



The Visioning Session will gather people from across the country and from the various roles in the IVC community to come together in listening and sharing sessions using a methodology developed by the Jesuits based in Ignatian Spirituality. These conversations will gather your spirit led thoughts and insights for the discernment of the Vision and Plan for IVC over the next 5-10 years. This follows the principles of the way of proceeding inspired by the tenets of Ignatian spirituality aka the “Jesuit way of proceeding”. It involves listening to your own interior movements of the spirit towards the questions we are posing as well as an opportunity to listen attentively to the movements of others engaged in the IVC mission.

Those questions are:

1. What resonated within you and enlightened you as you reflected on the words and images in preparation for this conversation?
2. What grace do you seek from God and each other to see (and/or embrace) a future vision for IVC with new light?
3. How should IVC seek to meet this moment in time?

Below you will find three documents that will be useful for your participation in the Visioning Session.

- General history and overview of IVC today
- Explanation of the Ignatian Spiritual Conversation Discernment Methodology
- Reflection piece – Visuals and Inspiration with Questions to guide your prayerful reflection.

We ask that you set aside a period of time before your scheduled session – an hour perhaps – in quiet space for reading and reflection. Some may wish to journal their thoughts at this reflection time. As in Ignatian prayer, invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you reflect on the questions posed.

Thank you in advance for your full participation in the Visioning Sessions. Input gathered from these sessions will be given prayerful and attentive respect and consideration in discerning the future of IVC's mission.

History and Overview of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps

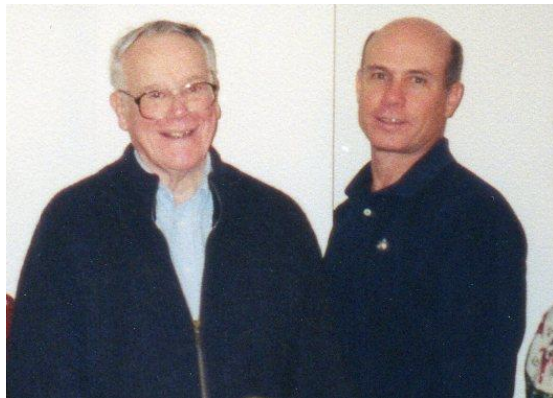


The Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) is a national nonprofit organization that offers mature (50+) adults the opportunity to serve in community-based organizations while also engaging in a process of spiritual reflection and growth. IVC is a lay Catholic organization rooted in the Ignatian spiritual tradition that aims to help corps members grow in their faith, serve people experiencing oppression on the margins, and develop a more profound sense of purpose and direction in their lives.

IVC's program, based on the spiritual teachings of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), emphasizes the importance of finding God in all things and using one's gifts and talents in service for and with others. Participants deepen their faith and grow in their spiritual lives while making a meaningful impact in their communities through long-term, committed volunteer service.

IVC is at a critical point in its history. It has grown to become a network of 20 regional programs, spread from Maine to California, Louisiana to Minnesota, and there is significant interest in many other US regions for bringing IVC to their communities. IVC has continuously operated on a "bare-bones budget," maintaining a minimal staff at the national and local levels to put more resources toward the women and men of the Corps.

A Brief History of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps



IVC Co-Founders Charlie Costello, SJ and James Conroy, SJ

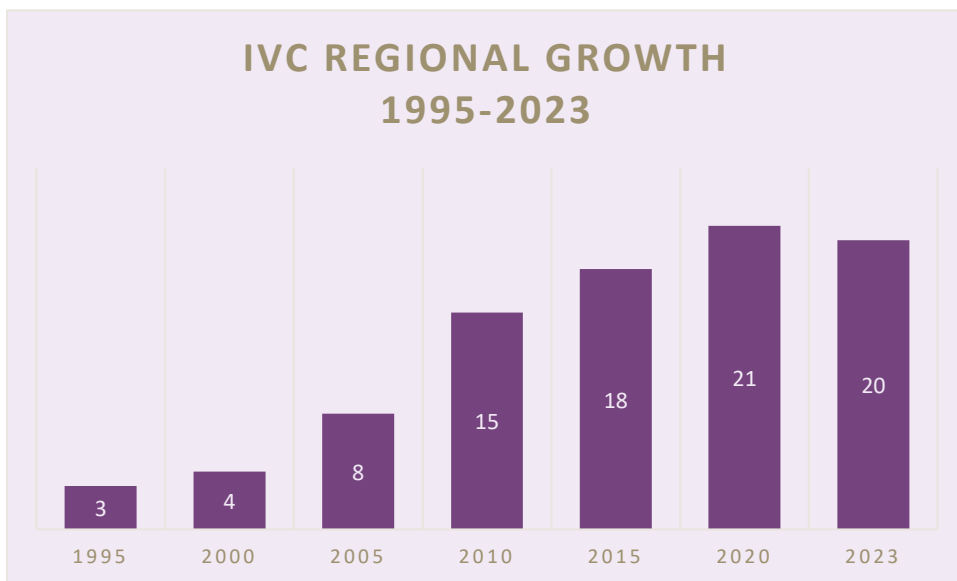
IVC traces its origin to two Jesuit priests, Jim Conroy, S.J. and Charlie Costello, S.J, who sought to give meaning to the call of Vatican II for the laity to participate fully in life of the Church. They gathered a small group of women and men to form IVC in 1995, building a model that combines service with people on the margins and a unique process of personal and spiritual reflection.

