

Love in Deeds of Service

Winter 2007, Volume IX, No. 1

IVC Conducts Survey of Ignatian Volunteers

In September 2006, the Ignatian Volunteer Corps celebrated eleven years of faith-filled community service. Over the years there have been more than 400 Ignatian Volunteers. IVC regularly asks Volunteers for anecdotes about their experiences of service and reflection, which often mention the profound personal and spiritual impact that IVC has on Volunteers' lives. Because of these striking, inspiring, and provocative stories, IVC's board and staff decided to research the impacts of specific elements of the IVC program.

Thanks to a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, IVC conducted a nationwide survey of current and former volunteers who had been in the program for at least one year, their spouses, and IVC spiritual reflectors. The goal was to understand better the impact of the IVC program on the lives of Ignatian Volunteers. The Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), a highly-regarded non-profit research center for Catholic institutions and organizations, conducted the survey for IVC.

The response to the survey was significant, with 54% of the current and former volunteers responding. Nearly nine in ten Ignatian Volunteers rated their IVC experience positively, with almost half describing it as 'excellent.'

The survey results show that men and women find IVC's unique combination of service and reflection to be a path to a fulfilling retirement, a deeper spirituality, and increased social awareness. Almost 80% of Ignatian Volunteers join IVC seeking to help improve the lives of people in need. Slightly more than 80% say that the spiritual goals of a deeper relationship with God and putting faith into practice became more important after participating in the IVC program.

"We discovered that IVC does fulfill its mission," said Suzanne Geaney, IVC Executive Director. "Volunteers enter IVC out of a feeling of gratitude - wanting to give back for all they've been given - and most find themselves doing work that is meaningful and contributes to improving the lives of people in their communities." She hopes the survey results will help the staff and board refine the program where it's needed and maintain the integrity of the program where it works well for Volunteers, partner service sites and people being served.

"Never before have so many people had so much experience - and the time to put it to good use. They constitute a potential windfall of human and social capital to nonprofit groups, a world with a surplus of goodwill and youthful ambition, and a shortage of experience and management skills."

Marc Freedman and John Gomperts, "Putting Retiring Baby Boomers to Work"

The Chronicle of Philanthropy
Nov. 24, 2005

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Miguel Quintos, IVC Washington DC/Northern VA, puts his experience into action through job training at Living Wages

IVC Mission

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) provides men and women age 50 and over 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.

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www.ivcusa.org

From the Executive Director

I hope that you appreciate our new IVC logo, as well as the new look of the newsletter. We have been working to build a strong and consistent IVC program across the country. Our new look is one step in this process.



So often I would be asked about the previous logo. You may remember it - the cross and its shadow? It was related to a quote, “May the shelter I seek be the shadow of your cross.” Some people said that the logo reminded them of a cemetery – obviously not a good image for IVC’s quite vital and effective volunteers

IVC’s new logo retains the image of the cross, which signifies IVC’s roots in the Gospel story and our call to live a life of faith in service. We have added the tagline ‘*Experience. Service. Reflection.*’, the path that men and women follow as Ignatian Volunteers. They bring their lifetimes of experience to the service of others, aided by reflection on their work as they find God is in the midst of their participation in IVC.

Over the past twelve years, I have heard story after story from Ignatian Volunteers about the power of the IVC process of service and reflection. I’ve often wondered how the IVC program stays with people, outside of their service, retreats and monthly meetings. Thanks to a generous grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, we have been able to explore this very issue. IVC partnered with the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University to survey current and former IVC volunteers, their spouses, and IVC spiritual reflectors to understand more fully the impact of the IVC program. The stories I heard were confirmed: the vast majority of the men and women who join IVC to “give back” and “make a difference” do appreciate and stay in IVC for the spiritual parts of the program. (You can read more about the CARA study in our cover story.)

May God bless our world with peace and justice in 2007. Please know how deeply grateful we are for all of those in the IVC family. A special thanks to all those who had a hand in bringing our new logo, and the CARA study, to birth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Suzanne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Suzanne

IVC Los Angeles Creates Della Strada Award

Jennifer Mangali, Regional Director, IVC Los Angeles

In the fall of 2006, the IVC Los Angeles Regional Council and staff set out to create an opportunity to recognize individuals who exemplify the values of service and social justice in their personal and professional lives.

