

RETIREMENT

Is God calling you to be an Ignatian volunteer?

A few weeks ago, Jesuit Father Robert Thesing, a Kentucky native, began his homily sharing that, in the Book of Genesis, Abraham was 75 and Sarah 65 when God called them. He promised them a new homeland, a new nation, even a child in their “golden years.” He also shared how Harland David Sanders at age 65 was retired and living on Social Security. At 75 he was known as Colonel Sanders and a multi-millionaire known for founding Kentucky Fried Chicken and having over 400 franchisees. Father Thesing said, “Retirement can be just the beginning!”



IVC volunteers change lives. William Mackey, a local Ignatian volunteer, tutors a child with “Making Sense of Language Arts.”

Christine Boehmer Hils, another Kentucky native and Ignatian volunteer, said, “For each of us there are people, experiences, places who are home or, perhaps, which call us home. The Ignatian Volunteer Corps has been that for me from the time I first responded to a bulletin announcement in 2006.

“Joining and belonging has been an invitation to live life more fully by discovering those places of connection that we have with each other in the group, in our lives and, uniquely, with those to whom we donate our time: bringing to light in that self-donation the mutuality of gifts shared,” she said. “Working within IVC has been an ongoing revelation of how we are called, in Gospel terms, to be one. As such, it is undertaken with openness by each of us to be changed. My own work with young children in an urban school setting continues to challenge me toward that growth. It is grace.”

Mrs. Boehmer Hils said that volunteering within the framework of IVC encourages her to reflect on her own life experiences and offers her the opportunity for prayer and the chance to learn more “about the conditions of life we encounter in companionship (with those who are) open to and seeking understanding. “This aids a deeper listening to all of my life helping me know it as ‘shot through’ with loving Presence while challenging me in places where I continually run into myself,” she said. At her college commencement, the speaker, Father Al Bischoff, asked her class and all present to bear in mind one thing as they departed from the ceremony: “He told us to remember in all that we are, in all we would do, in all we would become that we are on a journey home,” Mrs. Boehmer Hils said. “It has been and continues to be a lifelong journey to understand what that means. At this later time in my life, the Ignatian Volunteer Corps continues to serve an integral part in both the journey and the understanding.”

The director of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps of Greater Cincinnati, Linda Wihl, invites you to join in the quest of what St. Ignatius would call “finding God in all things.” Find purpose, community and spiritual growth with IVC. Volunteers serve those in need in area nonprofits eight to 16 hours a week. They meet monthly to reflect, pray, share a meal and study a book. They also meet monthly with spiritual “reflectors” to help find God in their lives. Twice a year they gather for retreats — the next retreat, in May, will be facilitated by Benedictine Sister Cathy Bauer, of St. Walburg Monastery, Villa Hills. So, if you’re retired and asking yourself: “What do I find challenging about retirement?” If you miss the sense of purpose you felt when you were working and miss the conversations you had with your co-workers. If you are asking God, “Is this it?” God may be calling you! Contact Linda Wihl, (513) 477-3428 or lwihl@ivcusa.org. This article was submitted by the Ignatian Volunteer Corps of Greater Cincinnati.