The original cohort of corps members – eleven women and men from Philadelphia, PA; Baltimore, MD; and Washington DC, served one or two days a week at local Catholic parishes, schools, and social service agencies. They were each accompanied by one of the two priests through spiritual direction, and corps members in each city gathered monthly to render mutual support and spend time in communal prayer and reflection.

The program grew organically in the mid-Atlantic region over the next six or seven years. As news spread to other areas of the United States, regions emerged in New York City, Chicago, Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Los Angeles, and San Diego, and IVC took on a national character.

In the early years, Frs. Costello and Conroy coordinated the entire program, but to bring their vision of founding a lay-led organization to fruition, they gathered a Board of Directors to assist them in growing their vision and laying the groundwork for seeking philanthropic support.

IVC is a lay-led organization, with the current President/CEO, Mary McGinnity, having been elected in 2009. The first ten years of IVC ushered in a decade of steady organizational growth that included new regional programs in Saint Louis, MO; Cincinnati and Cleveland, OH; Detroit, MI; Omaha, NE; Syracuse, NY; and Southeastern New England.



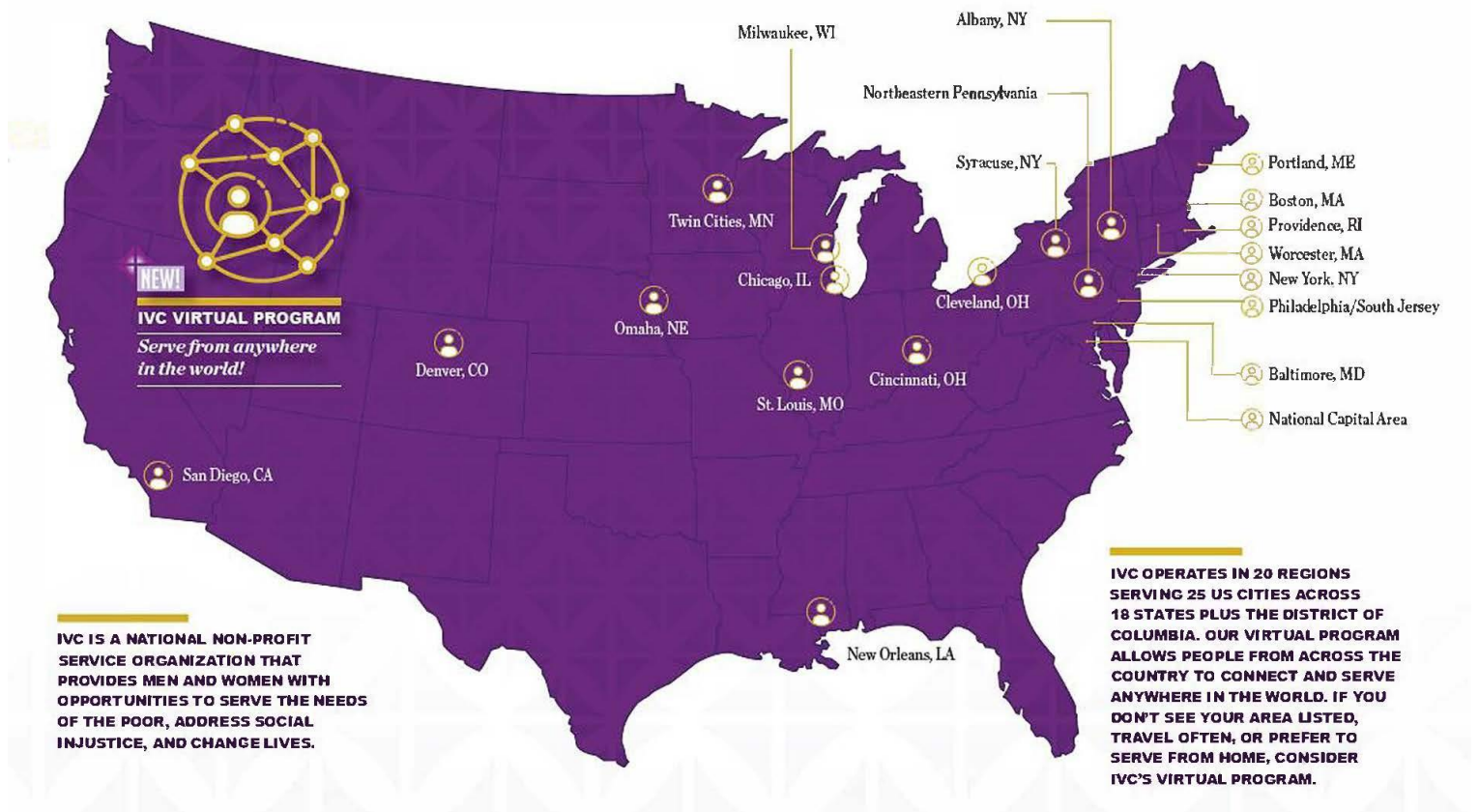
After 2005, IVC continued expanding, adding new regions in Milwaukee, WI; Northeastern Pennsylvania; Denver, CO; Portland, ME; Albany, NY; and New Orleans, LA.

