone
 2. Sarah Signorino
 3. Royshawn Sessum (NOLA)
 4. Tara Cicutello (Erie B.)
 5. Ashley Stewart (Erie L./ASB)
 6. Drew Genco (Syracuse)
 7. Siobhan Maloney (NYC)
 8. Abby Fronchowiak (NYC/Poland)
 9. Brian Zylinski (ASB)
 10. Jamiah Mootry (ASB)
 11. Dan Radwan (ASB)
 12. Mary Mietlicki (El Salvador)
 13. Rob Taylor (Jamaica)
 14. Liam Doherty (Ecuador)
 15. Jen Queeno (Jamaica)
 16. Rachel Farley (Ecuador)
 17. Kristen Hill (El Salvador)
 18. Lacey Schmitt (El Salvador)
 19. Olivia (Poland)
- 12 beds
 - 4 on pull-out couches (Ashley and Mary; Jamiah and)
 - 1 on couch
 - 2 on couch cushions (Abby and Tara)

Will drive self:

1. Abby (leave on Saturday in the afternoon)
2. Siobhan (leave on Saturday in the afternoon)
3. Laura (leave on Friday)—not counted in overnight
4. Mary Maroney (leave on Friday)—not counted in overnight
5. Rachel Farley (arrive around 7pm on Friday)
6. Kristin Hill (arrive around 7pm on Friday)
7. Brian Zylinski (arrive around 7pm on Friday)

Cannot attend:

1. Alex Snow
2. Lakeria Johnson
3. Essence Porter
4. Sandy Casey



LEADER HANDBOOK

Campus Ministry Service-Immersion Experiences

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VISION AND LEADERSHIP

PRAYER FOR PERSPECTIVE

The kingdom is not only
beyond our efforts,
it is even beyond our vision.
We accomplish in our lifetime
only a fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. . .

This is what we are about:
We plant seeds that one day will grow
We water seeds already planted,
knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations
that will need further development.
We provide yeast that
produces effects beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything,
and there is a sense of liberation
in realizing that.
This enables us to do something,
and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning,
a step along the way,
an opportunity for God's grace to enter
and do the rest.

We may never see the end results,
but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders,
ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.
Monsignor Archbishop Oscar Romero

The Vision Behind our Immersion Experiences

“God calls you to the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”

-Frederick Buechner

Rev. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., the former Superior General of the Society of Jesus, in his talk to the members of a Jesuit University in the United States in 2000, implored that:

“Students, in the course of their formation, must let the gritty reality of this world into their lives, so they can learn to feel it, think about it critically, respond to its suffering and engage it constructively. They should learn to perceive, think, judge, choose and act for the rights of others, especially the disadvantaged and the oppressed.”

Rev. Adolfo Nicolás, S.J., the current Superior General of the Society of Jesus, echoed this sentiment in an address to Jesuit Higher Education Institutions in Mexico City in 2010 with:

“the depth of thought and imagination in the Ignatian tradition involves a profound engagement with the real . . . the world as we encounter it; the world of the senses so vividly described in the Gospels themselves; a world of suffering and need, a broken world with many broken people in need of healing. We start there. We don’t run away from there. And then Ignatius guides us and students of Jesuit education, as he did his retreatants, to enter into the depths of that reality. Beyond what can be perceived most immediately, he leads one to see the hidden presence and action of God in what is seen, touched, smelt, felt. And that encounter with what is deepest changes the person.”

Based on the vision of these leaders, Campus Ministry at Canisius College hopes our Service-Immersion Programs will accomplish the following:

The purpose of Canisius College’s Service-Immersion trips is to increase our awareness of the world, so scandalously unjust, so complex to understand, and so hard to change.

The purpose of these trips is to fall in love and grow in solidarity with the people of the world and especially the poor, to let their stories become our stories, to let our voices speak for them.

The purpose of these trips is to help where we are needed but to know that listening and being with is as important as anything we can do.

The purpose of these trips is to challenge ourselves to live simply, to value relationships that we make, to engage our faith and spirituality in the experiences we have and to dig for the truth behind the injustices.

The purpose of these trips is to go into the gritty reality of the world and find God there and to let this God of the poor, this God of justice and liberation transform our hearts so that when we return we can act in a way that we become part of the solution, that we become women and men with and for others.

What We Expect from Leaders

As a leader, you represent your group. Both people in the community and your own team members will look to you as a role model and react based on how you act. They will praise you for your group's successes and they will blame you for an individual's failures. Moreover, when you are away from home, you will represent Canisius to the people you are working with. Whatever impressions you leave them with are liable to be the impressions they attribute to everyone from our college. You need to accept this role. The following are keys to being a respectable leader:

-Be available and dependable. The success of our teams depends upon our leaders being available for our trips. I need to be able to contact you and depend upon you to show up on time and prepared. I need to know that you will follow-through with that you say you will do.

-Lead by example. Please be the first to throw out ideas in brainstorming, to volunteer for fundraising events, to pay your deposits. Others will take this trip as seriously as they see you taking it.

