



ORIENTATION PREPARATION

PACKING INTENTIONALLY FOR LIFE AS A JESUIT VOLUNTEER

In a culture that values what we have over how we give, JVC allows volunteers to reflect on simple living. JVC creates valuable opportunities for Jesuit Volunteers to live a simple, practical life. Living in solidarity with poor and marginalized communities, volunteers learn to separate needs from wants and gain freedom from the material.

We invite you to consider how you pack for your term of service by using the following questions to help guide you through that process:

- **Fully immersing yourself.** How is what I am bringing demonstrative of my intention to live in solidarity with the local community and culture? How is my approach to packing reflective of a commitment to promote and support local resources and businesses?
- **Privilege and service.** How might what I bring debunk or reify negative stereotypes about U.S. Americans in full-time service programs (particularly in my service location)?
- **Wants versus needs.** What items may I perceive as necessary, though would be a privilege to have in excess? How might I consider adapting certain habits rather than looking to continue them (e.g., bringing a 2-yr supply of contact lenses to circumvent access issues versus adjusting to glasses all or most of the time)?
- **Being a conscious neighbor.** How might what I bring into the JV house affect security and perceptions of security, especially knowing that it is easy to observe when new JVs are arriving? Please refer to the bag/packing policy on your packing list.
- **Vital service, done intentionally.** How might my packing choices affect power dynamics and privilege between my co-workers, local neighbors, etc. and me? In what ways might my assumptions on what to bring reinforce perceptions I may hold about the quality of local resources available (e.g. bringing a year's worth of teaching supplies to be able to carry out my job "well." What does that mean for co-workers who rely on what the school can provide? How might they perceive your openness (or lack thereof) to learn from their resourcefulness, accept their conditions as is, be willing to sacrifice to learn new approaches to teaching and/or understand their systems?)
- **Shopping local (international JVs).** What items may be more advisable to purchase upon arrival, after receiving local perspectives on what is most culturally appropriate? For example, volunteers in the past who have chosen to put their stipends towards having clothes or uniforms locally made or bought, have tended to be perceived as dressing more appropriately. And often find they receive more initial respect from local students, co-workers and supervisors by seeking out advice and reflecting this sensitivity to cultural practices and norms.