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 forced IVC to draw on its resilience and adapt. Corps members found new ways to serve their partner agencies and the national office piloted a virtual option to offer opportunities to serve from anywhere. Recruitment and partnerships exceeded our initial expectations and in 2022 IVC formally launched the

Virtual Program for people who live outside our regional geographic boundaries, who travel often, or who simply prefer to serve from home.

IVC Today

Today IVC operates in 20 regions serving 25 US cities across 16 states plus the District of Columbia. In the 2023-2024 over 425 corps members serve with approximately 300 nonprofit organizations. Our Virtual Program allows people from across the country to connect and serve anywhere in the world.



The Role of Ignatian Spirituality in Service

IVC corps members are sustained through their commitment to Ignatian Spirituality and the community they create with one another. Seeking the presence of God in each person, they bring their stories back to one another in community to reflect, enrich, teach, and learn.

Ignatian Spirituality plays a significant role in reflecting on and sustaining the service to which IVC members commit. Inspired by the teachings of Saint Ignatius of Loyola,

Ignatian Spirituality encourages individuals to find God in all things and to discern their role in creating a more just and compassionate society.

Ignatian Spirituality provides a framework for corps members to reflect on their motivations, values, and the impact of their service. It invites individuals to cultivate a deep sense of gratitude, awareness, and contemplation, enabling them to see the presence of God in the people for with and whom they serve and in the issues of social justice they encounter. This reflection allows corps members to connect their actions to their faith and values, leading to a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of social issues and a greater commitment to systemic change.

Moreover, Ignatian Spirituality emphasizes discernment, the process of prayerful decision-making. Through discernment, corps members can assess the effectiveness of their service, discern where they are being called to act, and identify ways to contribute to long-term sustainable solutions. This discernment process helps corps members stay engaged and committed to their work, even in the face of challenges and setbacks.

Additionally, Ignatian Spirituality encourages corps members to cultivate a sense of humility and solidarity. It invites them to recognize their own privilege and to accompany those they serve as equals, fostering relationships of mutual respect and understanding. This approach promotes an inclusive and just approach to service, recognizing the dignity and worth of every person.

Overall, Ignatian Spirituality provides IVC members with a reflective and discerning framework to sustain their commitment to service. It helps corps members integrate their faith and values into their service, fostering a deeper understanding of the issues they address and their role in creating a more just and compassionate world.