-Be honest. If your group is experiencing a problem, talk it over with the team or with the community leaders. It is better to get problems out in the open and see if there can be a resolution instead of letting your group become angry and frustrated. Also, when you are to blame, admit your failure. You are not expected to know everything. Have the strength to say that you were wrong.

-Be flexible. You are going to another place. Things don't happen there the same way they happen here, especially schedules. The way people move about their day and keep timely is completely different. Relax. Just keep smiling, improvise and have fun!

-Deal with Conflict. Unless you are having a golden year, there will be a few people on your team who like to grumble, fight the group and try to break the rules. As the leader, it is your responsibility to confront these people and remind them of our values and covenant. This is not a fun part of the job, but your job is not to please everyone. You have to make sure your entire team is healthy by dealing with any conflicts as soon as they arise.

-Keep an Open Mind: Remember, you are leading, but you are learning too. Things will not happen exactly the same way as they happened the last time you went on this trip. That is Ok! Be open to new experiences and the newness of the entire experience for your team members.

-Be Selfless: As a leader, you will be calling the shots. You have already seen all this before and you know your favorite sites and the ones you would rather avoid. Remember, this trip is not about you – it is about your team.

-Create a good relationship with the community contact person. Remember, you represent your team and the community contact person represents the community. The two of you should be able to solve 90% of the problems that arise without involving anybody else.

-Initiate contact with the people you are helping. Remember, not only is your group feeling awkward as strangers in a strange land. Often locals are intimidated as well by the appearance of

strangers in their neighborhood. It is your responsibility as a leader to reach out to the people you are learning from and serving and to begin the process of building relationships.

-Communicate. You are the information link between your team, your adult leader and the community. Others will assume that any information that they tell you will be disseminated to your group. Your group will likewise assume that they have been told everything that they need to know. Be vigilant in communicating information. Once abroad, every morning gather the group together to debrief. By being clear and prepared, you will be in charge.

-Be Compassionate. Sometimes leaders get so caught up in the stress of managing a team that they end up creating a lot of unnecessary rules and punishing team members for not following them. New team members can seem immature and brash when they are outside their element in a new context. People might not be reacting in the same way to things that moved you deeply last year. Or someone might claim to be sicker than they appear. This is all OK and normal – every person adapts to a new situation differently. One of the most important things you can remember as a leader is to be compassionate towards your team members. Know that acting strange is a response to being nervous and overwhelmed and that some people are sick because they are having trouble adapting. Because you are the leader, we always recommend that you believe in your teammates and treat them kindly at all times.

-Challenge your Team to go Deeper. Anyone can do a service trip. But not everyone is changed by what they have experienced? Real transformation happens when people are challenged in loving and healthy ways to go deeper into our values, to try to connect these values with their everyday lives and to find ways to integrate what is discovered with concrete action when they return. As leaders, you are the ones who need to challenge your teams to take it to the next level.

-Live our Mission! This trip is meant to directly expose you to the marginalized people of the world in order to transform your heart and mind for good. We want people to come back with a life-long commitment to be on the side of the poor and suffering. In order for our mission to be fulfilled, it needs to be lived out and exemplified by you as a leader. Make sure you know our vision and values and try to practice them daily on this trip. Make sure you take our covenant seriously. Make sure you challenge yourself to make connections and go deeper. The more you live out our mission, the more others will be on fire with it!

Practical Advice from Past Leaders

“This is not your trip anymore – this trip is for the new students! Things will not go exactly like they did last year and that is OK. An effective leadership team is flexible and deals creatively with new situations by collaborating.”

“Things never go as planned. Be flexible!”

“Do everything you tell other people to do. Do it first! You have to lead by example.”

“As a leader, you will always face conflicts with your team. You are not always going to be the good guy. This is because you can’t please everyone. Sometimes you need to be the one to tell other people ‘no.’ Just make your decision and stick with it.

“Go into everything with an open mind. Just because you’ve been before doesn’t mean you know everything.”

“When you plan something out or make a decision, make sure that you have the entire team’s interest in mind first, not just your own.”

“Be mindful of your actions and the fact that people are always looking up to you for advice. The way that you act and react and do things will be a model for how your team will be. If you are excited about things, people will be too. If you don’t want to do something, others will not want to as well.”

“Work hard.”

“Communicate with your team. If you know something, they should know it as soon as possible.”

“Don’t look down upon your team. Just because you are the leader and have been there before doesn’t mean that you are better than anyone else. Remember, you once were going for the first time as well.”

