



International Program Handbook and Covenant 2015

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1. Introduction

In being a part of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, a volunteer joins hundreds of other men and women serving throughout the United States and in other countries, as well as the thousands who have come before. Our volunteers open themselves up to being transformed by experiences at work, in community, on retreat, and in your neighborhood. We encourage you to enter fully into the experiences—to participate actively in community; to form relationships with the women, men, and children with whom you work and live; to challenge each other to live more simply; and to trust that in all things, God is present and alive.

The following pages contain important information to make your year as a Jesuit Volunteer successful. You are responsible for knowing and upholding the policies outlined within this handbook and for ensuring that your communities are working together to live out the mission and values of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.

A. JVC's Mission Statement

Aspiring to create a more just and hopeful world, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps engages passionate young people in vital service within poor communities, fostering the growth of leaders committed to faith in action.

B. A Brief History of the International Program of JVC

The seeds of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps were planted in 1956, when a small group of college students began serving the native people of Alaska's Copper Valley. Around the same time, several US Jesuit Provinces had lay volunteer programs to assist in their international missions. U.S. volunteers in Iraq, Jamaica, Micronesia, Chile, Zambia, Brazil, Korea and other countries lived and worked with Jesuits, following their daily routines and assisting in the schools, as well as in pastoral and social service projects. By the late 1960s the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in the U.S. was well-established, but applicants to most international volunteer programs, including those sponsored by the Jesuits, dropped dramatically as the Catholic Church and the world experienced radical changes.

In the early 1980s, a renewed interest in international volunteer programs mushroomed with inquiries beginning to pour into the Jesuit Mission and campus ministry offices across the U.S. In response to this growing interest, the Board of Jesuit Missions, Inc. in Washington, D.C. established an organization to handle these requests. In November 1983, Jesuit International Volunteers was established and Fr. Ted Dziak, SJ, was hired as the first program director.

Jesuit International Volunteers (JIV) was later renamed Jesuit Volunteers International (JVI) as a result of growing collaboration with the five domestic regions of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. For the same reason, JVI and JVC East, Midwest, South and Southwest made the exciting decision to incorporate as one unified organization – the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, which took effect in 2009. Bringing together groups with shared history, values, and mission, this merger gives us additional resources and capacity.

JVC is a national and international organization, governed by a board of directors, implementing a program of more than sixty communities worldwide. Jesuit Volunteers work directly with program staff based throughout the United States, including in Baltimore, Maryland; Detroit, Michigan; Santa

Clara, California; and Washington, D.C. JVC's main office is in Baltimore, Maryland, and is home to the office of the president and other administrative departments. Most staff members in the International Program work out of the Washington, D.C. office.

C. Commitment to the Four Values of JVC

Spirituality Simple Living Community Social Justice

These four values are *lived* in daily work and relationships. Theologies of Liberation from Latin America and Africa have stressed the necessity of “praxis,” putting *faith into action*. As westerners we have historically emphasized “doxis,” or *correct thinking*. Only recently, thanks to ongoing theological renewal, emphasis on Catholic social teaching, and the ecclesiastical changes initiated in the spirit of Vatican II, have we re-discovered the centrality of praxis.

Spirituality

Core to being a Jesuit Volunteer is open engagement with spirituality and faith. JVC facilitates prayer, retreats, and other activities grounded in the Catholic, Ignatian tradition. JVC creates opportunities for volunteers to reflect on their commitment to find God in all things and put their faith into action through service for the rest of their lives. Volunteers are given resources and time to reflect on their work and their community, as well as what is going on within themselves. JVC encourages retreats, workshops, spiritual direction, and other opportunities for volunteers to consider and share insights drawn from their work and communities, while deepening their understanding of the program's values.

Simple Living

JVC's structure creates valuable opportunities for volunteers to live a simple, practical life. With basic needs met and living in communities alongside people who are poor and marginalized, they separate needs from wants and gain freedom from the material. As part of a supportive community, they learn to prioritize, put people before things, and make deliberate, intentional decisions about how to use their time, money, and talents. The two year commitment is a chance for volunteers to reflect on simple living, define it in their own terms, and explore how to carry it into their lives. It is also an opportunity to reflect on God's creation as a gift and the way in which we care for it and use it for the benefit of all in a spirit of respect and gratitude.

Community

JVC creates intentional communities that help people broaden their perspectives and confront boundaries. During their service, Jesuit Volunteers are placed in peer communities that foster spiritual growth and engagement. Volunteers share meals, reflect and pray together, live among the people they serve, and seek to be attentive of the lives of their companions. As apostolic communities, they challenge and support one another, gain new insight into the realities of poverty and injustice, and commit to a lifetime of advocacy and service. By fostering communities built on accountability, respect, and mutual support, JVC helps volunteers understand their place in the world, and how they will engage with it. Concern for all community members needs to be a priority to build a healthy community.

Social Justice

JVC makes a real impact in the world by increasing the capacity of local organizations to provide direct service. JVC places volunteers alongside those who are disenfranchised so that they come to understand the realities of poverty and injustice faced by much of the world. They are transformed through reflection on these experiences, and by the close interpersonal relationships they form with those they serve. The JVC experience brings a global perspective on living and seeing the world that becomes a part of those who serve, and they spend their lives advocating for compassion, fair treatment, and structural change that addresses the root causes of injustice.

The challenge to commit oneself to the four values is radical; we have been shaped by a society marked by rampant individualism and consumerism. The people and cultures we approach can authentically minister to us and allow us to re-examine the attitudes we may have unknowingly assimilated.

The four values are a direction in which we hope to be moving. As Jesuit Volunteers, we continually redefine, both individually and collectively, the meaning of the values in order to engage more deeply with them in each context we are in. The four values comprise a spirituality - the inner reality from which animates the lived outer expression of living simply, witnessing faith, doing justice, and building community. Without prayer: living simply becomes legalism; community becomes housemates randomly living together; witnessing faith becomes privatized ritual; and doing justice takes the form of an individualistic crusade.

For more on each of the Four Values, see *Appendix A: JVC's Four Values in Context*.

2. Our Jesuit Connections

An Invitation and Response: the 34th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus

Jesuit Volunteers work in collaboration with – and at the invitation of -- Jesuits in each host country. Although JVs are not Jesuits, we share a common Ignatian charism and vision. For JVC to function, it is necessary for the volunteer to understand how their work supports the overall mission of the Jesuits in that region. Conversely, the program will lack stability and a sense of purposeful growth without clear ownership and investment by the Jesuits. The 34th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus (1995) affirmed,

Jesuits are both 'men for others' and men with others. This essential characteristic of our way of proceeding calls for an attitude and readiness to cooperate, to listen and to learn from others...The Society of Jesus recognizes as a grace of our day and hope for the future that laity 'take an active, conscientious, and responsible part in this great moment of history.' We seek to respond to this grace by putting ourselves at the service of the full realization of the mission of the laity. We commit ourselves to that end by cooperation with the laity in mission.¹

¹ *Documents of General Congregation 34*. Section 3.3,C "Cooperation with Laity in Mission" (*National Jesuit News*, April, 1996)

Many lay persons desire to be united with us through participation in lay apostolic associations of Ignatian inspiration. The Society views positively this growth of lay associations. They give witness to the Ignatian charism in the world, enable us to undertake with them works of greater dimensions, and help their members to live the faith more fully. Jesuits are encouraged to know these various associations through personal contact and to develop a genuine interest in them. As privileged means for the Christian formation of lay people in Ignatian spirituality, and for the sake of partnership in a common mission, the Society promotes...Jesuit Volunteer programs [which] 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 volunteer associations, to develop better national and international networks among them, and to recognize them as a work of the Society.²

Jesuit Volunteers are asked to ratify the above invitation through your lived response to lay vocation as understood in the four values. In doing so you encourage our Jesuit brothers to more fully live their Jesuit charism and explore together the Ignatian spirituality which is at the heart of both the Society of Jesus and JVC.

3. JVC Formation Program

A. Orientation/Training

Orientation to the JVC's formation program begins even before a volunteer is accepted. This pre-orientation includes the entire application process: the experience of responding to application questions, of discerning with family and friends, of engaging with JVC staff via interviews and in the Discernment Weekend (DWE). DWEs are typically held in late February or March and are a chance for applicants to become more fully introduced to JVC's program and values, and the depth of the JVC commitment. While the weekend primarily allows the applicants a chance to discern about whether they want to be in the program, the JVC staff also further evaluates the applicant for an international program fit.

Travel costs to and from the site of the Discernment Weekend are the responsibility of the applicant. There is always a DWE on the East coast (usually Washington DC) and usually also in the Midwest (often Chicago) and West Coast (usually Santa Clara, CA).

The intensive JV Orientation is in two parts. The first stage is the two-week-long Summer Orientation held in the U.S. in July for all international JVs. Summer Orientation addresses themes such as crossing cultures, identity and perception, theology of mission, relationships and self-care, introductory workshops in teaching, and a more intensive exploration of the JVC program's values. The emphasis of Summer Orientation is intentionally more general given that JVs are going to countries all over the world.

² Ibid, no. 15-16.

The second stage of training, In-Country Orientation (ICO), occurs in the host country and is facilitated by second year JVs, the In-Country Coordinator, and local resource people. After arriving in the host country, JVs enter into In-Country Orientation specifically designed for the locale. Second Year JVs have planned (and submit their proposal to the JVC office) and will implement ICO which should provide an important foundation and introduction to life in the host country. ICO is more site specific than Summer Orientation, varying from two weeks to over a month in length and often includes a host family stay. Topics covered include the following:

- A. Sociology: Family structures; gender and racial/ethnic issues; perceptions of North Americans; alcohol and drugs, violence; influences on youth
- B. Power/Politics: Who has power and who threatens power? How is power distributed? Freedom of political discussion; regional political influences; media coverage and biases; political parties
- C. Ecclesiology: the role of church in everyday life; history of the local church and Jesuit presence; the church and social justice; role of laity and clerical personnel
- D. Culture: An expression of world-view; traditional presentations; outside influences; music and dress; honor and shame.
- E. Economics: Distribution of wealth; influence of outside forces; imports/exports; local salaries and living costs; unemployment; spending priorities (for families, government...).
- F. Education: Value and priority of education; schools structures; role of national exams; pedagogy of local teachers; discipline; counseling.
- G. History: important national/regional events; colonial remnants; emerging influences; immigrants and refugees; influence of geography and natural disasters.
- H. JV Life: The four values; spirituality nights and retreats; presence to one another; cultural sensitivity/considerations; opportunities for spiritual direction; logistics (finances...); self-care plans
- I. Personal Health: Precautions; food and water; cleanliness, health emergencies
- J. Personal Safety: Realistic concerns; regional travel; break-ins and theft; precautions at night; influence of alcohol/drugs; animals/insects; bicycles and traffic.
- K. Gender Issues.
- L. Racism and Privilege.
- M. Language Training
- N. Emergency Situations
- O. Embassy Registration: Should be done online and ahead of time

B. Retreats, Re-Orient/Dis-Orient (Reo/DisO)

Retreats: During each year of a JV's service, there are three to four retreats (not including ICO and ReO/DisO). At least one of these retreats should be 3-4 days long. The planning and facilitation of the retreats are the responsibility of the volunteer community with assistance of the In-Country Coordinator and/or support people. Retreats reflect on the four values and challenges the JVs are currently facing and provide time for togetherness and relaxation. Site supervisors should be advised of retreat times in advance so that volunteers will be free to attend these weekends. Retreat time is not considered vacation time.

ReOrientation/DisOrientation: Near the conclusion of each program year, the JVC staff facilitates a longer retreat held in the host country. JVs evaluate the past year looking at the lived expression of the four

values. There are also breakout sessions that address the concerns of 1st year JVs preparing for their 2nd year (ReO), and 2nd year JVs soon returning to the U.S. (DisO).

Retreats and ReO/DisO with JVC staff are an integral part of the JVC program and JVs are expected to participate. While obligations at a worksite may seem more pressing in a given moment, intentional time for reflection, analysis and prayer as a community are at the core of the JV formation experience.

C. Community Nights

Weekly community nights allow JVs to examine the four values more deeply in light of their experiences at work and in their communities. They are planned by each member of the community and are intended to enable the community to gather, to challenge each other, to develop conflict resolution skills, and to support growth. Community night ideas include sharing life stories, discussing current events, playing games, volunteering together, walking around the neighborhood, setting goals as a community, choosing a simpler lifestyle and consumption choices, discussing gender/sexuality, hosting a talent night, and discussing self-care and handling stress.