The desire to give recognition, to give an award, was truly about celebrating. As members of IVC we are asked every day to search for the presence of God in all things. God is around us every day, especially in our celebrations.

The criteria for naming an IVC award were simple. It must be meaningful in the Ignatian world and it must represent in some way the relationship in Ignatian Spirituality between action and reflection, speaking to the role of the laity in the Church in serving those in need.

When searching for a way to encapsulate these criteria, we found the Madonna Della Strada staring back at us. The Della Strada Award is named after Sancta Maria della Strada, the first Church that Ignatius and the first Jesuits used to serve the urban poor in the center of Rome. The Award honors an individual whose life reflects the Ignatian values of direct service of the poor, and of working and educating for a more just society.



Fr. Robert Caro, SJ, LMU Vice President for Mission and Identity, greets guests with Sr. Peg Dolan



Sr. Peg Dolan - First Della Strada Award Recipient



Sr. Peg Dolan, RSHM, received the 2006 Della Strada Award from IVC Los Angeles.

Who better to receive the very first Della Strada Award than Sr. Peg Dolan, RSHM and Alumni Chaplain at Loyola Marymount University (LMU)? Sr. Peg was presented with the Award at a reception on October 15, 2006 at Loyola Marymount.

Sr. Peg first heard about IVC eight years ago. When IVC moved to open a program in Los Angeles, she eagerly became a founding member of the Planning Committee and Regional Council. "I see IVC," shared Sr. Peg, "as a way to age gracefully, grow spiritually and serve others in need."

In addition to her service with IVC, Sr. Peg is also moderator of Gryphon Circle (an all women's service organization at LMU) and a Retreat Director. She has served as Director of Ignatian retreats for the past thirty years. At LMU, Sr. Peg has spearheaded several programs that take students, alumni, and friends of the University into the community to help people and institutions in need. In 1996, she launched the Alumni for Others program at LMU. As LMU Alumni Chaplain, Sr. Peg organizes retreats and spirituality programs, as well as provides counseling and spiritual direction for alumni.

IVC San Diego Honors Fr. Gil Gentile



Fr. Gil Gentile, SJ, founding member and spiritual leader of IVC San Diego, received the Della Strada Award on January 28, 2007, recognizing his many gifts of love and service to the San Diego community.

Fr. Joe Spieler, SJ, Provincial Assistant for Formation and Vocation, California Province

- Society of Jesus, wrote of the afternoon:

"Beyond the high spirits and eloquent talks shone what has to be the triumph of Vatican II's dream: the prominent leadership of lay women and men in the church. No one could miss the ecclesial maturity and capability of so many outstanding San Diego lay people who spoke to honor Gil Gentile.

For me as a Jesuit it was a thrill to observe the Ignatian themes woven into the remarks and woven into the lives of women and men who revealed years of lived experience of the Exercises and friendship with the Society of Jesus.

I sat there buoyed up, animated by the goodness of the leaders of IVC as well as by their obvious familiarity with the same elements of the dream we Jesuits try to measure up to: generosity to God, introspection in the Lord, appreciation of the church as it is.

Leave it to Gil Gentile to have created through the years an edifice of relationships drawing together so many Kingdom people. He has created the friendly container for people to step forward with their gifts of goodness for the world, especially for the forgotten ones." A full list of donors from the IVC San Diego event can be found on page 8.

A Message From Fr. Gil Gentile

"I was very humbled by the outpouring of affection, support and goodwill of all of the great people with us at our first IVC San Diego fund raising event and award presentation. I was also very edified and encouraged to feel the great energy for building God's kingdom and for laboring "*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*", for God's greater glory, present that January afternoon.

I looked around at all of the folks gathered and realized that having such support and friendship from these wonderful, extraordinary, beautiful people must mean that I'm doing at least a little something right. AND it means that IVC is doing more than just "a little something right"!

And so, from the bottom of a very full heart, I thank you."