SPIRITUALITY AND REFLECTION

Leading your Team in Reflection



You are going to be busy, tired and overwhelmed when you go abroad on this Service-Immersion Experience. At the end of the day, you are probably going to want to sleep and relax more than anything else. However, we are asking you to commit to processing your experiences together as a group each night through intentional reflection times. The reason for this is quite simple. The seeds that are being planted in you in your weeks abroad need to fall on rich and ready soil. **You need to do some digging into your minds and hearts in order to allow what you see and hear and feel each day to transform you in the very core of your being.**

While there is no one way to lead your team in reflection, having a format to follow sometimes helps people plan what to do. The following is a very simple format that works in every situation:

1. **Opening Prayer** - Start with an opening prayer that you made up or found in our reflection materials. Starting off your reflection session with a prayer sets the tone and brings everyone together.
2. **Highs and Lows** - Go around in a circle and let everyone on your team share their "high" and "low" for the day. This gets your entire team talking and reflecting.
3. **Ask for any Prayers of Intercession.** After everyone has remembered different people who have touched them throughout the day, it is important to give your team an opportunity to pray for those people. The Petition segment of the Reflection is begun when the leader says: "And now let's offer prayers for the people in our lives." Let each person speak as they feel moved, ending with "Let us pray to the Lord." For example, someone might say "God, please watch over

Juanita, who is struggling to feed her family, let us pray to the Lord.” Everyone responds with, “Lord, hear our prayer.” When people have no further prayers to offer, the leader closes this segment of the Reflection by saying, “God, please hear all these prayers and the prayers we hold in the silence of our hearts. Amen.”

4. **Reflection Activity** – This is the part of the Reflection Session when the leaders come up with a theme or topic for the group to reflect upon. Leaders can be most creative with this segment and there is no right way to do it. This is the time to explore the social justice and spiritual components of our trip in depth with one another. We encourage you to ask the following questions:
 - a. WHAT did you see today? (the immersion question)
 - b. WHY do you think this is happening here? (the social justice question)
 - c. WHY does this matter? WHY should we care? (the spiritual question)
This is a time to use the resources of our faith tradition or ethical demands to discuss how we should approach the situation.
 - d. WHAT (if anything) can we do about it? (the action question)

Often times, people may be uncomfortable sharing at first. Lead the way by being the first to open up and be vulnerable about your thoughts and feelings. Model the depth that you would like others to share with. If people are truly stuck on how to lead, there are plenty of ideas in the pages that follow to help them get started.

5. **Closing Prayer** - End your reflection with a prayer that you created, or look in your folder under “Prayers to Reflect on While Abroad”.
6. **End with Hugs!**

Questions to Ask to Spur Good Reflection

Some people might feel nervous about the idea of leading the team in reflection – especially the “Reflection Activity” portion. However, often all it takes is a good question to start the team on an important, insightful reflection together. The main questions stemming out of the philosophy of the Pastoral Circle on the previous page are a good place to start. However, there are many good questions to pose to your teammates as a starter for reflection. If team members are struggling to develop their reflection night, please review the following questions with them as suggestions:

- Why am I here? Why did you join this team?
- What is important to me?
- Where do I come from? Who are my personal heroes?
- Did I experience anything today that bothered me? Why?
- What emotion did I feel the most today? On the trip overall? What is triggering it?
- How do my values and experiences as a part of a certain cultural, racial, ethnic, religious group, etc. shape what I see and hear?
- What are the barriers that prevent me from changing based on this experience?
- How am I a part of the problem I am learning about? How have I worked or how can I work to be a part of the solution?
- Have I found it easy to relate to the people we have met here? Why or why not?
- How do you think our Canisius team has been perceived by the people here?
- What gifts can I offer the people here? What gifts are they giving me?
- What am I learning most about myself from this experience?
- What issue am I learning most about?
- How has this immersion experience “changed my perspective”?
- Mahatma Gandhi said, “Poverty is the worst form of violence.” Do you agree?
- “Living simply so that others might live” is a common expression to advocate for the living of a more just lifestyle. What do you think living simply means? Is this important?
- Where can I draw hope and strength from? How does God fit in to what I am experiencing?
- Do the things you are experiencing challenge or strengthen your faith? Or both?
- What signs of hope exist here?
- What are the social and political roots of the problems we are witnessing? What are the possible solutions?
- Do you believe your lifestyle affects the poor? If so, how?
- Who holds power in this society?
- In what ways can I become an advocate on behalf of the powerless?
- How can we as a group become empowered for change?
- What can you bring home from this experience and incorporate it into your everyday life?
- What institution or agency holds the most hope for changing the current situation?
- Name some concrete ways you will continue to work for justice when you return home.
- Do you feel as though you have given more than you received or vice versa? How?
- Has this experience changed your hopes and goals for the future? In what ways?
- People will ask you to describe this experience – but you might only be given a sentence or a minute to do so. How would you respond? What sentence would you use? How would you describe it in 5 sentences? Write it down and share!
- How do you feel God might want you to be different because of this week?

Highly Recommended Reflection Exercises

While all reflections are good, we have found some to be particularly timely and poignant across all our trips. We suggest them to you here and ask that you try to incorporate as many of them into the reflections as possible:

At the Beginning of your Trip

-Hopes and Fears: Focus on what people are hoping for the most during their time away and what they are also most fearful of in their experiences. *Good first day exercise!!!

-Prayer Partners: Put everyone's name in a hat. Everyone pick a name out and writes a letter to that person containing what you wish for them during this experience. The letters are returned to the leader and sealed until they are passed out on the last day of the trip. However, this exercise continues all trip long. Each person's mission is to do something nice for that person while we are away. Reveal your prayer partners at the end of the trip.