IVC's Impact

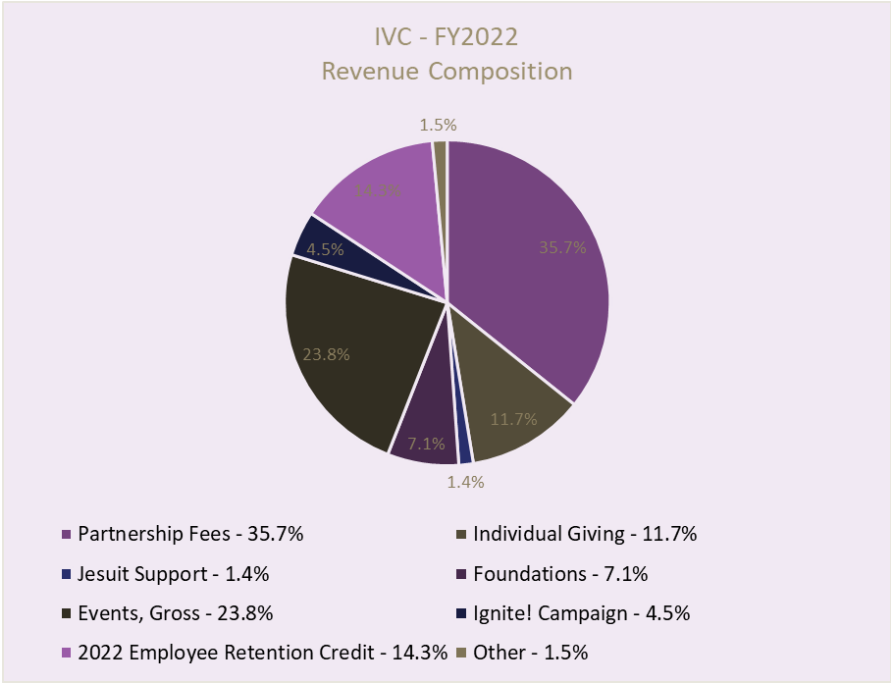


By offering support, advocacy, and friendship through its corps members, IVC serves those who are on the margins, living in poverty, or otherwise vulnerable. The organization aims to bring hope, dignity, and compassion to those they serve.

Overall, IVC serves as a convener by bringing together individuals and organizations that share a commitment to service, social justice, and community engagement. By facilitating partnerships, providing training and support, and promoting social justice, IVC helps to create a strong and vibrant community of individuals who work to make a positive impact in their communities. The added human capital provided by IVC allows their service sites to more effectively carry out their mission with the target populations they serve.

IVC Financial Model

IVC is funded by a mix of fees-for-service and philanthropy. Approximately 40% of IVC’s revenue is generated through modest partnership fees, which are paid by nonprofit partners to help support the recruitment, screening, placement, and support of their corps members. The remaining 60% must be raised through fundraising to ensure the sustainable growth of IVC.



A fundraising program for the Ignatian Volunteer Corps is necessary because it provides a vital source of financial support for the organization. Without fundraising, the Ignatian Volunteer Corps would have difficulty covering the costs associated with its operations, such as program expenses (recruitment, marketing, monthly meetings,

retreats, etc.), staff salaries, and facilities costs. By raising funds through a variety of means, including individual donations, grants, and events, the Ignatian Volunteer Corps can continue to provide valuable services and support to its corps members and the communities it serves.

In FY22, IVC's largest philanthropic source of revenue was individual donors, followed closely by revenue generated through special events. Gifts from grant proposals submitted to charitable foundations account for just over 7% of philanthropic support. And gifts from Jesuit provinces and communities-- once IVC's largest benefactors-- now account for under 2% of philanthropic revenue. Individual Jesuits, however, provide thousands of dollars' worth of in-kind services to IVC such as spiritual direction, retreat facilitation, service on Regional Advisory Councils, and the National Board of Directors, etc.

IVC in the Future

In charting the future direction of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC), we draw inspiration and guidance from the invaluable feedback shared by our dedicated constituents throughout the Imagine IVC vision and planning process.

As we navigate the path forward, we recognize that the collective insights, ideas, and aspirations expressed by our corps members, friends, donors, and partners serve as the compass guiding our course. With a deep sense of gratitude and commitment to our



mission, we envision a future for IVC that is enriched by greater donor engagement, robust partnerships with Jesuit institutions, and innovative strategies for recruiting new corps members. This collaborative vision, informed by the voices of those who have walked this journey alongside us, will continue to shape IVC as we strive to deepen our impact, expand our service, and remain steadfast in our dedication to fostering a more just and compassionate world. Together, we embark on this transformative journey, resolute in our commitment to the principles of Ignatian spirituality and the enduring mission of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps.