D. Spirituality Nights

Weekly spirituality nights are one of the most important sources of volunteer support and growth. They bring community members together to explore and share their faith. The responsibilities of planning and facilitating spirituality nights are shared by members of the community. Activities might include reading a scripture passage and reflecting together on its meaning, praying the rosary, sharing faith history, or exploring music, art, or poetry that has a spiritual meaning. Volunteers may design their own reflection materials, network with other JVs, or use reflection mailings sent from the JVC office or from the Orientation binder. Returned volunteers have observed a direct correlation between the health of community life and the commitment to authentic shared reflection. Moreover, this time can become "sacred" in that each person is reserving this time for the other members of the community, and may on occasion need to make a personal sacrifice to be present to the community.

E. Spiritual Direction

JVC encourages volunteers to inquire with the In-Country Coordinator about spiritual direction. As contemplatives in action, the tendency is often to err on the side of action. JVs are expected integrate their active life with prayer, and a spiritual director can be an invaluable companion in this journey. A spiritual director can also help 2nd year volunteers in discerning the question of what comes after JVC. The spiritual director is not a counselor, confessor, or mediator between you and God. Rather, the spiritual director can assist in terms of offering material for prayer, helping a JV observe patterns or themes in the spiritual life, actively listening, and encouraging a continued commitment to prayer.

F. Support Materials

JVC provides resource materials, such as teaching insights, reflection tools, social analysis on justice issues, and retreat exercises, to complement any materials available in your host country. JVC provides these resources through the monthly JVC newsletter *In the Field*, quarterly 'snail-mail' packages from the International Program Office, and emails from your Program Coordinator. Should direct teaching or classroom management support be helpful, JVC can connect you with an FJV who serves as a classroom teacher. *If you are in need of an additional resource, please ask!* JVC is here to support you if there is anything that can enhance the quality of your service or reflection.

Each quarter, JVC will share a reflection tool in the 'snail mail' package for communities to complete as a 'scribe update.' Each community chooses a volunteer to serve as a scribe at Summer Orientation; the scribe will remind and lead the community in this exercise, often at a Community Night. Because the JVC staff works as a team and all members take an interest in the JVs, the entire staff may read your updates.

4. Volunteer Support

A. The JVC office

JVC's International Program team includes one Program Director and several Program Coordinators. While each JV community will communicate primarily with a designated Program Coordinator, all members of the staff work as a team and update each other several times per month on the highlights of each JV community. *The entire team is here to support each of you.* Programmatic tasks of the International Program include promotion of JVC; volunteer selection; training and orientation of volunteers; exploration of new sites and assessment of our presence in existing sites; volunteer support and formation in the field; collaboration with the domestic JVC program; coordinating with JVC's Baltimore office on the management of volunteers' health insurance and providing documentation for volunteers' loan deferments.

JVC's Program Team, coordinating with In-Country support people, continually assess current and potential sites. The majority of times, the JV is in a single worksite and community during the 2-year term of service. In rare occasions and after much conversation with the ICC, site supervisor, JVC and JVC staff, a JV worksite or community may change during his/her time of service.

B. The In-Country Coordinator, Support People and Jesuit Relationships

The principle of subsidiary would counsel that the JVC office does not micro-manage the day-to-day issues that arise in your host country. The In-Country Coordinator (ICC), normally a Jesuit, is a facilitator, resource person, and companion. The ICC helps coordinate worksites, arranges country visas, and serves as a liaison among the volunteer, JVC, and site supervisors. In addition, the ICC may join the community for community nights, spirituality nights, or retreats. The most important role of the ICC is that of *cura personalis*, individual and pastoral care of the volunteer. In some countries, the ICC does not live in the same place as the JVs; in these circumstances, additional local support personnel provide logistical and pastoral care.

JVC encourages JVs to be proactive in engaging with the ICC and other local support personnel, while simultaneously recognizing that these individuals generously contribute their time amid an often already over-extended schedule. It is important to both make the Jesuits feel welcome in the JV home and to learn what level of volunteer presence is appropriate at Jesuit communities, as this will vary by site.

C. Site Contact/Supervisor

The Site Contact is the person directly responsible for the JVs at the worksite. JVC coordinates with the Site Contact and the ICC in order to arrange and evaluate volunteer placement and values regular communication among all three parties.

The Site Supervisor is someone to whom the JV can go for support and feedback. While the Site Contact and the Site Supervisor are sometimes the same person, it is also common for these roles to be fulfilled by different people. The JV is always encouraged to take initiative in building a positive relationship with his/her Site Supervisor and Site Contact. Any changes in the Site Supervisor and Site Contact should be communicated to the JVC staff immediately.

5. Living as a Jesuit Volunteer

A. Solidarity with Program Ideals, Apostolic Availability, and Flexibility

The extensive JV application and interviewing process has two purposes: 1) allow the JVC office to learn more about applicants to make appropriate selections and 2) allow the volunteer to learn about the commitments of JVC. It's not just the staff who selects you, but you who select JVC among other service and career options. Therefore, when an invitation to become a volunteer is extended, there is a reciprocity implied: that a volunteer desires to commit to JVC, its responsibilities, and living out its values.

During your placement process and orientation you may experience vagueness in the description of your work or life as a JV in country. The reality is that there can be unforeseen changes in the months and weeks prior to your arrival *and* throughout your two years. Considering the limited resources and personnel in your placement, neither your site supervisor nor the JVC office is in a position to determine your exact assignment months before you arrive. Furthermore, the daily life of a given JV community can change drastically from year to year; each individual and community experience is unique. Therefore, a healthy sense of flexibility and *realistic* expectations (e.g. not replicating a previous international experience, being open to various interpretations of the four values, etc.) are essential because you will be invited constantly to learn and re-learn over your JV years, and your experience will undoubtedly not play out exactly as you envision it.

We ask potential volunteers to reflect on the notion of apostolic availability, an Ignatian charism used by the Jesuits. It refers to a person's openness to service where the need best matches one's gifts and talents. Ignatius lays out the idea of apostolic availability in his First Principal and Foundation: "We should not fix our desires on health or sickness, wealth or poverty, success or failure, a long life or a short one. For everything has the potential of calling forth in us a deeper response in our life in God. Our only desire and our one choice should be this: I want and choose what better leads to the deepening of God's life in me." Jesuits practice apostolic availability when their Superior gives them a particular mission, believing that he has their best intentions at heart as well as a larger picture of the needs of the society.

JVC asks JVs to be open to the variety of possible placements. This means that we listen to the needs and desires of all people involved in making a decision, including that of the applicant. The program staff desires trust from the JV that we have his/her best intentions at heart as well as the larger picture of the needs of the program and the people we serve.

B. Behavioral Expectations and Cultural Sensitivity

*Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion,
is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy.*

Else we may find ourselves treading on another's dreams.

More serious still, we may forget that God was here before our arrival.

-Max Warren, missionary

JVs strive to be the antithesis of the caricature of the “ugly American traveler” -- loud, self-absorbed, and culturally insensitive. As guests in a new country, we are privileged to walk with those who have invited us. Through their hospitality, we are given an opportunity for growth and respect.

We also recognize that a JV's two-year experience is part of a much longer history of Jesuit Volunteer presence--those who have come before and those who will come after you. We are beneficiaries of the “good name” of JVC and those who were present before us. Our choices shape the reputation, positively or negatively, of all JVs. In this sense, community extends beyond those a volunteer lives with during those two years.

The old model of missionary was one who went out to “convert.” This posture presumes superiority; that “my” ways are best and “they” need to change. Contemporary theology recognizes that the real conversion in cross-cultural experiences is in the one attempting to render service. For such a conversion to occur, JVs recognize that they are in the position of learner, and thereby remain open to their experiences and reserve opinions and observations for a forum where they might be properly processed.

JVs are to be attentive not only to the cultures they are preparing to enter, but also acknowledge the way they've been shaped by the cultures they are leaving. This includes the social influences of family, work/service experiences, religious traditions, university life, and educational opportunities.

C. Accompaniment:

Another implicit component is that of *accompaniment*. The word itself reveals much of its ideal: To share bread together [*com=with/pan=bread*]. In more traditional cultures, meals symbolize hospitality and sharing in one another's lives. As JVs you are not bringing something to “these people” which they do not already have. Rather, you walk together as companions, and through your association both the JVs and members of the host country are offered in personal and spiritual enrichment. You are invited to participate, not to bring changes or advice to your worksite. Rather than owning your job JVs plant seeds, which in the larger scheme may bear fruit, long after your presence has faded. With this acknowledgment, JVs attend to the more immediately felt change -- that is, the change within yourself.

D. Rights and Responsibilities of a Jesuit Volunteer

RIGHTS

- **Housing.** JVC provides housing for JV communities, often in collaboration with the local Jesuits. Payment of rent, utilities, and maintenance needs vary among communities. JVC provides the

appropriate budgeted funding for housing requirements and/or needs that are to be paid by JV communities.

- **Stipend & Budget.** JVC creates and provides a budget for each JV community to cover the finances needed for items such as rent, utilities, food, retreats, etc. The community budget outlines the amount designated to a community each month and helps guide the community in their life of simplicity and solidarity. JVs receive a monthly personal stipend of a local currency amount equivalent to the buying power of \$60US to cover personal needs and entertainment.
- **Health Insurance.** JVC provides health insurance for all JVs during their time of service. Health insurance coverage begins the first day of the first month of service and ends the last day of the last month of service. For more information on JVC health insurance, see page 19.
- **Transportation.** JVC provides travel to site/country at the beginning of service and then home after the completion of the term of service. If a JV chooses to travel at the end of his/her term of service, JVC will cover the cost of the ticket from the last destination of travel to home. If that ticket costs more than the ticket directly home from the site of service, JVC can cover only the amount that the trip home directly from site of service would have cost. "Home" is defined by the JV's permanent address on file. If a JV chooses to leave the program early, the JV is financially responsible for travel home. Three months prior to the end of their service term, JVs should let JVC staff know whether the volunteer will be traveling home directly from the location of service or from an alternate destination. At that time, JVC staff will check in with JVs for this information and should be advised of any changes to the JV's permanent address. Most often, the JV is responsible for purchasing the return ticket and submitting a receipt to JVC for reimbursement.
- **Formation & Retreats.** JVs participate an extensive formation program, consisting of a two-part Orientation (2 weeks in the summer stateside with all departing volunteers and an in-country orientation upon arrival to site/country), 3-4 volunteer-led retreats throughout a year, and one annual JVC staff led retreat.
- **Vacation.** JVs receive two weeks of vacation per year of service. These weeks may not necessarily follow in succession. The schedules of most JVs are tied to the school year. For these JVs, vacation is often aligned with the designated summer and/or holiday breaks. Volunteers with an extended break are expected to participate in a summer project, identified as their secondary placement. This secondary placement is solidified in partnership with the local Jesuits in accordance with the needs they identify, and may, but need not be, an education related placement. For volunteers working a schedule other than a school year, trying to arrange vacation during quieter times at work and times when you might be able to relax with other JVs is preferred.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Travel. JVs agree to remain in their host region for the two years of service without returning to the United States or traveling outside of their designated region. JVs are also asked to refrain from elective travel within their host region for the first 4 months in their host country.

- **Visitors.** JVC asks JVs to refrain from hosting visitors for their entire first year in country, and local visitors are not allowed to stay in a JV house. Second year JVs should not have visitors during the new JVs' first two weeks in country, In-Country Orientation, the staff's site visit, or ReO-DisO. The rationale for this policy is born of the experience of past volunteers and in the understanding of a JV's calling of to whom to be primarily present and serve. When a guest arrives, families close to the JVs may feel obliged to offer a celebration. If each volunteer is showered with visitors, this expectation can quickly become burdensome for the local community. In addition, another "host" is the JV community. With any visit, there is a disruption to living space, community schedules, and reflection times. The JV community can be overwhelmed with visitors, so much so that the community effectively disbands for this period. JVs often express their commitment to this policy during the application process, but waver in their commitment to the policy once in the field.
- **Email communication.** JVs will receive a special email address upon becoming a volunteer. This email address is the primary mode of communication between the JVC and JVs. All JVs are expected to check this email address at least once per week
- **Alcohol use.** Volunteers are expected to use alcohol appropriately. JVs should strive for solidarity with the powerless and injured, including victims of abuse perpetuated by alcohol. JV's should also be aware that one's attitudes toward alcohol are culturally conditioned. In the United States, alcohol is portrayed as the means to relaxation and companionship. In most cultures where JVC is present, drinking alcohol is synonymous with getting drunk. While there may be appropriate times to drink moderately, if you are unsure, err on the side of abstinence.
- **Illegal drug use.** Volunteers are expected to refrain from any illegal drug usage as characterized by both U.S. law and the host nation law. Any JV who participates in illegal activity can be terminated from the program immediately. If this is unclear, please see a staff person before leaving Summer Orientation.
- **Relationships.** JVC discourages JVs from beginning romantic relationships throughout their term of service. If a romantic relationship is under consideration, we expect that both the JVC office and the in-country support person will be informed before a dating relationship develops. We insist on this for the safety of the JV and community as well as for the goals of the program. Generally, the JV involved in the relationship will want to be the one to inform JVC and the local support person. In some cases, a serious relationship can become an obstacle to the experience of a JV living in community. Therefore, there may come a time to fully choose *either* the exclusive relationship *or* the expectations outlined in the JVC covenant. It is a difficult balance to whole-heartedly give oneself to both a serious romantic relationship and the JVC program without feeling like one (or both) commitments are being short-changed. **Please refer to Significant Relationships in Appendix B for an extended discussion of JVC's relationship policy and discernment guidelines.**
- **Personal Behavior.** Volunteers are expected to refrain from any behavior that endangers oneself, one's community, or the reputation of JVC. Any contrary action or behavior that is not consistent with the spirit of the Covenant can result in termination from the program.