New Email Address for IVC

Along with the new logo, the Ignatian Volunteer Corps is updating its email addresses to reflect the IVC name. You can now find the website at www.ivcusa.org. The IVC national staff and regions can be reached at their new email addresses (see below). Please update your Internet bookmarks and email address books.

<i>General Information</i>	info@ivcusa.org	<i>IVC Detroit</i>	Detroit@ivcusa.org
<i>Suzanne Geaney</i>	sgeaney@ivcusa.org	<i>IVC Los Angeles</i>	LA@ivcusa.org
<i>Tamara Zavislan</i>	tzavislan@ivcusa.org	<i>IVC Minneapolis/St. Paul</i>	TwinCities@ivcusa.org
<i>Jennifer Anthony</i>	janthony@ivcusa.org	<i>IVC New York</i>	NewYork@ivcusa.org
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Working for Change - A Board Member's Perspective

Sheila Smith, IVC Board of Directors

In the middle of our family dinner this past Christmas, reminiscent of childhood family gatherings where my parents encouraged us to share and defend our positions on religion, politics and other non-politically-correct subjects, my brother, Charles turned to me and asked, "Why, given all the non-profit boards on which you sit, have you now chosen to be on the board of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps"?

My daughter, Lisa, immediately came to my defense: "Uncle Charles, don't you realize that Mom doesn't have Catholic guilt, she has RSCJ (Religious of the Sacred Heart) guilt and the Foundress of that order in the 1800's was a sister of a Jesuit!" Needless to say, there was a lot of laughter.

Seriously, why the IVC Board, why now, and what have I learned from my short tenure on this dedicated, intelligent, purposeful board?

I am currently the Chair of the Barat Education Foundation. Our mission is to build upon the Barat College legacy of Education and Social Action. We have a deep respect for intellectual and spiritual values, a social awareness that impels to action, and a commitment to personal growth in the context of community. These are also the values of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps.

What makes IVC unique is its spiritual reflection program that helps volunteers find God in their service. Reading about the experiences of IVC's many dedicated volunteers witnesses to the importance of IVC's spiritual dimension. I appreciate how, day in and day out, Ignatian Volunteers build community in not just physical ways, but spiritual and emotional ways as well.

Unfortunately, at this time in our country's history, more and more Americans are struggling just to raise families and meet their rent and/or mortgage. Fewer have the safety net of family and community. There is little time to volunteer in their schools, food kitchens, homeless

centers and churches. There is even little time for community.

Fortunately, 12 years ago, Jim Conroy, SJ, and Charlie Costello, SJ, shared a vision to bring together retired women and men, aged 50+, to serve people who are poor and integrate into that service strong spiritual components.



It was hard for me to say "No" to an organization that has no endowment but has successfully launched 12 regional programs in the East, West and Midwest, supporting 258 volunteers working with 218 nonprofits that serve the increasingly marginalized in our society: immigrants, Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, women and the growing ranks of our working poor families.

As an IVC Board member, I have witnessed the individual commitments of the IVC team of regional directors, national staff and Ignatian Volunteers. These passionate individuals challenged me to think about my own behavior, as well as what the Barat Education Foundation could do, to make a difference in one person's life.

One doesn't need to discover the cure for cancer or rid the world of social injustice to make a difference. It is just as important just to say "Hello" to that senior in the nursing home, to read to a child in a shelter, to mentor a high school student, or to deliver meals to the homeless.

What energizes me about IVC is that every day one of our Ignatian Volunteers has made a difference in someone's life. St. Madeleine Sophie Barat said, "Your example, even more than your words, will be an eloquent lesson to the world." Our generation still has time to make more of a difference. I invite you to join us as we set out to be an example for generations to come.

"One doesn't need to discover the cure for cancer or rid the world of social injustice to make a difference. It is just as important just to say "Hello" to that senior in the nursing home, to read to a child in a shelter, to mentor a high school student, or to deliver meals to the homeless."