IVC by the Numbers

Number of Corps Members through IVC's 29-year History	1,636
Average Length in Years in Service per Corps Member	7-10
Number of Corps Members Serving in the 2022-23 Program Year	449
Service Partners	380
Jesuit Ministry Service Partners	27
Spiritual Reflectors supporting the Corps	306
Jesuit Reflectors	127
National Board Members	20
Regional Advisory Council Members	220
Jesuits Regional Advisory Council or National Board of Director Members	127
IVC Staff Members	28
Home Office Staff	6
Regional Staff	24
Total Hours of Service in 2022-2023	216,128
2023 Value of Volunteer Work According to The Independent Sector	\$31.80/hr
Total Economic Impact of IVC's Corps in 2023:	\$6,872,870.40

Ignatian Spiritual Conversation Discernment Methodology

The Spiritual Conversation Spiritual conversation focuses on the quality of one's capacity to listen as well as the quality of the words spoken. This means paying attention to the spiritual movements in oneself and in the other person during the conversation, which requires being attentive to more than simply the words expressed. This quality of attention is an act of respecting, welcoming, and being hospitable to others as they are. It is an approach that takes seriously what happens in the hearts of those who are conversing. There are two necessary attitudes that are fundamental to this process: active listening and speaking from the heart. The aim of spiritual conversation is to create an atmosphere of trust and welcome, so that people can express themselves more freely. This helps them to take seriously what happens within them as they listen to others and speak. Ultimately, this interior attentiveness makes us more aware of the presence and participation of the Holy Spirit in the process of sharing and discernment. The focus of spiritual conversation is on the person to whom we are listening, on ourselves, and what we are experiencing at a spiritual level. The fundamental question is: "What is happening in the other person and in me, and how is the Lord working here?"

a) Active Listening

- Through active listening, the goal is to try and understand others as they are. We listen not only to what the other person says, but also to what he or she means and what he or she might be experiencing on a deeper level. This means listening with a heart that is open and receptive.
- This way of listening is "active" because it involves paying attention to more than one level of expression of the other. In order to do so, one must participate actively in the listening process.
- We listen to the other while he or she is speaking, and do not focus on what we are going to say afterwards.
- We welcome, without judgment, what the other person says, no matter what we think about the person or what they have said. Each person is an expert on his or her own life. We must listen in a way that is "more disposed to giving a good interpretation to what the other says than condemning it as false" (Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, no. 22).
- We must believe that the Holy Spirit speaks to us through the other person.

- Welcoming without prejudice is a deep way of welcoming the other in his or her radical uniqueness.
- Active listening is letting oneself be influenced by the other and learning from the other.
- Active listening is demanding because it requires humility, openness, patience, and involvement, but it is an effective way of taking others seriously.

b) Speaking from the Heart

- This means sincerely expressing oneself, one's experience, one's sentiments and thoughts.
- It involves speaking about one's own experience and what one truly thinks and feels.
- We take responsibility not only for what we say, but also for what we feel. We do not blame others for what we feel.
- We share the truth as we see it and as we live it, but do not impose it. • Speaking from the heart is offering a generous gift to the other, in return for being actively listened to.
- This process is greatly enriched by a regular personal practice of prayerful self-examen. Without a habit of discernment and knowledge of oneself and how God is present in one's life, one cannot actively listen or speak from the heart.

In summary, what are the desired attitudes for spiritual conversation?

- Listen actively and attentively
- Listen to others without judgment
- Pay attention not only to the words, but also to the tone and feelings of the one who is speaking
- Avoid the temptation of using the time to prepare what you will say instead of listening
- Speak intentionally
- Express your experiences, thoughts, and feelings as clearly as you can
- Listen actively to yourself, mindful of your own thoughts and feelings as you speak
- Monitor possible tendencies to be self-centered when speaking

Carrying out Spiritual Conversation: The Basic Steps

Estimated time: About 2 hours

1. Preparation: Before coming to the group meeting, participants carry out a time of personal prayer and reflection over the question at hand. Usually some background information as well as some points and questions for prayer are provided. An adequate time of about 30 min to 1 hour can be set aside for this. At the end of the prayer period, participants take stock of the fruits of their prayer and decide what they will share with the group.

2. Gathering: Ideally each group can comprise about 6-8 persons. A facilitator is appointed for the group meeting and he or she welcomes all the participants. An opening prayer is said, and each person may share one or two words that describe his or her interior state at that moment. The facilitator may also briefly recap the sequence of steps as below. Usually volunteers are also requested for note-taking and time-keeping.