- **Finances.** JVs are responsible for submitting community budgets in a timely manner on a monthly basis and for being responsible stewards of finance.

E. Elective Travel Policy during Term of Service

JVs agree to remain in their host region for the two years of service without returning to the United States or traveling outside of their designated region.

Death/Terminal Illness of Immediate Family Member

The terminal illness of an immediate family member (parent or sibling) may cause family to want to fly a volunteer home. In the event of a family funeral, JVC staff is open to a volunteer briefly returning home and invites conversation between the JV and staff to determine the best course of action before a decision is made. For JVs who know that a loved one is elderly or in fragile health, they should make a point to have quality visits with that person before leaving for their two-year placement.

Coming home for a graduation, a sibling or friend’s wedding, a niece’s birth, a reunion, or some other social visit is not an acceptable reason for returning home. These occasions are not in the same category as death or terminal illness.

If after a JV is in country and feels an intense need to travel home, then a discussion with the JVC office needs to be initiated by the volunteer as soon as these feelings or situations arise. Entertaining discussion after a decision is made is not discussion at all. Feeling “guilty” about an impulse to go home should not block open discussion of the matter. Guilt is a neutral emotion that points to something beyond itself. If a JV decides to return home in a case of elective travel, JVC may decide that it is in the best interest of the program, site and/or JV community for the volunteer not to return to his/her host country or continue service as a JV.

If a JV terminates his/her term of service early or returns home for a special event or emergency, the JV is logistically and financially responsible for travel arrangements. The JVC Staff will be in touch with the JV, the community, and the support people to provide next-steps for the community which has just lost a community mate.

Regional Travel

JVs agree to remain in their host region for the two years of service.

Identifying the host region below does not mean that JVs should feel entitled to visit each of the countries in the region. Please seriously discern the need for and use restraint when considering ANY elective travel. We ask that the same discernment and discussion of solidarity be applied to regional travel as it would to any other significant decision.

The regions are the following:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Belize | Central America and the Yucatán |
| Chile | Argentina, Bolivia, Perú |
| Federated States of Micronesia | Federated States of Micronesia |
| Nicaragua | Central America and the Yucatán |

Perú
Tanzania

Bolivia, Chile
Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda

Please check with your local support person to ensure the safety of your travel. It is important to inform your ICC/support person, your community, and the JVC staff of your travel plans and contact information. In an emergency, the JVC office needs to know how to contact you.

Please refer to Travel Policy Rationale in Appendix C for an extended discussion of JVC’s Travel Policy.

F. Connections to “Home” and Communications

One of the most difficult aspects of entering a new culture is the question of what it means to be a U.S. American in that culture. Many organizations that send their employees to international assignments (e.g. the U.S. military, multinational corporations) replicate the conveniences of home. JVC can neither afford such benefits nor do they fit into the program’s values of simplicity, accompaniment, justice and cultural integration. JVC asks that JVs “let go” of personal preferences and what is familiar so as to really enter into another place. The decision to serve for two years and the commitments that JVs exhibit to their placements are overwhelmingly selfless and humbling. Consider JVC’s policy on visits back home, hosting visitors, and using free time should be considered before you accept a position with JVC.

As a member of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps you have entered into a relationship with our staff and with our partner agencies. The JVC staff and partner agencies have a primary and singular relationship with and responsibility toward you. While you are a Jesuit Volunteer, except in the case of an emergency, we will not contact your parents, guardians or friends in regards to your personal experience in the program. Since you are an adult, we also do not consider it our responsibility to discuss your personal experience in JVC with anyone other than you should another person contact us directly.

We know that many of you are doing JVC as a direct result of the values passed on to you by your family and close friends. To that end, we strongly encourage you to share the experiences you are having with them. Write to your family, and friends, and community members. Do not underestimate the ways in which you may stir the hearts of others to service, to work for justice, or to deepen their own prayer life.

Many JVs set up blogs; this is a wonderful way to share stories. We ask JVs to be intentional and responsible with the information they choose to share with the public, even in “private” blogs. JVC asks JVs to avoid posting personal contact information that can adversely affect themselves and the rest of the community. Additionally, JVs are asked not to “publicly denounce local leadership” (see the Covenant). This commitment extends to blog postings and other online messages. Everything you post online about people from your host culture should be carefully considered. The online platform that you have as a JV and U.S. American is a form of power and privilege which can influence the way people from the host culture are perceived. In the past, locals have read negative thoughts about their culture from a JV’s blog.

JVs should be attentive to their engagement with mail and phone calls from loved ones. These interactions can remind us of what we know as familiar and such correspondence can become a fixation when we find ourselves longing for comfort amidst a time of discomfort in the host culture. Excessive connection to home can strengthen this longing in a way that can take us away from the present reality.

G. Living Simply with Technology

JVC recognizes the value that can be gained from technology but also sees the dehumanizing effect that “conveniences” can have on an individual and community, while also increasing the disparity between people of different income levels. Therefore, JVs should weigh the time- and energy-saving benefits associated with certain conveniences (computers, Internet, e-mail, cell phones, etc.) with the social and environmental impacts these may have. When determining use of technology and what to bring to JVC, consider the following:

- How does my individual use of technological conveniences add to or detract from my relationships with my community, my coworkers, my neighbors, and/or God?
- Is my community using any of these conveniences to escape relationships and/or issues rather than deal with them?
- Am I using these conveniences simply because they are there, or am I making conscientious decisions in regards to their use?
- Are these conveniences making my life simpler or more complicated?
- Is my reliance on technological conveniences interfering with opportunities to practice trust in God’s providence?
- Is my access to technology a result of my privileged status, and if so does it distance me from living in solidarity with people who do not have access to these amenities?
- Am I using technology in an intentional way to uphold past and current relationships with an awareness of the effects that my usage has on the people around me?

Internet. Most JV placements have some access to the internet. Email provides quick, precise information and can be useful for communication among JV communities (e.g. retreat planning) and with the JVC office. For personal communication, some JVs prefer email to the postal system. Like postage, JVs can use their personal stipend to finance personal Internet time. While wireless internet is becoming increasingly accessible, international JV communities should refrain from having regular Internet access in their homes.

Personal computers and MP3 players: Some JVs choose to bring their personal computers or MP3 players to their JV homes, which can be helpful tools for work, drafting emails to send home, or playing music in communal areas. Simultaneously, electronics have been a distraction and escape at times for JVs when used excessively for watching DVDs, listening to music on headphones, playing games, or spending extensive time drafting emails and blogs. Taking personal time to retreat can be healthy, but JVs should be attentive to how much their use of electronics leads to isolation or distraction from the people in their midst.

Some climates make electronics more prone to damage than they would be in the U.S. where there are options for controlling room temperature. Additionally, JVs have had laptops and other electronics

stolen at times. This is an unfortunate reality and JVs should be prepared for potential loss or damage should they choose to bring electronics to their host country.

Televisions and personal cell phones: In the spirit of simplicity JVs should not bring televisions to their homes. In placements where there is access to TV, we encourage JVs to limit usage as a way of prioritizing relationships with coworkers, local friends, and other JVs. Additionally, JVs are to refrain from bringing, purchasing, and using cellular phones while serving at their international placements as a way of being challenged into new norms of convenience. There are some exceptions in certain countries, due to safety and cultural norms, that use of a cell phone in place of landline has been approved by the JVC office. This phone is to be shared among all community members in the spirit of how a landline or any other communal appliance would be used. JVs are to consult the JVC office if questions arise.

H. Third Year.

JVC offers the possibility of serving as a JV for a third year of service. If interested, the JV would complete a thorough and prayerful discernment in coordination with the JVC office. As a reminder, the JV should enter into the discernment process open to all possibilities; if one's mind is already made up, then it is not discernment, rather it is praying for confirmation (equally important, but very different!). Discernment is a profound resource if done in the spirit of honesty and openness. Decisions about a third year will be made on an individual basis, with the input of the Site Supervisor, In-Country Coordinator, and the JV's Program Coordinator. When available, it is encouraged the JV walk through this process with a spiritual director. It is also important to discuss the possibility with JVC community members and other support people. If a JV decides to pursue a third year, JVC staff will accompany the JV through this process, which also includes an Additional Year Application.

6. Logistical Matters

A. Finances and Stewardship

JVs have a responsibility to take care of the resources that provide the privilege of serving in their host countries for two years. This includes spending only according to one's needs, considering the donors who are equal partners in our mission (i.e. private donors, foundations, international worksites, and the generous families and friends of JVs). All funds received from worksites, including bonuses, are contributions to JVC, and should be deposited into the community account.

JVC gives each community a yearly budget (July-June) based on previous expense reports. It is the community's responsibility to discuss financial needs and communal spending with its Program Coordinator, requesting budget increases or decreases as necessary. Safe, local transportation is a priority within the budget. All JVs have a responsibility to have a basic understanding of the budget and the financial reality of their JV community. The budget should stretch your community; it is intended to dictate how much volunteers are able to spend on certain categories (e.g. less time on the phone or choosing a different retreat location if it's beyond budget) and should be used as communities strive to more deeply live the value of simplicity. Are areas of our budget comparable to those of local people? Where do we spend money that pulls us farther from solidarity? The budget allows communities to regularly evaluate the way they spend money and to ask questions which can lead to a more profound experience of solidarity.

Expenses JVC Provides

- One airline ticket from U.S. to host country and one airline ticket to JV's home of record at end of two years of service (See *Travel Home after Term of Service* for additional information).
- For airline travel paid for by JVC: If an airline does not allow any (0) checked bags free of charge, JVC will pay the fee to check one (1) bag (of standard size and weight). Submit receipts to JVC for reimbursement.
- Health insurance coverage beginning the day of your departure and valid until the last day of the last month you are in service. If you stay in your host country or travel abroad beyond this time you are responsible for your own coverage thereafter.
- Orientation with the exception of travel expenses
- In-country orientation
- Language support (in some countries)
- JV community expenses (shared): housing, basic household supplies, utilities, food allowance
- Personal stipend equivalent to the spending power of \$60USD/month per JV
- Visas in-country
- Local transportation to worksite
- Retreats (including transportation to and from)

Note: *While JVC encourages communities to gather in a location other than their home for a rejuvenating respite, the choice of retreat location should be made with the value of stewardship in mind, and JVC will not support retreats in "extravagant" locations.*

Personal/Stipend Expenses

- All personal and work clothing
- Personal toiletries
- Recreational travel
- Local entertainment
- Any alcohol
- Any food expense outside the budgeted allowance
- Any extra school supplies beyond that available at the work site
- Travel to Summer Orientation

Bookkeepers and Expense Reports

Each community of JVs will have two designated bookkeepers or "financial stewards," one 1st year JV and one 2nd year JV. Bookkeepers are responsible for seeing that actual funds spent each month by the community are recorded in an expense report form provided by JVC and submitted to JVC staff. All JV communities should JVs should keep a ledger to record all JVC funds spent. This should be used to generate the monthly expense reports.

Bank Accounts and Wire Transfers

Most communities have a local bank account. JVs should keep funds in the account, drawing cash on a biweekly basis, to avoid having excessive cash vulnerable in the house. Any income received from the work site should be deposited and used to support community needs. When funds available in the bank account are low, please notify the JVC staff with at least two weeks notice, so that a wire transfer can be made. A few communities have U.S.-based bank accounts. In this case, JVs will be issued ATM

cards and checks. ATM cards should be used to withdraw cash only, and not as debit cards. JVC will transfer funds needed directly into the U.S. based account. Communities should spend according to their budget whether they have a local or U.S. based account.