During the Middle of your Trip

-Cornerstone Values: (a good mid-trip reflection!) Everyone picks a slip of paper that has one cornerstone value written on it (social justice, simplicity, spirituality, solidarity). At the beginning of the reflection, the leaders read about each cornerstone and all remind the group about their shared experiences. Then, each team member has to reflect and share about how they are fitting into the cornerstone that they chose. Then, each person shares what they want to work on and do differently during the second week of the trip.

-Affirmations: Each person talks about one event (and the Canisius people involved in that event) that inspired them during the day/week. This is a good way to other people on your team how much you appreciate them!

Towards the End of your Trip

-This I Believe – Everyone takes some quiet time together to write down at least 10 things they have come to believe in based upon their immersion experience. Afterwards, share your entire lists with one another or just your top 3.

-Letter to Your Future Self – Towards the end of your trip, pass out paper and an envelope and have each team member write a letter to themselves about what they learned on this experience. Encourage them to include as many concrete details as possible! Also, have them record how they hope that the insights from this experience will impact their lives upon their return home. This session should be about ½ hour – plenty of time. Make sure students put their letters into the envelope and address them to a place where they are sure to receive them (for example, parent's address). Please collect the letters and keep them in the leader binder which will be returned to Lu or Sarah. They will mail the letters a few months after the trip is over.

-How can I communicate these experiences to people back home? Brainstorm as a team how you can use emails, PowerPoint presentations, newspaper articles, church venues and our own Campus to spread the word about the people you met on your trip. Be creative in thinking up ways to help these people after you are gone. Could you organize a book drive? Could you scholarship a child to go to school? Could you ask the places you work with for a wish list?

VALUES

The Four Cornerstone Values of Service-Immersion Experiences

1. Simplicity

The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak. ~Hans Hofmann

Life can get complex. Sometimes we need to strip away some of that complexity in order to remember what is truly important. Focusing on simple living allows us to reconnect with what is essential. Through simple living, participants can explore and question how their own lifestyles are connected to and interdependent with the lives of others.

Participants of Campus Ministry Immersion experiences commit to a simple lifestyle. The commitment is more than an attempt to live without your cell phone or hair dryer for a week or two; it is a shift of focus. When away from home, we encourage you to spend your time centered less on technology, shopping and the consumption promoted by our U.S. culture so that you can be free to experience the value of simple pleasures, conversations, and your own creativity.

All of our trips intentionally partner with low-income neighborhoods so travelers become more aware of the realities of people who are forced to live simply every day. It is important to remember that simple living is not poverty. Poverty is always degrading and dehumanizing. Simple living is paring down our wants so that we can focus on what is really important. By living simply we can choose to be in solidarity with the people we spend time with. Embracing simplicity allows us to value relationships over things; to hear the voices of our brothers and sisters, the voice of our own inner-self, and the voice of God. The end result of simplicity is freedom.

How to live out the value of simplicity will be different for everyone. This is because each of us is controlled and manipulated by the things in our lives in different ways. Naming those things that “control you” is the first step towards getting free. If you are a person that relies heavily on technology, challenging yourself to leave behind cell phones, internet, television or i-pods is a way to practice simple living. If you are a person that needs to be busy all the time, scheduling quiet time, prayer or just hanging out with your team might be what you need to simplify your life. Look inside of yourself and try to challenge yourself to go deeper into this value!



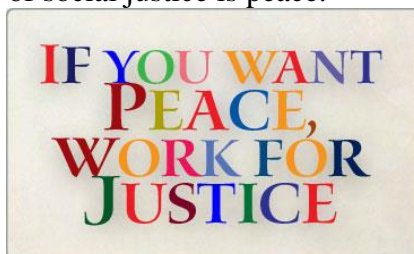
2. Social Justice

Social Justice is being in right relationship with one another.

Many people confuse social justice with charity. Charity is meeting the direct needs of someone who is in trouble. For example, if you are hungry and I give you my lunch today, I am doing charity. If you are without shelter and I let you sleep in my home tonight, I am doing charity. Charity is necessary and vital to keep people alive and safe in the moment. However, it does not fix anything permanently – so even though I give you a sandwich today, you will probably be hungry tomorrow. Social justice is looking to correct the root causes of an injustice by asking “why are you hungry?” and “what can be changed so you won’t be hungry again?” This is the more dangerous, complicated question, because in order to make society more just you need to understand the intricate systems of oppression that are operating in our world today and you need to commit more energy into trying to resolve them.

Social justice is about creating a society where everyone is in right relationship with one another because of the fair distribution of advantages, assets and benefits among all members of a society. The idea is that when justice reigns on earth, everyone has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential in life. When an injustice is discovered, social justice is about correcting the structures that perpetuate the injustice. The basis for social justice from a Catholic perspective comes from the foundational principle that all human life is sacred and that we must recognize the dignity of every human being stemming from the fact that she/he is a child of God. Catholic Social Teaching also insists that believers make a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, which means that when we think about social justice we must be advocates first and foremost for the rights and opportunities of the marginalized who are so systematically neglected in our world. The Catholic Church teaches that the moral test of any society is “how it treats its most vulnerable members” and urges us to look at the way in which our world is structured economically, politically and socially from the perspective of how these systems affect the poor.