3. The First Round: Each person takes turns to share about what happened during the personal prayer time and shares the fruits of his or her prayer. Everyone is given the same amount of time to speak (e.g. 3 minutes). The focus is to listen to one another rather than simply think about what one wants to say. Participants are invited to open their hearts and minds to listen to the one who is speaking, and be attentive to how the Holy Spirit is moving. Between each person, the group may take a brief pause to absorb what was said. During this round there are no discussions or interactions between participants except to ask for clarification about a word or phrase if necessary.

4. Silence: A time of silence is observed, during which participants attend to how they have been moved during the first round, what struck them as they listened, and what were the notable points of consolation or desolation if any.

5. The Second Round: Participants share what emerged within them during the time of silence. No one is obliged to speak, and participants can share spontaneously without any particular order. This is not a time for discussing or refuting what someone else says, nor for bringing up what participants forgot to mention in the first round. Rather, it is an opportunity to respond to questions like:

- How was I affected by what I heard?
- Is there a common thread in what was shared? Is there something missing that I had expected would be said?

- Was I especially touched by a particular sharing?
- Have I received any particular insight or revelation? What is it?
- Where did I experience a sense of harmony with others as we shared with one another?

This second round enables the group to realize what unites them. It is here that signs of the action of the Holy Spirit in the group begin to manifest themselves, and the conversation becomes an experience of shared discernment.

6. Silence: Another time of silence is observed for participants to note how they were moved during the second round, and particularly what key points seem to be emerging in the group.

7. The Third Round: Participants share what emerged from the preceding time of silence. They may also take note of the ways in which the Holy Spirit may be moving the group. A prayer of thanksgiving can conclude the conversation.

8. Review and Report: Finally the group can briefly review and reflect on how the conversation proceeded, and decide on the main points they will report from the conversation

Special Conversation Reflection Booklet
Ignatian Volunteer Corps



“As Christians, we do not only receive *a vocation, a all to service*, individually; we are always called together. We are like the tiles of a mosaic. Each lovely in itself, but only when they are put together do they form a picture. Each of us shines like a star in the heart of God and in the firmament of the universe. At the same time, though we are called to form constellations that can guide and light up the path of hope, beginning with the places in which we live. When we speak of *vocation*, then, it is about making God’s dream for the universe come true.” (Pope Francis, Vocation Sunday, 2022)

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps A Call to Service

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps story begins six decades ago in 1962 (long before its actual founding in 1995) with Pope John XXIII's calling forth the Church to the Second Vatican Council to discover how best to embrace the role as the Church in the Modern World. Although the Second Vatican Council ended in 1965, Church historians tell us the effects such a major event in our Church may take centuries to truly understand and even longer, perhaps to measure in impact and importance.

Among the major achievements of Vatican II was the recognition of the important role of the laity. "The laity are not simply in the church, but with us they are the church." Pastors and the laity must mutually respect and have confidence in each other.

Lumen Gentium (the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, one of the principle documents of Vatican II) says, "A reading of the signs of the times since the Second Vatican Council shows unmistakably that the Church of the next millennium will be called the "Church of the Laity". Since Vatican II, increasing numbers of lay people have responded to the call to ministry flowing from the grace received in baptism.

Apostolicum Actuositatem (The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity of Vatican Council II) states "Wishing to intensify the apostolic activity of the People of God, this most holy synod earnestly addresses itself to the laity, whose proper and indispensable role in the mission of the Church derives from its Christian vocation and the Church can never be without it."

Another document of Vatican II *Perfectae Caritatis* (Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life) charged religious communities of women and men to return to the authentic charism of their founders and modernize their mission to the needs of today. This energy proved to be transformative for the Society of Jesus and its effects are on-going.

General Congregations (GC) for the Society of Jesus serve as the highest governing authority among Jesuits. General Congregations are called for two purposes; first to elect a new General of the Society and/or second to consider matters of great and universal importance. These purposes came together in 1964 upon the death of Fr. General John Baptist Janssens and the momentous events of Vatican II. GC #31 was convened May 6, 1965. Fr. Pedro Arrupe was elected general and among the many documents that emerged from the General Congregations 1965 meeting was one titled 'Relations with the Laity.' This document considered how Jesuits might appropriately adapt the teaching of Vatican II to the way in which they relate to the laity. Since GC#31 there have been five General Congregations. Three to elect new generals and three that focused on important matters including the relationship of Jesuits to the laity. (GCs 32, 34 and 35)

GC 31

We seek to respond to this grace by offering ourselves in service to the full realization of this mission of the laity, and we commit ourselves to that end by cooperating with them in their mission. (GC 31, D 33)

GC 34, Decree 13, Cooperation with the Laity in Mission.