B. Health Insurance/Emergencies

Volunteers are covered by a comprehensive worldwide insurance policy that includes medical evacuation in the case of an emergency. *Please carry your insurance card with you at all times and file a copy in a safe location. All JVs should register on the insurance carrier's website.* The health insurance policy has very limited eye or dental care coverage, so please take care of those needs before Orientation/departure as JVC cannot guarantee coverage of these costs while in the field. A mandatory health insurance conference call will occur prior to Summer Orientation where JVs can raise questions.

GeoBlue is an international health insurance provider with certified medical facilities located around the globe. When you do need to see a doctor/health care provider outside of an approved GeoBlue facility, please pay for all charges with JV community funds or in an emergency with borrowed funds from the Jesuits. Claims should be submitted directly to GeoBlue, with a copy also being sent to JVC. JVC informs JVs when and if their claim has been accepted. Claim forms can be downloaded from the GeoBlue website and sent, along with the original receipts, to GeoBlue.

Do not hesitate to go to a doctor when you need medical attention; being proactive with self-care (to a degree reasonable to the context one is in) is prudent and helps JVs to sustain their commitment to JVC and be of service to their worksites. Mild sickness related to adjusting to a different diet, environment, etc. can be expected; JVs are expected to balance developing healthy habits with getting timely medical attention and follow-up to issues that require it, so worsening of issues is minimal.

“High-Risk” activities (e.g. mountaineering requiring guides or ropes, deep sea diving requiring a helmet/hoses, hang-gliding, competitive racing) are not covered by the JVC policy. For expenses resulting from grossly negligent, illegal behavior, or behavior inconsistent with the Behavioral Expectations discussed in this handbook, the volunteer will assume all financial responsibility (e.g. DUI, drug abuse, STI, pregnancy, etc.). JVs should be attentive to their health; prevention and simple, prudent choices should be the first line of defense.

You will be covered on the JVC policy through the last day of the final month of your JV worksite employment. In the event that you terminate/are terminated before the end of your two year commitment, you will be covered on the JVC policy until the last day of that month. Several months before the end of your term, you will receive sample insurance options for coverage after JVC. You may pursue one of these, including COBRA, or an insurance policy of your own.

Please refer to Appendix D: Specific Guidelines on Health and Appendix E: FAQs GeoBlue Procedures for more information. Please refer to Appendices G, H, and I for more specific guidelines on emergencies.

Who to call:

1. Call, or have a community member call, the GeoBlue Global Health Team collect (24 hours): 1-610-254-8772. This number is located on your insurance card. GeoBlue will walk you through the process and contact any local doctors you have seen (have his/her name and number ready) to determine the necessary procedures and authorize your transportation/evacuation if necessary.
2. **Call the JVC office 1-202-462-5200 during business hours** (9am-5pm EST Monday-Friday) or the emergency phone at all other times. **The emergency phone number is 1-202-957-5845.** If JVC staff don't answer the phone, leave a detailed message describing the situation and the number where you can be reached along with your doctor's name and number (if we do not pick up the emergency phone immediately we will be checking messages regularly).

C. Loan Deferments

Loans are becoming more specialized and often more challenging to defer. It is the responsibility of the JV to obtain all necessary information on deferring their loan for two years before beginning their service. In the event that a loan cannot be deferred for the entire time of service, the JV must designate a person or plan to handle the loan. By request, the JVC office is happy to provide supporting documentation to validate the deferment of the loan and send these documents to the person in charge of the JV's loan (please allow six weeks).

D. Country Visas

It is the responsibility of volunteer to provide appropriate documentation necessary for visa procurement. The process varies by country, and the JVC office will provide information regarding requirements. Once volunteers are in country, JVC pays for processing fees associated with visa procurement.

E. Vaccinations and Malaria Prophylaxis

After placement as JVs, JVC office will provide a current list of country-specific recommended vaccinations by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), also accessible via the CDC's website at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel. JVs are responsible and financially accountable for obtaining the vaccines that a) the JV feels most comfortable having or b) are officially required to enter or stay for two years in the country where they will be serving. Recently returned volunteers may be able to provide context for realistic precautions that should be exercised, and the availability of medicines at a site. JVs are encouraged to research the best price on vaccinations; for example, sometimes the savings at a student health center or a county medical clinic can be substantial.

JVC does not require JVs to take malaria medication since the risk for contracting malaria in all the countries where JVs serve ranges from "none" to "moderate" (Center for Disease Control, 05.14). Should a JV opt to take a malaria prophylaxis (medication to prevent malaria), s/he is responsible for making an informed decision about their options. There are several prophylaxes available and recommended based on location, and all have different risks, benefits, and financial costs.

For JVs serving in Tanzania, where the risk is "moderate," JVC is willing to provide reimbursement up to \$50USD (with receipts) to assist with cost of a malaria prophylaxis (estimate based on the

average cost of an adult dose of Doxycycline for 6 months). Financial responsibility beyond this is assumed by the JV.

7. Life Directions after JVC

Transitioning Out...

The life of the returned Jesuit Volunteer is transformed by the experience. The nature and extent to which you've allowed yourself to be transformed may only become apparent after you've returned. JVs are encouraged to speak with FJVs through the application process and their time as a JV to get a sense of how this experience may impact one's life in the long-term.

On the annual ReO/DisO retreat, JVC staff devote an entire day to discussing "disorientation" and "re-entry" with JVs about to depart. Around this time staff shares resources for how to connect JVs to relevant communities upon return, such as From Mission To Mission (missiontomission.org). The JVC office is happy to receive your inquiries about this transition, career prospects, or graduate schools.

Transitioning In!

JVC is proud of the over 13,000 Former Jesuit Volunteers (FJVs) who continue to be challenged by the JVC values and make an impact on the church and the world. JVC seeks to engage FJVs in a life-long relationship to JVC and its values.

Volunteer alumni/ae and the JVC staff recognize the immense value of a close association of FJVs amongst each other. FJVs enjoy discussing the meaning of the values in life-after-JV. FJVs gather for reunions and sharing stories, for networking and learning about career paths and educational opportunities, and much more. In some cities, former volunteers meet for potlucks, retreat days, and some have worked with JVC to form official FJV chapters. JVC is in the process of developing a mentor program, pairing recently departed JVs with a FJV who has been in the United States for at least three years.

You can find information which helps FJVs stay connected to JVC and one another at jesuitvolunteers.org/former-jvs. Listed there are ways to network with other FJVs on Facebook, LinkedIn, and local and national listservs. Contact JVC's Director of FJV Relations, Kate Haser (khaser@jesuitvolunteers.org) to find out about how to be involved as an FJV.

The experience of a Jesuit Volunteer has been described as a "Novitiate for Life," with "novitiate" a reference to the first two years of the intense formational process that men go through on the journey of becoming a Jesuit. The goals of the Jesuit novitiate during this time are verification of one's vocation, a more intimate relationship with the Jesus Christ, growth in authentic self-knowledge, and an increasing love for the Society of Jesus. This handbook has attempted to describe the norms and vision of this "novitiate" experience. How you allow this novitiate to shape your life has yet to be written.

8. Appendices

Appendix A: JVC's Values in Context

A. Spirituality

Advocates of social justice in the Christian tradition engage both actively and contemplatively. Dorothy Day and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., for example, were not only immersed in the issues of their world but also profoundly prayerful. It was precisely their spirituality which moved them to action and genuine compassion for those whom they encountered. Without time for prayer, one engaged in justice work will “burn out” as the problems encountered can seem hopeless.

As *Jesuit* Volunteers, we look to Ignatius of Loyola for guidance in our spiritual development. Even before he founded the Jesuits, while still a layperson, Ignatius wrote the *Spiritual Exercises*, which would later serve as the foundational text of the Society of Jesus. While other religious orders held that one must retreat *from* the world to encounter God, Ignatius emphasized that God is to be found present *in* the world. This view, rooted in the life of Jesus, revitalized Christian commitment in his world and continues to be relevant today not only for Jesuits, but also lay people and other religious orders. Theologian Monica Hellwig has identified five hallmarks of Ignatian spirituality, paraphrased below:³

1. Finding God in All Things.

All creation is designed to give greater glory to God. Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins spoke of our universe as “charged with the grandeur of God.”⁴ This sense of an integrated and interconnected universe, society, and personal life along with an intimate appreciation of God’s presence, is a goal of Ignatian spirituality. We recognize ourselves as sinners, but loved unconditionally by God, and therefore centered on profound gratitude and awareness.

2. Continuous cultivation of critical awareness.

Although Ignatius was optimistic about the human condition, he was not naive. The magnitude and attraction of sin is real. It is a force that dehumanizes people and blots out God’s image. For Ignatius, life is an ongoing struggle between good and evil. Therefore, our choices either contribute to or diminish the Kingdom that Jesus envisioned. Recognizing that the allure of sin can be enticing and subtle, Ignatius encouraged rigorous study, analysis and discernment. There is nothing incompatible between religious faith and intellectual inquiry. In fact, authentic human reason should confirm one’s recognition of God and empower one to unmask the power of evil.

3. Commitment to putting faith into action.

Jesus taught that the great test for those who claim to be his followers is their responsiveness to the marginalized--feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger (Mat 25: 31-46). It is in these individuals that one finds Jesus present, because for a moment, our self-interest is suspended. While feeding and sheltering is the appropriate starting point, we must also question the forces that made people hungry in the first place. We know from our own experience that love is better expressed in action than words.

³ Hellwig, Monica. “*Finding God in All Things: A Spirituality for Today*” (*Sojourners*, December 1991)

⁴ Hopkins, Gerard Manley. “God’s Grandeur.” *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*. (Humphrey Milford, 1918)

Repentance, recognizing ourselves as loved sinners, calls us to act. Gandhi observed that in the morally mature person, actions increasingly move from the unconscious to the conscious. We become more reflective of our actions and their effect on others. A consequence of this grace is the gradual elimination of the profane categories in one's life. In other words, one's response to God is seen less as a "Sunday morning obligation" and more as a lived commitment to justice.

4. Recognition that Jesus' Good News is countercultural and revolutionary in a nonviolent way.

U.S. American mythology claims that if you work hard and persevere, you will be rewarded. Our hero (sometimes even in our own family's folklore) is the one who pulled herself up by the bootstraps--the *rugged individualist*. The myth of upward mobility is the foundation upon which our economic and social systems are based.

This myth also maintains that poverty is the result of sloth. Therefore, politicians gain popularity by calling for the abolition of the welfare system. They claim that "poor people" brought their condition upon themselves. In our U.S. American imagination we glorify the poor girl who became rich, not the rich girl who voluntarily became poor.

Jesus' call is one of *downward mobility*, an option for the poor. Rather than seeking power and prestige, he instructed followers to embrace suffering and humility. Ignatian spirituality is revolutionary because it questions existing power structures, and seeks to establish a society where people are liberated from that which oppresses them.

5. Confident expectation of God's grace to exercise responsibility.

In his *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius meditated on the Two Standards to which people are aligned. Under the first standard are those consumed by their own desires and what they can gain from others. The second standard includes those who live for others--possible through an experience and recognition of grace in one's life. Grace can be understood as God's mysterious presence in our lives, even though we may not recognize it at the time. It is also that unexplainable, innate desire for relationship with God--as St. Augustine said, "the heart is restless until it rests in Thee." According to Ignatius, through grace one can attain *indifference*, meaning not disinterest, but rather, *nonattachment*. As humans we all desire.⁵ Desire is not a bad thing--it moves us to friendships and commitments. Desires which affirm what we know to be good are true desires. However, we also have false desires which tear down what we know to be human in others and ourselves. Addiction is an example of this kind of desire. The problem with addiction is that it "uses up" desire and good desires take a back seat. It is an assault on one's freedom. Ignatian discernment seeks to clarify true desires from false desires. Ignatian indifference, rather than *freedom from desire* could be understood as *freedom in what we desire*. True desires move us to action, toward God and affirming of others.

The Examen: The Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern God's direction for us. It is a hallmark of Ignatian spirituality. Two versions of the Examen follow:

From St. Ignatius: The First Point is to give thanks to God our Lord for the benefits I have received. The Second is to ask grace to know my sins and rid myself of them.

⁵ May, Gerald. *Addiction and Grace* (Harper and Row, 1988).

The Third is to ask an account of my soul from the hour of rising to the present examen, hour by hour or period by period; first through thoughts, then words, then deeds, in the same order as was given for the particular examination.

The Fourth is to ask pardon of God our Lord for my faults.

The Fifth is to resolve, with his grace, to amend them. Close with an Our Father.

From James Martin, SJ

1. Gratitude: Recall anything from the day for which you are especially grateful, and give thanks.
2. Review: Recall the events of the day, from start to finish, noticing where you felt God's presence, and where you accepted or turned away from any invitations to grow in love.
3. Sorrow: Recall any actions for which you are sorry.
4. Forgiveness: Ask for God's forgiveness. Decide whether you want to reconcile with anyone you have hurt.
5. Grace: Ask God for the grace you need for the next day and an ability to see God's presence more clearly.