We will be encountering a lot of social injustice on our immersion experiences. You will be exposed to the complexities of the systemic injustices faced by the disenfranchised in a way that is impossible to understand simply through statistics and stories. As you meet them and hear their stories of abuse and neglect, continue to challenge yourself with the question “why?” But this is really just the first step. This cornerstone value will continue to challenge you even after you return home and are left with wondering how you can help promote justice in our world. Long term ways to strengthen your commitment to social justice are to **educate yourself** about the social issues facing the world today, **organize your community** around doing concrete initiatives to help rectify the problem, **advocate** for those who are suffering injustices by speaking out to your politicians and the public and **living in solidarity** with others, especially victims of injustice. The end result of social justice is peace.



3. Solidarity

“If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

- Aboriginal activists group, Queensland, 1970s

Solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress you might feel when witnessing the misfortune of so many on your immersion experience. Solidarity includes compassion, but it is also a decision to take action to join with, to form community with, those who are suffering. Solidarity takes place when a person or community not only sees a need and acts, but commits to follow up, to endeavor to see that action is taken to improve the other’s situation for the long run. Solidarity then is the firm and persevering determination to act in favor of the well being of all, especially those who are most poor and marginalized.

The idea of solidarity stems from the belief that everyone in this world is connected in one great community and thus we all have a common responsibility for everyone else. Solidarity includes a kind of mutuality that goes both ways in respect and accountability when the relationship grows. Solidarity becomes a two-way process because it becomes a relationship with both sides giving and receiving. Those who reach out to offer help quickly begin to realize that their own humanity is being fostered in new ways. Those who are receiving assistance discover that they bring gifts to the relationship which the others would be otherwise lacking. The end result of solidarity is living an authentic life.

Solidarity, however, is a difficult value to live. Feeling sorry for or wanting to be charitable to people can lead you to solidarity, but it is only the beginning. Solidarity is very different from the “top-down” ideas that distort the human dignity of others by treating them as children and assuming someone else understands their difficulties and knows the solutions more than the people themselves. Solidarity does not assume understanding or solutions. It begins with careful listening and taking to heart what is heard and also with patience. Listening to stories of oppression and impoverishment can be deeply disturbing to the listener who may then want to rush to conclusions about “what to do.” Solidarity is at least partly about offering human companionship and support while the person or the community itself figures out what to do. The listener must trust that the people who are experiencing oppression know best the path to liberation.

There is a saying attributed to Lao Tzu that sums up the essence of solidarity: “Go to the people, live with them, learn from them, love them. Start with that they know, build with what they have. But with the best leaders, when the work is done and the task accomplished, the people will say, ‘We have done this ourselves.’”



4. Spirituality

A faith that does justice is the foundation of our trips.

Everyone is welcome on our trips! However, we are a Catholic, Christian college and the impetus for these kinds of exposure experiences directly stem out of how we believe God is calling us to live in relation to God and to one another.

Our Campus Ministry exposure trips are motivated out of the heart and soul of Jesus' message in the Gospel—the coming of the Kingdom of God. What is this Kingdom? We get a glimpse of it in Jesus' his first public message to his community in the fourth chapter of Luke's Gospel, when he stood to read from the scroll of Isaiah: "The Spirit of our God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring Good News to those who are poor. God has sent me to proclaim liberty to those held captive, recovery of sight to the blind, and release to those in prison – to proclaim the year of God's favor!" In a nutshell, Jesus is announcing that he has come to bring liberation from all that binds us, which is God's dream for the world. God wants us all to be free to live into our full potential as sacred and beautiful children of God.

Where ever there is injustice and oppression, people's potential to grow into their fullness is stifled and stolen from them. That is why God is so passionate about justice, or a world based on right relationships between all people and all creation. Looking around at the world today, we can sadly conclude that we are living the dream yet. But with each person who connects into the vision of the Kingdom of God, we are on our way! The amazing thing about our faith is that God asks us be co-creators of this Kingdom here on earth—to help everyday to build up God's dream of peace, justice and liberation. That is what we are about on these kinds of trips – to go connect with others, especially the marginalized, in order to support them in achieving liberation from the ties that bind them down.

All participants on our trips are called to be "contemplatives in action"; that is, to work actively for and with the poor and to be just as active in reflecting on God's presence in our work and our relationships. We need to spend time with God, speak to God about our experiences and listen to how God interacts with the world through others. By trying to notice how close to or far away a situation is from God's dream for the world, we feel spiritually called to do something about a situation and effect change in the world in behalf of the common good. Spirituality is a cornerstone value because when we spend time with God, eventually we will come to see the world how God sees the world. And then what breaks God's heart will break our hearts and what gives God joy will be our joy as well. This is the firm foundation upon which we can effectively begin working for justice.