Jesuit volunteer programs offer service marked especially by concern for the poor and work for justice, community living, simple lifestyle and Ignatian spirituality. Provinces are encouraged to support these volunteers associations, to develop better national and international networks among them, and to recognize them as a work of the Society where desired and appropriate. # 349. GC 34.

GC 35, Degree 6 Collaboration at the heart of Mission

“Following the inspiration of the Second Vatican Council, the Society of Jesus has been transformed by a profound movement of the Spirit. Recognizing this, GC 34 approved the decree “Cooperation with the Laity in Mission”, which both affirmed and encouraged apostolic collaboration, calling on Jesuits to cooperate with others in their projects and ours. GC 35, reviewing our own life and service to the Church, and noting how the seeds which have been scattered through the inspiration of GC 34 are yielding a harvest “thirty, sixty, and even a hundredfold, renews our commitment to apostolic collaboration and to a profound sharing of labor for the life of the Church and the transformation of the world.” #185

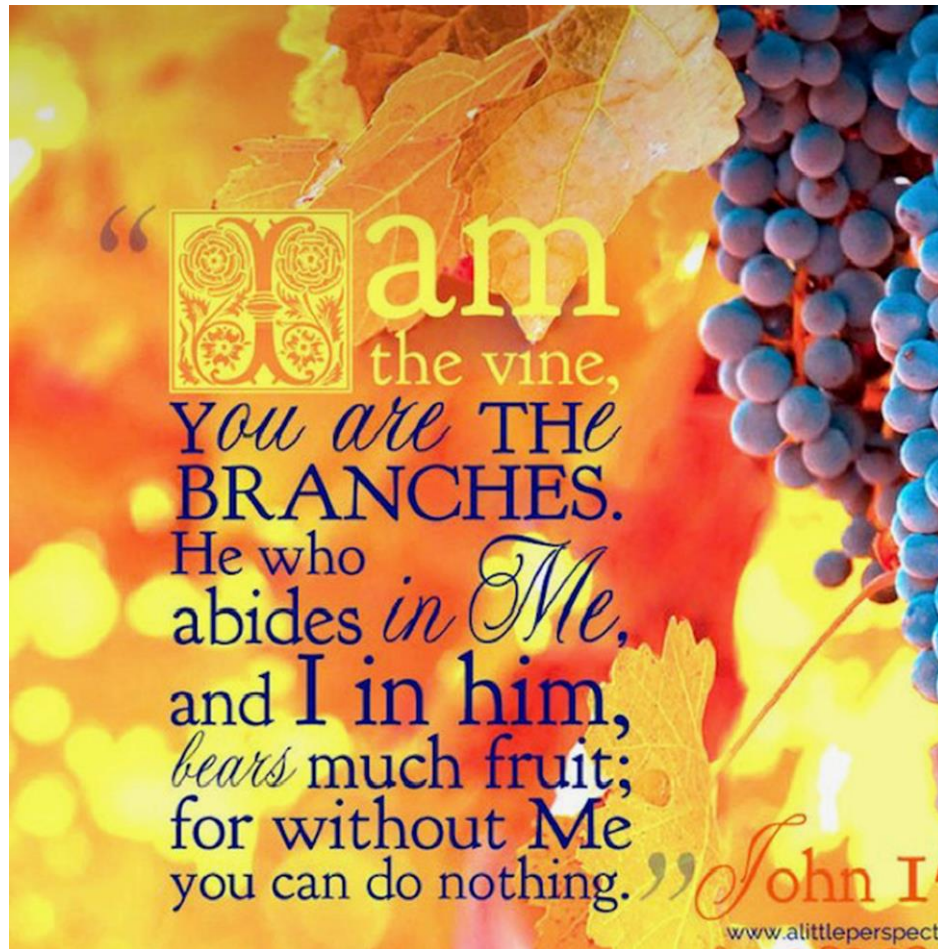
The Ignatian Volunteer Corps is a Spirit-led response that recognizes the role of laity in the Church as envisioned in Vatican II and the willingness of the Society of Jesus to embrace the laity as partners in the apostolate. IVC is a very real and vibrant movement of the Holy Spirit among baptized Christians. And like the dynamic at work within the entire church IVC and other lay lead organizations are only just beginning.