JVs are encouraged to participate in the Examen at least daily, as Jesuits are also committed to doing. The Examen can be done individually and should at least occasionally be done as a community. In doing so, JVs strive to find God's presence in their shared experience. On a practical level, other community-mates may have felt similar graces and frustrations.

B. Simple Living

John Kavanaugh, SJ observes that we are often led to believe that objects can fulfill our deepest longings.⁶ We are promised that driving a certain car will bring happiness or wearing a certain scent will assure companionship. However we know that this is a hollow guarantee, for the greater our dependence on things, the less we are able to trust in God and others. Possessions can isolate us and create perceived needs in us that are not needs at all. To combat this desire for possessions, Ignatius preached "indifference" — detachment, a stripping of ourselves of that which separates us from relationships with God and others. Simplicity is far more rich and complex than merely consuming less; it is a call to put God and relationships before false desires and material needs. Simplicity is a path regained freedom.

According to Bishop Pedro Casaldaliga of Brazil, consumerism consumes humanity, creating insatiable appetites for more things.⁷ Furthermore, consumerism kills cultural identities and promotes uniformity. One finds the same soft drinks, music, and tennis shoes throughout the world. Rather than becoming *unified*, we become *uniformized*, the opposite of being unity.

We recognize the link between environmental degradation and the areas where the world's poor reside. We strive to care for all creation with the same reverence as St. Francis of Assisi, who often displayed our familial connection to nature by referring to "Brother Sun," and other familiarly-named natural elements. Through our stewardship of God's creation, we seek to appreciate our deep connection with Mother Earth and to lessen the burden of climate change and environmental injustice on those who are poor and vulnerable.

JVs consciously seeks solidarity with those who have no choice about being deprived rather than legalistically linking voluntary poverty to penance or self-denial. In Latin America, before a thirty day

⁶ Kavanaugh SJ, John. *Following Christ in a Consumer Society* (Orbis, 2006).

⁷ Casaldaliga, Pedro. *In the Year 2000* (servicioskoinonia.org/Casaldaliga/cartas/january2000.htm)

Ignatian retreat begins, it is common for the spiritual director to request retreatants engage in direct service with the poor. Later, in the context of the Ignatian Exercises, retreatants confront the magnitude of sin in their lives. After witnessing poverty, they recognize that the impact of sin is larger than personal choices and shortcomings. Social sin takes on a life of its own and outlives the original perpetrators of the sin. In theological terms, this is the sin of the world.

Theologian Dean Brackley, SJ observes that such an experience allows one's heart to be broken by the poor. We are compelled to not stand idle but to act, in this case to opt for living simply, so as to help dismantle dehumanizing structures -- particularly those in our own life and when we return to the U.S.

Nicaraguan economist Xabier Gorostiaga, SJ has urged the Church to advocate a civilization of simplicity.⁸ Such a society would be ordered to meet the needs of all people. This would require something more than a new economic and political order. It would include a new set of attitudes and values--a new spirituality. JVC hopes to contribute to such a vision, through our individual choices and our collective, communal commitment.

C. Social Justice

Justice is concerned with working out the truth of the situation. We cannot know "truth" when we are new to a situation. A spirit of humility and a commitment to ongoing reflection is required. Although we are open to revision, there are certain truths to which justice is oriented. A more just society would be committed to valuing all persons, eradicating barriers that perpetuate inequality, and discourage egoism and self-centeredness, as these values are manifested in social structures. As JVs, we strive for justice, understanding that justice is distinct from but not superior to charity. The word charity (*caritas*) means love of God, which manifests itself in love for other people. Some distinctions of the two are listed below.

Charity

1. In response to accidental event
2. Person-to-Person
3. Spontaneous Reaction
4. Non-controversial
5. Relieves Symptoms

Justice

1. In response to human act
2. Structural
3. Requires Reflection
4. Controversial
5. Addresses causes

Following a hurricane, there is often a tremendous outpouring of relief assistance to victims. There is something random about the event, a feeling on the part of the benefactors that "that could happen to me." Through the television, the crying child becomes a very personal image. The spontaneous compassion which moves me is directed toward that person. Not even the cruelest heart could argue against rendering assistance; the response is non-controversial. Like relief work, charity deals more with symptoms than causes.

Unlike charity, justice is in response to human acts. It is not accidental that much of the world is poor and getting poorer. Justice analyzes structures (e.g. political, economic, social, military, educational, media) that fragment community and foster inequality. Such reflection and action for justice will be met with resistance by those who benefit from the existing arrangements. Brazilian bishop and poet Dom Helder Camara observes, "When I feed the poor they call me a saint, when I ask

⁸ Gorostiaga, SJ, Xabier. "The New Consensus: A Civilization Based on Harmony and Simplicity." (New Development Options Conference, 1995).

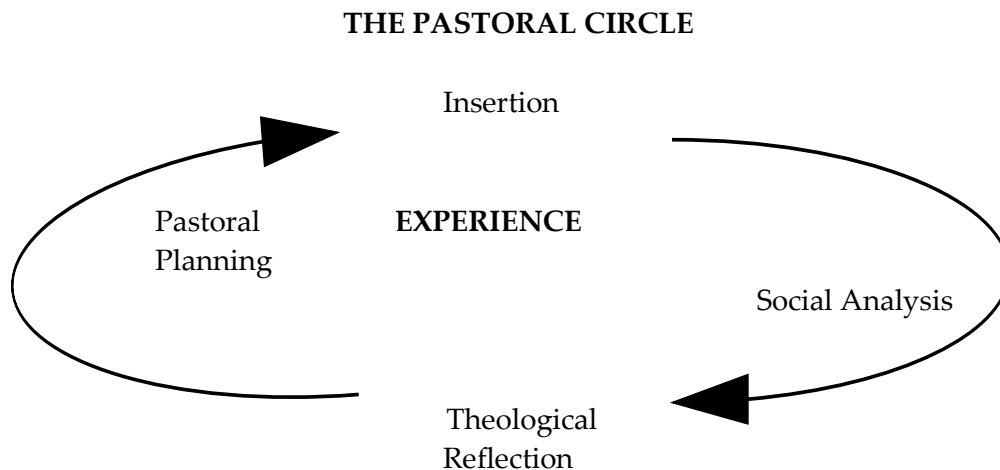
why they are poor they call me a communist.” Camara’s insight reflects the tension between charity and justice, and illustrates that justice addresses the deeper causal issues which perpetuate suffering.

JVs understand the value of charity and justice. Ancient rabbinical wisdom contends that the rich will throw coins over a wall to the poor, but they will not pay to have the wall torn down. As short-term teachers, counselors and pastoral workers, the coins and the wall have many allegories. However, JVs must discern which walls *we* are obligated to help remove, and which walls we need to allow *others* to remove. As a foreigner, the role of a JV is more indirect – one of companion rather than revolutionary.

At their 1979 meeting in Puebla, Mexico the Bishops of Latin America stated: “We affirm the need for conversion of the whole church to a *preferential option for the poor*, an option aimed at their eternal liberation.”⁹ While the term “option for the poor” is relatively new to the Church’s teaching, it is rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Gospel. Laws protecting the vulnerable are among the most ancient biblical directives, and the ideal of stewardship rather than private ownership is firmly established as a theme in the Torah. In the gospel, identification and solidarity with the poor is central to Jesus’ message. Preferential commitment is not to be understood as exclusive love pitting one class against another. Rather, the condition of the poor reflects the degree to which we have established or fallen short of true community. Jesus’ notion of the “Kingdom of God” is the realization for all of liberation from oppressive injustices.

According to Archbishop Romero, the church finds its own salvation by aligning itself with the poor. Jesus is seen not only as one crucified 2000 years ago, but still present and still being crucified in our suffering sisters and brothers.¹⁰ This recognition is an urgent invitation to link faith with justice.

The pastoral circle is a tool used to evaluate one’s experience in light of social justice, and JVs are encouraged to use it individually and collectively on a regular basis to reflect on the injustices they encounter.



Insertion: Where and with whom are we identifying ourselves as we begin the process? Whose experience is being considered? Are the experiences of the powerless being considered or even heard? Who should we be consulting?

⁹ *Third Conference of Latin American Bishops: Puebla de los Angeles, Mexico.* January-February 1979.

¹⁰ Brockman, James. *The World Remains: The Life of Oscar Romero* (Orbis, 1982)

Social Analysis: How is the experience to be considered in a social and cultural context? Who has power in the existing situation? Who is powerless and how are these arrangements maintained?

Theological Reflection: How closely linked is theology to the given situation? What insights can be obtained from scripture, Catholic social teaching, and prayer?

Pastoral Planning: What is an appropriate response? Are we keeping in mind that we are outsiders and relatively transitory visitors? Is this the right place to make a public action or might this frustrate the actual goals I'm trying to encourage? Am I remaining open to learning from the people of my host country? Am I maintaining the ideal of accompaniment and seeking to empower others, particularly local people?

Return to "Experience" and begin the process again.

D. Community

"Community can appear a marvelously welcoming and sharing place. But in another way community is a terrible place. It is the place where our limitations and our egoism are revealed to us. When we begin to live full-time with others, we discover our poverty and our weakness, our mental and emotional blocks...The unexpected discovery of the monsters within us is hard to accept. The immediate reaction is to try to destroy the monsters, or to hide them away again, pretending that they don't exist, or to flee from community life, or to find that the monsters are theirs, not ours. But if we accept that the monsters are there, we can let them out and learn to tame them. That is growth."

-- Jean Vanier, *Community and Growth*

Returned volunteers often remark that building community was the most challenging component in their JV experience. After all, you do not choose your companion JVs. You are moving into a new culture and adjusting to new work and you are without your familiar support systems. In addition, JVs come to the program with diverse understandings of community. It is possible to romanticize community, thinking that it will be blissful unity with one another. *We may confuse community with friendship and wonder why our community-mates are not our best friends.*

Often those same volunteers will add that being committed to building and living in community was the most beautiful component of their JV experience. What holds communities together? According to Richard Rohr, communities might be held together by function, economic interests, proximity, law or a defined goal.¹¹ However, communities whose primary motivation is building faith come together and stay together because they trust God is active in their midst. One could say community is God's strategy for reaching the world.

Living as community was a distinctive feature of the early Christian churches as members sold their property and distributed their goods among the community. Clearly, responsiveness to the material, social and spiritual needs of others is central to building community. As U.S. Americans, we pride ourselves for our individuality and independence. However, community seeks collaboration and interdependence.

¹¹ Rohr, Richard. *Sojourners*, February 1981, page 17.

Our model for community borrows from the *comunidades de base* in Latin America. These communities come together to reflect on Jesus' Good News in light of difficult circumstances. Moving from their experience, and coming together in prayer, the base communities then determine an action step. We would hope to work in a similar manner, mutually complementing one another and allowing the community a forum to shed light on our individual and corporate experience. If we trust that God is in our midst, we should increasingly trust one another. With trust we allow ourselves to be vulnerable, sharing with one another our weaknesses and our fears.

Appendix B: Significant Relationships - Guidelines and resources for discernment

Introduction

As with other aspects of JV life, your attitude about relationships during your commitment as JV needs to be reassessed in the context of community life. The prevailing cultural current in the U.S. culture which informs each of us, even unconsciously, is of *accentuated individualism* which enshrines privacy and anonymity, a current JVs are called to scrutinize. From this cultural stance of hyper-individualism, *tolerance* is the bedrock principle. This impulse can especially compromise a community's felt responsibility. Our cultural preference is to recoil from confrontation, dreading to impugn a peer, especially in the area of romance, which is often in the U.S. considered a private matter. While *tolerance* is an important value that has helped us to confront racism, sexism, and homophobia, it must be counterbalanced with an objective standard in a healthy community. An uncritical attitude of "*you do your thing, I'll do mine*" undermines a community's commitment to accountability and growth.

Furthermore, many JVs arrive from a college subculture which holds dating as a priority. It is unrealistic to assume this desire will simply cease for two years. It is important to acknowledge one's own cultural and psychological influences, which are heightened at times when JVs feel lonely.

In addition, a key to success for a JV is building cross-cultural friendships on a level deeper than a tourist could, and enter the heart of another culture. To do so, one **risks falling in love**. This situation places JVs in a position of vulnerability.

The **love** we speak of calls us to *serve many*, especially those who are suffering and poor. In contrast, a romantic relationship implies an exclusive investment in one other person. This too is a sacred investment that many people pursue at some time in their lives. Indeed, some JVs come to the program with a serious relationship already "in play." These JVs accept the risk of the outcome of this relationship after two years of distance and less frequent communication. In that sense, these JVs have relegated these relationships to a place of less importance than their response to a call to a JV. We ask that each JV seriously consider whether s/he can put this important human concern (i.e., the pursuit of exclusive relationships) in its proper place of importance and allocate their energies in favor of the service to which they are committing.