Friends and Supporters of IVC

We are honored to be able to recognize the individuals and organizations whose generous financial support helps to provide IVC members opportunities 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. *Listed alphabetically. List represents gifts received between July 1, 2006 and January 31, 2007.*

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*"I can't be and do what
 you are and do. You can't
 be and do what I am and
 do. Together we can do
 amazing things."*

- Mother Theresa

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 Award - October 2006*

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*“To serve is to make whole
in some way. Service.
It’s more of a grace. It’s
very close to love, but a
very pure kind of love. A
befriending of the life in
others, unconditionally.”*

- Rachel Naomi Remen

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You Can Make a Difference in the Future of IVC

Estate gifts and bequests are investments in the future, helping to continue the work of IVC today and for generations to come. Like any other investment, an estate gift is an important decision that can give great personal satisfaction. We would be happy to talk with you or your financial planner about opportunities to make a lifetime gift to IVC, through a bequest, life insurance, retirement funds, or other assets, that best serves your interests.

Contact Tamara Zavislan, IVC Director of Development, 888-831-4686 or tzavislan@ivcusa.org, for more information.



“Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve.

You don’t have to have a college degree to serve...

You don’t have to know Einstein’s theory of relativity to serve...

You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love.”

- Martin Luther King Jr.

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*“Work does not distract us
from God...It continues
the work of God through
us.”*

- Joan Chittister

Ignatian Volunteer Helps Resettle Refugees

Frank Wassermann, IVC Cincinnati Volunteer

Catholic Social Services of Cincinnati operates as the local refugee resettlement agency of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), which sponsors refugees referred by the U.S. State Department. In addition to resettlement assistance — housing, job referral and training, cash, health care, food stamps — the agency provides ongoing 'immigration counseling' services to the refugees. This includes various kinds of services the refugees need to help them adjust to their new life. The agency has been facing cutbacks due to loss of financial support from the diocese which has put a strain on its ability to fully serve the refugees.

As an Ignatian Volunteer, with my background as an attorney, I am assisting the regular staff by providing counseling on immigration issues — primarily helping refugees obtain permanent residency (the 'green card') and bring other family members to the United States. U.S. immigration policy offers several special programs which enable refugees to bring close relatives to join them without the long waits of regular family immigration. Parents, spouses, and minor children can come to the U.S. under these programs.

Most of the people I encounter come from Africa, especially the eastern 'horn' area — Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Eritrea. I have also worked with refugees from Cuba to Nepal. Through my work, I have compiled a manual on immigration issues to help other volunteers, such as the social work students from local universities, to also do this work on behalf of future refugees.



I am awed by the courage and resiliency of these people in undertaking a new life in the United States, after their many hardships living as refugees abroad, as they struggle with language and cultural barriers. It is a privilege to meet them and help them secure legal status in the United States and bring family members to join them in this country.



IRA Charitable Gift Rollover Opportunity

In August 2006, President Bush signed groundbreaking legislation that permits tax-free distributions to charities through individual retirement accounts (IRA).

Tax-Free Distributions from IRA's

Prior to the passage of this legislation, all IRA distributions were taxed as income. The new law allows tax-free IRA distributions in 2007 of up to \$100,000 to tax-exempt organizations such as the Ignatian Volunteer Corps.

Window of Opportunity

After age 70½, you may direct a tax-free distribution from your IRA to the Ignatian Volunteer Corps as a rollover gift. Because the provision expires at the end of this year, you must make the gift(s) by December 31, 2007.

Making an IRA Rollover Gift

The new legislation reduces the cost of making a gift by eliminating the income tax on IRA distributions. The gift must be made as a direct rollover gift from the trustee of the IRA to a tax-exempt organization, such as the Ignatian Volunteer Corps.

The IRA rollover gift can be counted toward the mandatory IRA withdrawal obligation for donors over the age of 70½. Gifts to the Ignatian Volunteer Corps will be used to support the more than 250 Volunteers nationwide — mature men and women helping children, families, and adults who are materially poor.

If you wish to discuss this option, please contact: Tamara Zavislan, Director of Development 888-831-4686, tzavislan@ivcusa.org

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) is a national non-profit organization and does not provide tax, legal, or financial advice. Any document or information shared by the IVC staff is intended to be for purposes of information only. IVC strongly encourages donors to consult with competent financial and legal professionals to discuss the applicability of this information.



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To find out more about IVC Programs or to become a volunteer, please contact the regional office in your area or visit the IVC website at www.ivcusa.org.

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