IVC is well-rooted, now it is time to grow.

Fr. James Conroy, SJ
Co-founder, The Ignatian Volunteer Corps

References will be made in the following pages to Pope Francis’s Encyclicals *Laudato Si*, (On Care for our Common Home) May 2015, *Fratelli Tutti*, (On Fraternity and Social Friendship) October 2020 and other of his writings. Additional references include the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* February 2019 of the Society of Jesus. All of these serve as guiding light to the on-going ministry of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps.





*“This “remaining” is not a question of abiding passively, of slumbering in the Lord, letting oneself be lulled by life. **Oh, NO, NO,** It is not this. The remaining in Him, the abiding in Jesus that is proposed in the Gospel is remaining actively, faithfully, and reciprocally.*

Why? Because the branches without the vine can do nothing, they need say to grow and to bear fruit. BUT he continues, the vine, too, needs the branches, since the fruit does not grow on the vine’s trunk. It is a reciprocal need, it is a question of a reciprocal capacity to remain in relationship. We remain in Jesus and Jesus remains in us.

We need Jesus but Jesus also needs us. He needs our witness. Like the branches the fruit we must give is the witness of our lives, the witness of God’s love. Attached to Christ, the vine, we can think like Jesus, act like Him and see the world with his eyes. In this way, we can love or sisters and brothers, starting from the poorest and those who suffer most, as Jesus did and love them with His heart and bring to the world fruits of goodness, fruits of charity, fruits of peace.

--Pope Francis, Spring

John 13: 12-15

So, when he has washed their feet and put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, “Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me *teacher* and *master*, rightly so, for indeed I am.



If I, therefore the master and the teacher, has washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet.

I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.

Based on the Jesuit Universal Apostolic Preference : **Walking with the Excluded**,
We (the worldwide community of Jesuits), we desire, first and foremost, a conversion in our own hearts, that makes us alive and sensitive to the suffering Christ in our midst. Our communities desire to be more hospitable and open, learning how to live more deeply in the Spirit of Jesus, a Spirit that welcomes.



“Solidarity entails the awareness of being part of a single body, while at the same time involving a capacity on the part of each member to “sympathize with others and with the whole. When one suffers, all suffer. For solidarity is no mere ideal; it is expressed in concrete actions and steps that draw us closer to our neighbors, in whatever situation they find themselves.

For solidarity is much more than a “feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. Solidarity is “a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all, because compassion flows from fraternity.

*--Pope Francis, Fratelli
Tutti*

Based on the Jesuit Universal Apostolic Preference: **Showing the way to God**, we want to share with others this most fundamental discovery of our own lives: Jesus Christ.



I Corinthians 12: 4-12, 27

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit;
There are different forms of service but the same Lord.
There are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone.

To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.
To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom, to another the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit.
To another faith by the same Spirit; to another gift of healing by the one Spirit.
To another mighty deeds; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another varieties of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues.



Mission

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) provides mature men and women the opportunity to serve the needs of people who are poor, to work for a more just society, and to grow deeper in Christian faith by reflecting and praying in the Ignatian tradition.

IVC Values

- Service done with and for the materially poor.
- Reflection on the work/service experience with the poor.
- The life experience, wisdom, and skills of senior men and women.
- The leadership role of the laity to transform the world through justice, rooted in gospel values.
- The dignity and equality of all women and men regardless of race, age, education, economic deprivation, or social status.
- The search for the presence of God to be found in all things and the call to holiness extended to all women and men throughout life.
- Jesuit support, including opportunities for spiritual development in the Ignatian tradition.

How We Serve

- Address chronic homelessness
- Provide legal services
- Serve persons and families with disabilities
- Integrate refugees and asylees into society
- Care for injured military veterans and their families
- Educate disadvantaged youth
- Facilitate medical care for individuals who are uninsured or underinsured

- **Train and equip adults toward employment**
 - **Reduce recidivism for ex-offenders**
- Increase capacity of social service agencies in many more ways**

Finally please keep the following questions that will be considered throughout the Imagine IVC Process in your mind as you participate:

- 1. What resonated within you and enlightened you as you reflected on the words and images in preparation for this conversation?**
- 2. What grace do you seek from God and each other to see (and/or embrace) a future vision for IVC with new light?**
- 3. How should IVC seek to meet this moment in time?**