Guidelines for the individual volunteer regarding relationships:

1. A significant (exclusive/romantic) relationship is not a private issue (see JVC covenant and handbook on Responsibilities of a Volunteer).
2. If you feel the tendency to stay secretive about a relationship, is this a healthy sign? Does a need for secrecy reflect a life-giving relationship or indicate that something is skewed and disproportionate?
3. If you find yourself rationalizing that "*this is different*" or "*they just don't understand*" – how will you check the accuracy of these subjective declarations?
4. Ask yourself the additional following questions:

- a. What is this relationship providing for me? For the other person? What needs are being met? How does it relate to my attempt to immerse myself into the culture?
- b. Many people define themselves by who they date. Therefore, when they are not dating there is a feeling of lost identity. Is it possible I am craving stability in a time of insecurity or affirmation in a time of vulnerability?
- c. JVs are generally “helpers.” Could it be that the other person is “needy” and therefore fulfills my tendency to want to help another?
- d. Where is this relationship leading me? Is this long term? How will it be played out in time?
- e. How much of my time and energy is this relationship requiring?
- f. Why did I come here?
- g. Does my community know about the other person? What is their opinion of the relationship?
- h. Have I talked with my support person, family, and the JVC office about the relationship? If so, what are their opinions? If not, why not?
- i. Have I prayed about this relationship? Why / Why not? What have I found in my prayer?
- j. How do I spend time with the other person? If in the JVC house, how does this affect my community? If outside the JVC house, what is the effect of my absence from community?
- k. How does my being in this relationship affect my community mates on an emotional level?
 - 1) Am I still able to share intimately with my community mates? Are they able to share with me?
 - 2) How does my experience with this unique level of intimacy affect my community mates who do not have this opportunity?
 - 3) Consider that in many JVC host countries, homosexuality and bisexuality are not accepted in the way that we may be used in the U.S. In some host countries, being out about one’s homosexuality may threaten a JV’s safety. This is a very difficult reality for some JVs to face for many reasons. If you are considering a romantic relationship that would be accepted by cultural standards, we urge you to consider your fellow JVs who may experience the lack of this openness as a painful injustice.

Guidelines for reflection for a relationship between 2 JVs

1. When you committed to being a JV, you committed to being of full service to your site, and a fully engaged community member. Being in a significant relationship does in some way change your ability to continue to live this commitment. In many cases it has been a challenge for the JVs to maintain the same priorities on a day to day level. How would a significant relationship change the way you live the commitment you made to be a Jesuit Volunteer? How would it affect your willingness to invest in relationships in the local community?
2. A significant relationship necessarily takes investment of time and energy, and a higher level of intimate sharing. There can be a tendency once involved in a significant relationship to share joys and struggles with that person, and for there to be less of a need to share these with others. Part of what being in a community is to intentionally make oneself vulnerable, and to intentionally share these highs and lows with your community mates. How would you ensure that you are truly invested in building relationships with each individual in your community, as well as the group as a whole? How would you keep the community from dividing from one

group to two or more groups? How would you challenge yourselves to continue to share intimately with the others in your community?

3. In our experience in seeing relationships developing within communities, it inevitably affects the community. It is frequently the case that there aren't major objections when relationships are beginning from community-mates, but this does not mean that there are not implications later. Even if your community does not object, we hope you will recognize that if you are in a significant relationship, it will affect the community. It is a difficult responsibility to foster a life-giving environment that supports the growth of all individuals as well as the group, when there is a new couple in the group.
4. Finally, for your own sake and that of your potential significant other, we challenge you to make sure the relationship is not only contextual—that it is not “a crutch.” In an intense, overseas setting, away from supports and people we are close to, we crave intimacy, someone with whom to share the intensity of our emotions. When we find this in community, we may attach romantic feelings to this person, as our previous experience associates this level of intensity with romance. In the moment it can be difficult to see. It is important to be honest with yourself and each other, to avoid hurting one another, to build a strong and healthy community, and to be able to fully live your commitment as a JV (for yourselves as well as your worksites, etc.).

Guidelines for reflection for a relationship between a JV and a member of your host culture

The primary focus of this discussion is dating relationships between JVs and nationals in the host country. Looking at JVC's organizational history, there have been rare cases of happy endings, but these are few in comparison to the broken relationships, misunderstandings, and hurt feelings.

JVC encourages friendships and an immersion in the host culture. Being associated with the JV presence in the host country, the volunteer often has an entree into relationships that other visitors do not enjoy. A mistaken assumption may soon arise when one says, “I've figured this culture out, I know all there is to know.” This is nowhere more dangerous than in the area of female-male relationships.

We add a note of caution here: emotional entanglements happen very quickly. By the second or third meeting, what at first may have been perceived as an interesting friendship must already be an occasion for serious reflection. For this reason, we offer the points below for consideration if you are discerning a relationship with a local person.

1. We encourage you to consider how a significant relationship with a local person will shape the lens through which you experience your host culture. In developing an exclusive relationship you run the risk of developing a skewed perception of the local culture, formed largely through your interactions with a specific member of the local community instead of the community as a whole. It is important to examine to what extent this is true for you. If you entered a significant relationship would you be able to immerse yourself in the community as a whole? How do you envision yourself committing time and energy to both the local community as a whole and to the person you are in a relationship with?

2. We have found that at times when people begin to feel confident in their host culture they start to feel as though they understand the nuances and subtleties that characterize it. While this type of positive growth does occur, it is important to also remain cognizant of the fact that as foreigners we will never be able to fully grasp the complexity of another culture. This balance of fully immersing yourself and growing in confidence while simultaneously remaining humble and open to continued growth is pivotal, in our experience, to being a responsible guest in a host culture. This is magnified when considered in the light of significant relationships as culture plays a big role in how we relate to people in general, but especially when we are in significant relationships. It is important to consider how well you are maintaining that tension. Are you allowing yourself to develop an inflated sense of comfort in your host culture? Actions of course carry different implications depending on culture. Thus it is important to remain aware of how your actions may be interpreted by another, as well as how you may be interpreting their behavior, conscientious of the potential for misinterpretation.
3. Gender dynamics and cultural norms surrounding gender should also be considered. JV women are particularly vulnerable as blatant patriarchy is the norm in most of the societies in which we are present. In many cases, if a man and woman are publicly seen alone together, the presumption is that they are sexually involved with one another. Regrettably in this scenario, men receive praise from other men while women are seen as damaged goods. Non-physical relationships between men and women are unheard of, and **to presume that one can occur is unrealistic**. The good intentions of a solitary JV will not reverse a culture.

JV men are not exempt from responsibility. We do not want to perpetuate a hurtful climate that degrades women. An attitude of respect for local women and brotherly concern for JV women would be consistent with “doing justice.” Such empathy has been for many JV men a moment of growth, as they witness, and more importantly listen to, the experiences of women. It can be an opportunity to be an ally.

4. In addition to the potential for misinterpretation between parties involved in a significant relationship, there is also the larger community to consider. In U.S. culture significant relationships are often considered private. We can usually stay anonymous – at least to a certain extent. In many of your host cultures this is not the case. We ask that you remain attentive to what assumptions are being made, or could be made by the local community should you decide to pursue a relationship. Some outward behaviors that we consider to be very innocent carry greater meaning in our host cultures. Additionally, it is important to recognize that engaging in a significant relationship affects not only you and the reputation that you will carry for the remainder of your time in your host community, but also the reputation of the JVC program as a whole. While it is sometimes hard to see, the actions of each JV do contribute to the collective knowledge of who JVC is and what our presence in a community means. It is our desire to accompany members of our host communities. Entering a significant relationship has the potential of hampering your ability to be an accompanier of the person you are dating as well as limiting your capacity to accompany the community as a whole. Dating could lead to confusion in terms of what our perceived role and intention is in being present in the host community. Our actions and choices directly affect the JVs who come after us -- how they are perceived and

how they will be welcomed. In a small village or island, these perceptions have a much longer collective impression than in an urban setting or a transitory university culture.

5. Among the many things we ask JVs to be aware of, we encourage volunteers to continually recognize the privilege that is inherent in the fact that we are from North America. It is important to accept the fact that your status as a U.S. American is an inflated one. Consider the image of the U.S. portrayed in media, your education and earning potential, not to mention the fact that when a JV gets seriously ill, s/he is flown where the best treatment is available. Awareness of this begs the question – with our privilege can we create a significant relationship of equals? What does it mean that as U.S. Americans we have the choice to travel to and from our host community, pursue a variety of education and career options, and even the privilege to take two years to volunteer? There is an inherent imbalance between the partners in a cross-cultural relationship, as they come from and will ultimately be living in completely different worlds. In this case, is it fair to the other person to enter a relationship that should be based on equality and commitment when these two values are so drastically challenged from the start? While we all do our best to not allow these realities to affect the way we interact with others, it is important to recognize that despite our efforts, they may be a part of the way we are perceived. Therefore we ask that you consider how investing in a vulnerable relationship, and asking another to do the same could, though unintentionally, could create a situation where you are in a position of power.
6. A factor that can sometimes inhibit one's ability to assess the authenticity of these feelings is the appeal associated with dating someone who comes from a different culture. This can go both ways. At times it is very attractive to a person from one of our host cultures to date an American. At the same time, as U.S. Americans we are sometimes curious about and intrigued by the possibility of dating someone from another culture. We ask that you carefully consider this point both when assessing your own feelings, as well as when considering what it is that attracts the other person to you.
7. Finally, we would ask that you look closely at what the long term implications of a relationship would be on the person you are considering dating. If the relationship does work out, what would this mean? Would you move to the host community? Would you ask your significant other to return to the U.S. with you? How would this affect their ties to home? What responsibilities do they have to their family and their community? If it doesn't work out, what would this look like for the other person? What sorts of expectations may have been riding on this relationship – spoken or unspoken? How could a perceived rejection from a U.S. American affect the other? In what ways do you see this as possibly being different from a rejection from someone from their own culture? While these sorts of "looking into the future" questions may feel difficult to answer in the early stages of a relationship, we believe they are critical to consider in our collective efforts to be conscientious guests in the communities that receive us.

Guidelines for the JVC Community-Mates of a JV who is in a relationship:

As Americans our cultural bias towards individualism tells us that romantic relationships are private, and that therefore taking the issue of a community-mate's significant relationship to the JVC staff or the ICC is a betrayal of privacy or trust. But JVs embrace the value of community, and commit to work,

prayer, and sharing our lives with others. This necessarily includes a sacrifice of autonomy, and indeed an invitation to our community members to hold us accountable to dialogue and openness. It is in this framework that we say that when a JV is not open with all parties about a significant relationship, it becomes the responsibility of the community-mate(s) to raise the issue first with them, and then with the JVC staff and ICC, both for the health of the JV involved and for the community at large.

1. During a community meeting, acknowledge the effect a relationship has had or will have on community. Develop community rules – what's ok and what's not ok. ***Note: Staying the night together/housing overnight (dating) guests, in the JVC house is not compatible with the JVC program. This also applies to a JV staying overnight with a dating partner outside the JVC house.*** Refer to the guiding questions above, and discuss the need for openness with the JVC staff and ICC, and suggest that s/he raise the issue.
2. If the person does not communicate with the JVC staff or ICC after one week, then for his/her sake, that of the person s/he is dating, as well as the community at large, then you should initiate the discussion. If you need ideas or help to confront a situation of concern, do not hesitate to contact the JVC office. We leave these important matters to your good judgment because of our respect for you all.
3. Note: Some volunteers in the past have found themselves in hazardous relationships (psychologically and physically dangerous). Paradoxically, the JV involved was often blinded or perhaps in denial at the time. In this vulnerable position, the members of the community were the only people in a position to intervene. **If you know that a JV is in a dangerous relationship, you are ethically obligated to inform your In-Country Coordinator and the JVC office immediately.**

Appendix C: Travel Home Policy - Rationale and resources for discernment

Rationale:

The rationale for insisting that JVs stay in the host region for the entire two years without coming home is based on experience of JVs and staff and input from our local support people. JVs should enter the program with this stance and understanding. For those struggling with the issue, this discussion may help explain why JVC holds this position.

Some applicants remove themselves from the process when they realize the JVC position on not coming home. This indicates honest discernment on their part because the standpoint of the JVC program is clear. Is it fair to those who left the process because of this position, if those have been accepted do not also commit to it?

What kind of solidarity and with whom do we identify as we look for cues on life as a JV? It is evident that international travel has become more common over the past few years. Conceivably this is even true among some of the local people in our host country. This is no surprise as the world's wealth becomes more concentrated in the hands of the privileged few while the poor get poorer.