Covenant of Participation and Behavior for Campus Ministry's International Service-Immersion Experiences

Although you are signing up voluntarily for this experience, the preparation process is lengthy and demanding. For at least 7-months, we require participants to actively learn about their travel destination, their teammates, a variety of social justice issues and our four cornerstone values via workshops, trainings, readings, and events. This is also the time when you fundraise. These preparatory events are mandatory and your ability to travel with us is contingent upon you joining us.

Once you leave to go abroad, remember that you are not on vacation—these kinds of trips are stressful! We will be eating new foods, sleeping in tight quarters, being at the whim of someone else's schedule, struggling with a language barrier and will have limited contact with our families. All of these factors will challenge your ability to stay rested, positive, flexible and focused. However, that is exactly what we will expect from you. While participating on one of Campus Ministry's Service Immersion Experiences, we as representatives of Canisius College need to be responsible for our conduct. We need to be culturally sensitive, careful about our safety, willing to settle for less than the comforts we experience at home, flexible about our needs, willing to live by standards of behavior that perhaps are higher than in our home culture, and at all times remain focused on our reason for being abroad. **The success of our programs depends on a high degree of personal maturity and responsibility on the part of participants.** Therefore, every participant will be held accountable to:

Our Cornerstone Values

Our service-immersion program is centered on the following cornerstone values:

- 1. Social Justice:** Social Justice is not only working alongside the underserved—it is committing to explore the causes of injustice and oppression and to take action on behalf of the common good. A commitment to justice involves challenging our acquired ways of thinking and feeling. It challenges us to allow the pain, anger and helplessness of others to have an impact on us. As privileged members of our society, we have a responsibility to seek to understand and help to change the structures that create poverty and oppression:
 - I will listen to and work with those who are more disadvantaged than I and will pursue solidarity with them
 - I will strive to become just in my own thoughts, language and actions
 - I will seek to know the truth of situations, rather than relying on my prejudices and biases
 - I will strive to explore the spiritual side of poverty and injustice

- 2. Simplicity:** While traveling, you will be forced to live without a lot of the comforts you rely on here at Canisius. To get the most out of this experience, we ask that you shed your desire for material comforts and the use of technology as a crutch for communication in favor of embracing the richness of a simpler lifestyle that focuses on building face-to-face relationships with others. Living the simple life is liberating and energizing because you become centered less on things and more on people.

- I will seek the richness of life focused on people and their needs more than on my comfort or my acquisition of things
- I will strive to remain open to differences of opinions and behaviors as they present themselves in the encounters with those of another culture
- I will not seek to bring my ways, my food, my language or my mentality to the people I encounter, but rather seek to experience the richness of what is theirs
- I will cultivate a positive outlook, realizing that cultural conditions may be more harsh and less comfortable than those I am used to at home

3. Solidarity: When we are in solidarity, we are pursuing what is best not just for ourselves but for the common good. Solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress you might feel abroad when witnessing the misfortune of so many. Rather, it is the firm and persevering determination to act in favor of the well being of all, especially those who are most poor and marginalized. This is a Gospel value and essential in working towards lasting peace. Solidarity demands openness, flexibility, tolerance, deep compassion and sustained action for justice for all.

- I will be open and honest with other community members and willing to share part of my life with them.
- I will actively participate in the team's activities from beginning to end with an attitude of respect and working together for a shared goal.
- I will seek to accompany the people I meet as a companion on their road to justice and liberation.
- I will not seek to "accomplish" so much as to listen, learn and patiently plant seeds that may not bear fruit until long after I am gone.
- I will commit once home to working in some way on behalf of the marginalized in this world.

4. Spirituality: This international experience is an opportunity to interface your real world experiences with your faith. You will see and hear things that will make you feel uncomfortable – startling poverty, people living without hope because they are living without access to the basic necessities of education and health, countries who have been the pawns of the foreign policies of the United States. Living the value of spirituality means living as "contemplatives in action", reflecting on God's presence in all the gritty complexities of the world.

- I will allow the reality of my experiences to sink deeply into my heart and challenge my assumptions and will commit to growing in spirituality together with my team.
- I will attempt to find God in all things, especially the gritty complexity of the world.
- I will use our reflection sessions each night as a time to ask what my faith has to say about the situations I am witnessing and the people I am meeting and I will not shy away from bringing a critical awareness to the situation.
- I will willingly pray with my team when the spirit moves us and respectfully attend any religious services my team is asked to go to.

Covenant of Participation and Behavior

Campus Ministry's Domestic Service-Immersion Experiences

Although you are signing up voluntarily for this experience, the preparation process is lengthy and demanding. This is a 3-month process when we require participants to actively learn about their travel destination, their teammates, a variety of social justice issues and our four cornerstone values via events, fundraisers, and reflections. This is also the time when you might fundraise. These preparatory events are mandatory and your ability to travel with us is contingent upon you joining us.