For JVs, is our solidarity to identify with the affluent in the host country or with the poor? Are we to be lumped with many of the ex-pats who, while living internationally, have little interest in solidarity or living simply? Catholic teaching and the Gospels maintain a preferential option for the poor. The statement should not be reduced to say 'everyone is poor, just in different ways.' Excursions home are not in solidarity with the economically poor.

One might reason, "I am in solidarity with my family too." However, that statement presumes that physical proximity is the only way to express solidarity. Nelson Mandela was in a solitary jail cell for 30 years, but people from around the world were in solidarity with him and his cause. Is it possible for two years to maintain solidarity--and perhaps even deepen commitments to family back home--by sharing ourselves in new ways without relying physical proximity?

What about solidarity with the JV community? The costs of travel are substantial, not only economically but in the time and energy required. Will this option become a practice only for JVs from wealthier families who can buy their ticket? Only for JVs in the placements closest to the U.S.?

Other factors to consider:

Community: Going home will remove volunteers from their JV community and other communities that they belong to; and inevitably affect the JV, the community, and the placement. What about the mental and emotional energies which precede and follow such a trip as well as the actual time when a JV is away?

Culture: Why apply to a cross-cultural program if our orientation and reference remains the U.S. culture rather than deeper immersion in the host culture?

Stewardship: Is it fair to our benefactors to be asked to pay for volunteers' travel and other expenses when volunteers have within their means the resources to travel back and forth from home? Is it misrepresentative to say we are sending volunteers to live with and serve in the developing world for two years?

It is normal when crossing cultures to rationalize, “If I could just go home for a while, I would be refreshed in my work.” While travel home may appear to be the remedy needed, it is difficult to appreciate the intensity of the rupture it will cause. The discomfort is an indication that one is becoming immersed. Long distance runners recognize this paradox, it is at that moment when the run is most painful, when they are most tempted to stop, in which real conditioning begins to occur. After breaking through this barrier, the run actually becomes easier.

This matter is complicated when volunteers get mixed signals from their site supervisors and others. Often for site supervisors, the most important thing is that a JV is present for all work-related tasks. The JVC office tries to see the bigger picture. JVC seeks to maintain the integrity of a two-year cross-cultural program, which encourages JVs to serve generously, immerse in the culture, and intentionally commit to identification with the economically poor. This commitment extends beyond mere work duties.

St. Ignatius prayed for the grace of total availability to one’s mission. JVs are asked to try to give their selves without reservation to community, their worksite and the JVC values.

Discernment Resources

The JVC staff hope to be in conversation about this decision and encourage a JV to consider the decision fully by engaging the following discernment questions:

- a. How might this travel affect you in the emotional process of leaving your host country, arriving home for a brief time, leaving home again, and returning to your host country again?
- b. What opportunities for growth in personal/communal/cultural/familial development are present by a decision to stay? To go?
- c. What messages does your decision send to your host community surrounding the commitments you have made? To your work placement? To your family?
- d. What insights have you gained from discussions with community mates? How would your decision affect them?
- e. What insights have you gained from discussions with your family? How would your decision affect them?
- f. Have you been able to pray honestly about this? Where do you feel God guiding you in this decision?

Appendix D: Specific guidelines on health

Countries can vary in terms of viruses, water quality and overall precautions. There have been several cases in recent years when a JV has had to return home early due to illness. Most of these involved JVs' **unnecessary risky behavior** that resulted in an inability to complete the program. These unfortunate cases leave their placement short-staffed and the JV community feeling incomplete. Moreover, it is frightening to be sick and far from familiar health care. Often JVs could have prevented illnesses with a little more cautious regard for their activities and their food and water consumption. While we cannot eliminate all illness that JVs will encounter, international travel clinics have established some helpful criteria that should reduce risks with small behavior modifications.

Guidelines and Procedures:

- A. Water: In most placements, JVs will need to drink filtered and/or boiled water. Properly maintain and clean the filter in the JV house. Remember to follow this guideline when traveling.
- B. Food: Be especially attentive to food prepared by street vendors and local restaurants. Choose foods high in complex carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains). Cooled food that has been allowed to stand for several hours can provide a medium for bacterial growth.
- C. Cleanliness: A clean home and kitchen will greatly reduce the pests associated with carrying diseases and viruses (cockroaches, mice, rats). Wash hands and shower frequently. Be attentive to food storage and preparation surfaces. All raw food is subject to contamination.
- D. Shoes: JVs may need to wear closed shoes -- many viruses are found in dust and enter through the feet.
- E. Rest: Staying well-rested will help fight off illness. If you are sick, not resting will prolong or intensify the sickness. Try to eliminate or reduce the areas of your life which give rise to stress and poor sleep.
- F. Sun: Wear sunscreen and cover exposed areas. Use hats.
- G. Animals: Exercise caution with dogs (carry a few rocks if you have suspicions). Remove pigeons and bats from ceiling rafters.
- H. First Aid: Maintain a kit in each JV home. In the JV library there should be a first-aid guide. Clean and cover all small cuts.
- I. Motor Vehicle Transportation: Accidents involving cars, bikes, motorcycles are a leading cause of death and injury for international workers. While travel and commuting is necessary for work, exercise caution when traveling.
- J. General Guidelines: Keep well-hydrated and eat a balanced diet. Watch the water you choose to swim in. In East Africa, do not swim in lakes or streams.
- K. Establish Healthy Patterns: Build relaxation, humor, prayer, exercise, and walking into each day. Don't sweat small things, break large tasks into smaller ones, and let off steam. Minimize or avoid alcohol and tobacco. Eliminate unrealistic expectations of yourself and others.
- L. Finally, for Diarrhea: Remember BRAT-- Bananas, rice, applesauce, and toast. Eat bland foods and plenty of water while avoiding alcohol, black pepper and caffeine.

Appendix E: FAQs about GEOBLUE procedures

I'M SICK. WHAT DO I DO?

- Logon to your GEOBLUE account at geo-blue.com. Click on “doctors and hospitals”. Click on “International destinations.” Search away. When you find a doctor, make an appointment.

HOW DO I MAKE AN APPOINTMENT?

- Call/email GeoBlue Global Health Team and ask them to do it for you (the general response time is 24-48 hours).
- Make an appointment through the GeoBlue page.
- Call the doctor’s office directly.

IT SEEMS EASIER TO CALL THE DOCTOR MYSELF. WHY WOULD I GO THROUGH GEOBLUE?

- GeoBlue will arrange for direct billing with in-network doctors/facilities eliminating the need for you to pay money or fill out a claim form.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN A DOCTOR OR FACILITY IS “IN-NETWORK?”

- Being in-network means that the doctor or facility works with GeoBlue to offer care at negotiated rates. It is a relationship. This can mean less paperwork for all parties involved.

WHOM DO I CONTACT AND FOR WHAT REASONS?

Global Health Team

- WHY? For medical assistance/advice in arranging an appointment, for urgent care, to get feedback from a US-based MD, to find a specialist, to talk about prescriptions.
- HOW? globalhealth@geo-blue.com or 610-254-8772. GeoBlue accepts international collect calls or will call you back at any number.

Customer Service

- WHY? For claims, eligibility, benefits, billing, new plastic ID cards, etc.
- HOW? customerservice@geo-blue.com or 610-254-8769. GEOBLUE accepts international collect calls or will call you back at any number. Or, inside the U.S. 888-243-2358.

JVC Office

- WHY? To inform, for advocacy, for support.
- HOW? intlstaff@jesuitvolunteers.org or 202-462-5200 (office) or 202-957-5845 (e-phone).

HOW DO I MAKE A COLLECT CALL TO GEOBLUE?

- Varies by country...find out once you arrive in-country.

HOW DO I FIND OUT IF A DOCTOR/FACILITY IS IN THE GEOBLUE NETWORK?

- Logon to your GeoBlue account at geo-blue.com. Click on “doctors and hospitals.” Click on “International destinations.” Enter the doctor/facility and if contact information appears, then the doctor/facility is in-network.

IF THERE'S AN EMERGENCY, DO I NEED TO WORRY ABOUT WHETHER THE DOCTOR I'M ABOUT TO SEE IS IN THE GEOBLUE NETWORK?

- No. The cost difference is minimal and your immediate health is what's most important. You can see ANY doctor; however, there will be less paperwork and out-of-pocket expenses if the doctor is in-network and you have contacted GeoBlue. Thus, if you cannot contact GeoBlue yourself because you are incapacitated, have somebody call the Global Health Team to a) determine if the doctor is in-network and 2) if the doctor is in-network to let GeoBlue know of the situation as GeoBlue can then contact the medical facility to arrange for direct billing.

I FOUND A DOCTOR WHO IS IN THE GEOBLUE NETWORK BUT WHEN I WENT I HAD TO PAY OUT OF POCKET. WHY?

- Most, but not all in-network doctors/facilities participate in GeoBlue direct billing; it is not a requirement for an in-network doctor/medical facility. Also, some in-network doctor/medical facilities will only participate in direct billing if you have contacted the GeoBlue Global Billing Team.

THE JVs HAVE BEEN GOING TO THE SAME DOCTOR/FACILITY FOR YEARS BUT THE DOCTOR IS NOT IN THE GEOBLUE NETWORK. IT'S SUCH A PAIN TO FILL OUT A CLAIMS FORM AFTER EACH VISIT. CAN'T GEOBLUE ADD THIS DOCTOR/FACILITY TO THE NETWORK?

- In many cases, YES! GeoBlue depends in part on people like yourself to recommend good medical care. The best approach to getting a doctor or medical facility added to the network is 2-pronged. Forward your recommendation to the GeoBlue Global Health via email; provide as much information as possible: doctor/facility, contact info (website, address, phone) and to indicate any good experience you have had. Additionally, please send the same information to somebody on the JVC staff to pass along to our internal GeoBlue representatives.

I NEED TO PAY FOR MEDICAL CARE OUT OF POCKET (EITHER BECAUSE IT'S NOT AN IN-NETWORK GEOBLUE DOCTOR/FACILITY OR BECAUSE I MADE AN APPOINTMENT DIRECTLY WITH THE DOCTOR AND DID NOT INFORM GEOBLUE). HOW DO I PAY?

- Use community money when possible because when you submit the claim form, the reimbursement check gets sent to JVC.

THE DOCTOR I WANT TO SEE IS NOT IN THE GEOBLUE NETWORK? CAN I STILL MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH HIM/HER? HOW DO I PAY?

- Yes. Be sure to get an itemized bill to submit with your claim form.

HOW DO I SUBMIT A CLAIM?

- Download claim form and fill it out completely. You can find forms on GeoBlue's website.
- Attach appropriate documentation.

- Send in via snail mail, fax, or—if you have access to a scanner—by email. Addresses are found on the claim form.

I'M FILLING OUT A CLAIM FORM. WHERE DO I FIND INFORMATION LIKE GROUP CERTIFICATE AND GROUP NAME?

- On your GeoBlue Medical Insurance ID card

WHAT IS I LOST MY CARD?

- You can download a PDF card online. Or, if you need a new plastic card, you can contact customer service.

WHAT IS AN ITEMIZED BILL?

- An itemized bill should include name and address of provider, name of patient, date(s) of service, amount charged for each service, total charge, diagnosis and reason for treatment.

I'M FILLING OUT A CLAIM FORM...WHAT IS MY REIMBURSEMENT MAILING ADDRESS?

- The JVC main office address: 801 Saint Paul Street; Baltimore, MD 21202

Appendix F: Specific guidelines on personal safety

JVC prioritizes the safety of its volunteers and makes placements considering a region's political, military, and civil instability. It is not the scope of a two year program to jeopardize the safety of volunteers. However, safety should be something to which all JVs are attentive. Volunteers have been physically and sexually assaulted in all countries where JVs serve. Thefts occur. The reality of living and working among the poor is facing some of the same realities they face. **DO NOT** be lulled into thinking that you or your country is exempt from risk. It is very possible to immerse fully in your host culture while exercising caution and minimizing risks. Safety risks vary greatly by country, thus guidelines should be established as a community, with the ICC, immediately upon arrival in-country.

Guidelines and Procedures:

A. General Precautions: Whether living in a small town, a village, an island or a big city, international JVs should practice the same caution that JVC volunteers living in Detroit or New Orleans do.

JVs should avoid:

- Traveling, jogging or walking alone at night
- Idling or spending time alone in isolated, public places during the day (such as parks and beaches)
- Areas where there is known drug use and alcohol abuse
- Poorly lit areas
- Wearing valuable items or carrying large amounts of cash
- Having expensive or high profile items in your home
- Using cell phones or any electronics while walking

Establishing Good Patterns of Safety:

- Walk purposefully attentive to where you are and where you are going
- Secure the JV house at all times (lock doors and windows) and lock bikes
- Stay informed of any recent attacks or threats
- Utilize well-traveled routes

B. Gender and Safety: It is no surprise that women have experienced more violence (especially sexual violence) than men. In addition there are the ongoing verbal and non-verbal suggestive comments. Hopefully, as a JV becomes a more familiar face, the comments will diminish. It sometimes helps to know that these crude comments are beyond our control. But JVs can control our own actions and reduce the situations where women have been attacked and threatened.

For JV women we recommend:

- Avoid being alone with a local male. This includes students, neighbors, and acquaintances. If you are counseling a student, do so in a room with an open door or sitting outside a school building in an open area
- Do not travel alone
- Do not take a ride alone in a car with a male
- Avoid regions (even in groups) where there have been random attacks on public or private transportation (e.g. parts of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Kenya)

- Be especially vigilant at night
- Do not assume that women can be platonic “friends” with males
- *Concerning Clothing:*
 - if the norm is more conservative than the U.S., observe local dress
 - if local dress tends toward the provocative, dress **more conservatively** than local standards

For JV men we recommend:

- Take these concerns seriously and avoid the tendency to diminish the threat JV women experience
- Accompany women at night when they will be traveling alone
- Find an appropriate way to challenge local gender attitudes (especially those which degrade women) and recognize your obligation to be in solidarity with JV women
- Be aware of the messages you inadvertently send (i.e. a North American male may be assumed to have money).

C. Bars and Dance Clubs: These areas often tend to be high risk areas, including for physical and sexual assaults. Alcohol has factored into the large majority of assaults on JVs, and being in an atmosphere can increase one’s exposure to risk. Bars do not provide some magical cultural immersion. They may even prevent some aspects of enculturation.

Appendix G: Disaster preparation Guidelines

- 1) **Discuss emergency preparation with your community.**
 - Meet with your community members. Discuss the dangers in your area. (i.e. fire, severe weather, earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, other emergencies).
 - Clarify whether each danger would specifically affect the JV house (i.e. fire) or more broadly affect the region (i.e. earthquake).
 - Discuss how to respond to each disaster that could occur. For the disasters that affect the region, please include your ICC and local Jesuit communities in the conversation.
 - Discuss what to do about power outages and personal injuries.
 - Learn all possible escape routes from your dwelling and neighborhood.
 - Learn how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at main switches (if applicable).
 - Learn local emergency response units - how and when to contact police, fire, etc, (if applicable)

- 2) **Create a disaster prep kit.** Place this kit in a safe spot in your house. It should contain the essential items necessary to live for at least 3 days. You can design it to fit your needs, but it should contain at least the following items: a) water and non-perishable food, b) first aid kit, and c) flashlights. In the event of an emergency, you will also want to bring any cash on hand, important documents and copies of them (passport, visa, driver's license, credit card, etc), and a list of important phone numbers.

- 3) **Write a Community Emergency Protocol Plan (*see Appendix H*).**
 - Make 3 copies of this plan: 1 for your ICC; 1 for your PC; 1 to post in your house where everyone can easily see it. Please make sure that you discuss this plan with your ICC.
 - Each community needs to call ICC if separated by disaster.
 - Pick two meeting places – Inform ICC of location of rendezvous location.
 - A place near your home in case of a fire.
 - A place outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home after a disaster.
 - Update as needed and keep ICC and JVC informed of changes.

- 4) **Register with the U.S. Embassy online.** The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling abroad to enroll with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. You will receive information from the Embassy about safety conditions, and the U.S. Embassy will help contact you in the event of an emergency. step.state.gov/step/

Appendix H: Community Emergency Protocol

Community Emergency Protocol

(Please hang a copy up near your phone or somewhere else convenient in your house. Thank you!)

Country:

City:

Community Members:

COMMUNICATORS:

(Communicators are expected to contact the ICC and JVC staff within 24 hours of an acute emergency and within a week of a non-acute emergency, prepared to provide the necessary information)

Primary Communicator in the case of an Emergency:

Secondary Communicator in the case of an Emergency (in case primary communicator is directly involved):

* In the case where the primary and secondary communicators are directly involved, other community mates are expected to take on these responsibilities

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION:

(Things to consider include: phone or email? What numbers can you reach people at? How can you make calls to the US? What needs to be in place now?)

How will you contact your ICC?

How will you contact the JVC office?

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:

In the case of a medical emergency, what is the closest hospital?

How will JVs be transported to the hospital?

to hospital or other local emergency response:

MEETING LOCATIONS:

In the case that you cannot meet at you home, in an emergency you will meet:

Near home

A place outside your neighborhood

SITE SPECIFIC EMERGENCIES:

Which emergencies are unique to your region? (i.e. earthquakes, hurricanes, flooding, etc)

For each emergency unique to your region, please share specific response options that you have discussed with your community, your ICC, and the local Jesuit community (as applicable). JVC asks both the JVs and the ICCs to coordinate ahead of time on emergency protocols for natural disasters and other region-specific emergencies.

JVC Office: 202-568-6747

Emergency Phone: 202-957-5845

Please be prepared to discuss the following points

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Who? | 8. Where is the person involved now? |
| 2. What? | 9. How can we contact you/person involved? |
| 3. When? | 10. Have you contacted your ICC? |
| 4. Where? | 11. What is your plan for contacting family members? |
| 5. Are they safe? | 12. Does GeoBlue need to be contacted? |
| 6. Is the rest of the community safe? | |
| 7. What is being done for follow up? | |

Appendix I: Incident Report

An incident report should be completed anytime there is a significant incident that compromises your safety, or potentially could have compromised your safety. After completing an incident report, please email to the international program staff at intlstaff@jesuitvolunteers.org

Name:

Country of Service:

Date of Incident:

Date of report:

Type of Incident:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assault | <input type="checkbox"/> Burglary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robbery | <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theft | <input type="checkbox"/> Accident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Location of Incident:

Please briefly describe the incident:

Was the volunteer consuming alcohol?

Were others involved consuming alcohol?

Were others with the JV at the time of the incident? Who?

If there was an assailant:

What relationship does this person have with the JV?

What do you believe their motive was?

Has your ICC been informed of this incident?

If not, what are your plans in communicating with your ICC about this incident? Do you need support in communicating with your ICC about this incident?

What follow up has occurred thus far in response to this incident?

What follow up do you believe still needs to occur in response to this incident?

Appendix J: JVC Covenant

We invite you to serve as a Jesuit Volunteer. By accepting this assignment, you agree to live and work as a JV for the next two years. We stress that this is a significant commitment, for we describe JVC as a life-changing service and formation experience, an experience that leaves one “ruined for life.” As a faith-based cross-cultural program, volunteers are expected to leave behind the dominant US preferences for personal status, autonomy, comfort, and acquisition; while increasingly committing to the Gospel’s preferential option for the poor. We understand the JVC program as lived options expressed in the four JVC components.

Commitment to this covenant signifies that not only has the JVC office accepted you, but that you accept and fully desire JVC. It is not a program for everybody. Please let the JVC staff know if you need clarification on points contained in this covenant or if you disagree with any of the following.

In order to more fully understand what is entailed in the commitment you will be undertaking, PLEASE READ the JVC handbook CAREFULLY. It describes the JVC values and how we see their lived expression. Please consider whether you can enter this covenant enthusiastically.

I have discerned and prayerfully commit to the following:

Building Community:

- I will share fully in communal living with my companion JVs and accept responsibility for maintaining a clean, safe and hospitable environment in the home where we live.
- I will enter fully into the community meeting times (minimally, 1 hour/week) and regular community activities such as sharing meals together (minimally 4 times/week).
- I will be honest with my community members and willing to share my life with them. I realize that the community’s common good will sometimes require individual sacrifice and compromise.
- I will be aware of how significant relationships affect the community as a whole and therefore will aim to be intentional, inclusive and sensitive to the common good if I find myself discerning this type of relationship.

Witnessing Faith:

- I will pray and share my spiritual insights with my community each week in the context of spirituality nights (minimally, 1 hour/week).
- I will dedicate some time each day for prayer and personal reflection growing in my relationship with God and others. I will discern how God is calling me to service and will strive to respond to that call during and even beyond my time as a JV.
- I will attend Sunday Mass appreciating that it will probably be a different spiritual experience than I am familiar with. I also understand that it is often a cultural expectation of the local church community who has invited the presence of JVs and also an opportunity to more fully immerse with the people whom we are trying to serve.

Doing Justice:

- I enter JVC realizing, as the Second Vatican Council affirmed, that the proclamation of faith and work for justice are inseparable and equally integral to the Christian mission.
- I will exercise social analysis and critical reflection on my experiences to better understand the structures that foster and perpetuate powerlessness and poverty. I will examine my own personal history to see how I have benefited or suffered from these same structures.

- I will strive to continually examine my own behaviors and ways in which I relate to others, recognizing how in some ways, I could unintentionally work against my desire to do justice.
- I realize that as a guest in my host country, it is not my role to publicly denounce local leadership. While my work as a JV may not be social/political advocacy, I will strive for friendships and solidarity with the poor. I do this not for their benefit, but for mine, for the friends of Jesus are found among the poor.
- I realize that before all else, the promotion of justice requires my own continuing personal conversion. This process will scrutinize the cultural influences and values which have shaped me -- for I come from a North American culture which often promotes the individual and where immediate gratification and accumulation have become standards of success.

Living Simply:

- I will strive with my community members to live simply in all aspects of my life, exploring the meaning of this value and ways to challenge each other to simplify even further.
- I will put God and relationships above material possessions and practice Ignatian indifference, appreciating that in a position of privilege, my responsibility is to be a helpful rather than hurtful human in coexistence with my brothers and sisters in the world.
- I will live within our JVC budget for all routine living expenses understanding that for special needs, I may have to provide my own financial resources (e.g. contact lens materials, special prescription medication);
- I will stay within my host country/region for the next two years as an important real and symbolic way of entering into this place and accompanying people.
- I will approach vacation time with the norms of a simple lifestyle -- seeking guidance from the Jesuit support person and the JVC office. I will:
 - a. not let visits from family and friends interfere with this norm, after all, it is I (not them) who chose to enter into this covenant;
 - b. I will prayerfully discern and discuss with my JV community and local support person any leisurely travel. When traveling I will recognize that I am exercising my privilege and therefore will maintain simplicity, rather than participating in tourist opportunities that remain out of reach for the majority of local people.

Program/Placement:

- I will participate fully in the scheduled JVC retreats and the year-end Re-Orientation/Dis-Orientation (Re-O/Dis-O) program;
- I will, upon my arrival, meet with the local JVC support person to work out the mutual relationship that can be expected between the JVs and the local support community. I understand that:
 - a. our goal is to support the Jesuit presence and/or the diocesan efforts and to work in the spirit of cooperation and friendship;
 - b. the local support community want and appreciate JVs but their primary focus is their local ministry;
 - c. hospitality and help from the local support community should be recognized as a kindness which we reciprocate as a JV community;
 - d. in cases of serious and urgent need JVs can expect the support of the local support community as well as the JVC office;

- e. financial compensation and JV living expenses are provided by funds from the work site and the JVC office.

I will commit to honestly trying to live consistent with the behavioral norms described in the handbook, specifically chapter VI concerning “Responsibilities of the Volunteer” in my personal life and by supporting and challenging other JVs in my community to live in accord with these expectations concerning:

- a. significant relationships
- b. alcohol, drugs, addictive behaviors
- c. use of free time
- d. my connections to “home”

During any time when there is hiatus from my primary placement, I will seek a secondary placement approved by the JVC office, giving priority first to any specific need as designated by the Jesuit superior or local support person; and next to use this time to further connect with the host culture and to become more proficient with the local language. Secondary placements vary by country.

I freely enter this cross-cultural experience with a desire to appreciate a culture other than my own. I will use this principle (and the four components) to guide my discernment about travel; the time I spend in correspondence with friends, family (especially via email); the time I spend connecting to U.S. culture via the internet and mass media; and when I consider whether to enjoy luxuries frequently extended to expatriates but not accessible to most local people.

With a desire to be fully immersed in this experience and appreciating the commitments with my various communities and responsibilities, I will refrain from having friends or family visit during my entire first year as a volunteer. Additionally, I will stay for the entire two years without going home, unless a situation of personal health or trauma arises, in which case I will consult with the In-Country Coordinator and JVC staff to discern appropriate measures.

I freely commit myself to JVC, its values, and the people I will live this experience alongside. The lifestyle described in this covenant resonates with how I desire to live my life for the next two years. Therefore, I am willingly entering into this covenant and will make a continual effort to integrate its essence into my life as a JV.