Once you leave, remember that you are not on vacation—these kinds of trips are stressful! We will be eating new foods, sleeping in tight quarters, being at the whim of someone else's schedule, and have limited contact with our families. All of these factors will be a challenge to you staying rested, positive, flexible and focused. However, that is exactly what we will expect from you. While participating on one of Campus Ministry's Service Immersion Experiences, we as Canisius students need to be responsible for our conduct. We need to be culturally sensitive, careful about our safety, willing to settle for less than the comforts we experience at home, flexible about our needs, willing to live by standards of behavior that perhaps are higher than in our home culture, and at all times remain focused on our reason for being abroad. **The success of our programs depends on a high degree of personal maturity and responsibility on the part of its participants.** Therefore, every participant will be held accountable to the following:

Our Cornerstone Values

Our service-immersion program is centered on the following cornerstone values:

- 1. Social Justice:** Social Justice is not only working alongside the underserved—it is committing to explore the causes of injustice and oppression and to take action on behalf of the common good. A commitment to justice involves challenging our acquired ways of thinking and feeling. It challenges us to allow the pain, anger and helplessness of others to have an impact on us. As privileged members of our society, we have a responsibility to seek to understand and help to change the structures that create poverty and oppression:
 - I will listen to and work with those who are more disadvantaged than I and will pursue solidarity with them.
 - I will strive to become just in my own thoughts, language and actions.
 - I will seek to know the truth of situations, rather than relying on my prejudices and biases.
 - I will strive to explore the spiritual side of poverty and injustice.

- 2. Simplicity:** While traveling, you will be forced to live without a lot of the comforts you rely on here at Canisius. To get the most out of this experience, we ask that you shed your desire for material comforts and the use of technology as a crutch for communication in favor of embracing the richness of a simpler lifestyle that focuses on building face-to-face relationships with others. Living the simple life is liberating and energizing because you become centered less on things and more on people.
 - I will seek the richness of life focused on people and their needs more than on my comfort or my acquisition of things.
 - I will strive to remain open to differences of opinions and behaviors as they present themselves in the encounters with those of another culture.
 - I will not seek to bring my ways, my food, my language or my mentality to the people I encounter, but rather seek to experience the richness of what is theirs.
 - I will cultivate a positive outlook, realizing that cultural conditions may be more harsh and less comfortable than those I am used to at home.

- 3. Solidarity:** When we are in solidarity, we are pursuing what is best not just for ourselves but for the common good. Solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress you might feel abroad when witnessing the misfortune of so many. Rather, it is the firm and persevering determination to act in favor of the well being of all, especially those who are most poor and marginalized. This is a Gospel value and essential in working towards lasting peace. Solidarity demands openness, flexibility, tolerance, deep compassion and sustained action for justice for all.
- I will be open and honest with other community members and willing to share part of my life with them.
 - I will actively participate in the team's activities from beginning to end with an attitude of respect and working together for a shared goal.
 - I will seek to accompany the people I meet as a companion on their road to justice and liberation.
 - I will not seek to "accomplish" so much as to listen, learn and patiently plant seeds that may not bear fruit until long after I am gone.
 - I will commit once home to working in some way on behalf of the marginalized in this world.
- 4. Spirituality:** This experience is an opportunity to interface your real world experiences with your faith. You will see and hear things that will make you feel uncomfortable – startling poverty, people living without hope because they are living without access to the basic necessities of education and health. Living the value of spirituality means living as "contemplatives in action", reflecting on God's presence in all the gritty complexities of the world.
- I will allow the reality of my experiences to sink deeply into my heart and challenge my assumptions and will commit to growing in spirituality together with my team.
 - I will attempt to find God in all things, especially the gritty complexity of the world.
 - I will use our reflection sessions each night as a time to ask what my faith has to say about the situations I am witnessing and the people I am meeting and I will not shy away from bringing a critical awareness to the situation.
 - I will willingly pray with my team when the spirit moves us and respectfully attend any religious services my team is asked to go to.

Personal Conduct:

Having a safe and respectful experience is our goal. The following therefore are very important:

- **I will not make decisions that affect the group or the program independently of the team leaders.** Rather, I understand that I am just one part of a larger team and that following the rules and guidelines set forth by my leadership team will keep our entire team safe and healthy.
- **I will never go off-site on my own** for extended periods of time. Rather, I will always be with at least one other team member, and if we are going to be gone for long I will check with the team leaders to make sure they know where we are going and for how long.
- **I will never drink alcoholic beverages.** I understand that this is a service trip not a vacation. We are here to learn and serve.
- **I will neither bring, buy, nor use illegal drugs at any time.** I understand that if I violate this policy I will be sent home at my own expense.
- **I will not engage in sexual behavior.** I realize that engaging in sexual behavior could: 1) risk alienating those that we have come to visit, 2) raise questions about my motives to participate in this exposure trip, 3) jeopardize the integrity and future of Campus Ministry trips, 4) potentially cause division among those of the group, 5) potentially have lasting legal ramifications that I am not aware of, 6) and would not be consistent with the values of our Catholic, Christian college. Therefore, I will conduct myself with integrity in regard to my sexual behavior. I will not physically "couple-up" with another member of this group or with a local. I understand that if I violate this policy I will be sent home at my own expense.

Financially Responsibility

Although Campus Ministry will do our best to help you in the months leading up to your service experience, ultimately you are responsible for the cost of the trip. (Some minor scholarship help is available through Campus Ministry.) Your personal fundraising initiative and creativity will go furthest in helping you to meet your goal. Below are the different financial deadlines that you need to meet to continue on with your team.

- **A out-of-pocket deposit due by**
- **\$100** (\$125 total including deposit) is due by 5pm to Campus Ministry.
- **All money is due** by 5pm to Campus Ministry.
- I understand that if I am struggling to raise money and need scholarship help, it is my responsibility to be pro-active and approach Sarah to learn about my options. My silence threatens my chances of receiving scholarship help.
- I understand that all money turned in to Campus Ministry is **non-refundable**.

Placing your name after this statement indicates that you have read, understood, and agreed to abide by all of the above:

Name:

Date:

Deepening the Four Cornerstones

Each member of the team has signed a covenant agreeing to commit to our four cornerstone values – Spirituality, Simplicity, Solidarity and Social Justice. If the leadership team sees members of the team taking these values lightly or if opportunities to go deeper present themselves, it is the responsibility of the leadership team to challenge the team to live our values to the fullest!

One way you can take the experience deeper is by **living out your commitment to our values** as a witness to the rest of the team. How can you do this?

1. Spirituality

- a. Go to mass or any other worship service as a sign of respect.
- b. Be sure that your team prays before meals.
- c. Take your own reflections deeper and work with reflection leaders beforehand to help them prepare a profound reflection night.
- d. Make sure to keep the space and time of reflection sacred. Don't compromise this time for other concerns. And make sure that you are meeting when your team has enough energy to process the day.
- e. Choose a "team prayer" before you leave and ask your teams to say this prayer together every day before you start work.

2. Simplicity

- a. Pack light! Pack simple! Set an example right from when you walk into the airport.
- b. Wash your clothes by hand and help others do the same. Make this fun!
- c. Don't use your own technology in front of the students.
- d. Make sure to try all of the food served and encourage others do to the same.

3. Solidarity

- a. While respecting your need for personal time, be sure to spend at least some time each day bonding with your team members.
- b. Make a point of talking to everyone on the team and trying to bring together different groups of students.
- c. Be the first to reach out to local folk and make a connection when you get on site.
- d. Try to find ways to challenge the team to be present to the people they meet and to reflect on finding concrete ways to accompany them on their road to justice.
- e. Value listening and being the people we meet with as much as "doing" anything.

4. Social Justice

- a. Ask questions from your hosts and the people you work with. Try to get at the root of the issue you are discussing.
- b. Challenge you team to ask "why" things are like this as much as possible.
- c. Reflect together on ways to bring what you are learning back to Buffalo.

LOGISTICS

Who is the Leadership Team?

Anyone on the trip who is a Student Leader, Lead Mentor or Translator is considered part of the official leadership team and is expected to work together to help facilitate the most successful experience possible. Please try to balance your unique strengths and weaknesses! That being said, each component of the leadership team specializes in different leadership duties listed below.

Student Leaders - Campus Ministry would like challenge our student leaders to take on as much responsibility as they are comfortable with. As they have experienced the trip before and have prepared all year with Lu and Sarah, they ideally should be the public face of the leadership team to other team members and with our contacts while adult leaders should be in a more supportive role, empowering and encouraging the student leaders to really step forward and take the lead. However, each leadership team is different. Some student leaders like more freedom to make decisions, others need a lot of support. Therefore, the heart of a successful leadership team rests on establishing an open forum for communication. A leadership team that can talk to one another and make decisions collaboratively that everyone is comfortable with will succeed most of all!

Lead Mentors - Our Lead Mentors are the faculty, staff and alumni assisting on our immersion experiences. Certain responsibilities fall specifically with this role, such as managing all major monetary transactions or accompanying our students to medical facilities when they get sick. However, in broad strokes, we envision our adult leaders supporting and empowering our student leaders, caring for students who are sick or in crisis and in general helping the team make healthy, smart choices while abroad. The adult leaders will need to work closely with their student leadership team to get a sense of how to balance outright leading with supporting. In most cultures we will be visiting, the nuns and priests we are working with will often defer to the most senior members of the team when discussing leadership decisions. Campus Ministry would like to ask our adult leaders to be mindful of this and try their best to include the student leaders in these conversations whenever possible.

Translators - The special role our translators play is obvious – they are our primary connection with our host community, helping the leaders and team communicate effectively with the people we are working with. A translator should expect to do everything from coordinating logistics with our hosts when needed to translating when we listen to speakers or visit museums to accompanying students in special situations, like visits to the doctor or specific errands. Besides this, the translator should assume the same role as the adult leader in terms of empowering student leaders, caring for team members and helping the team make healthy, smart choices while abroad.

Community Support Persons. Not present on every team, these people have been alumni, family members of students on the team, or other interested persons from our community. Community support persons are **not** considered part of the official leadership team on our trips. However, they might be looked upon as a leader in the eyes of our team members because of their age and/or experience. This is inevitable and acceptable. Oftentimes community support persons have been real assets to our teams, offering new perspectives, wisdom and companionship for our adult members. The leadership team is certainly welcome to invite and include the community support person in leadership conversations if this seems appropriate.