

Benefits of Volunteering



Volunteering with a faith-based program will have a transformative effect on both you and those whom you serve. Your time of service will be one of tremendous change and growth. Some of the benefits of service include:

- ✓ **The opportunity to serve others.**
You will be able to give of your time and talents to help those in need. Chances are, you will find that you receive far more from those you serve than you can ever give.
- ✓ **An environment in which you can grow spiritually.**
Whether you are a person with an active spiritual life or someone seeking to deepen your relationship with God, a year of service is a way to be challenged spiritually.
- ✓ **The opportunity to live in community with other volunteers.**
Many volunteers find this to be the most challenging part of their volunteer experience.
- ✓ **The opportunity to live and work in a place culturally different than your own.**
Whether you discern to serve internationally or whether you choose to serve in a different city in the United States, volunteering will allow you to live in a place different from your own. You will be challenged to adapt to a new environment and understand how different people live.
- ✓ **Committing yourself to living a simple lifestyle.**
Living on a small stipend will offer you a chance to examine your own lifestyle decisions and how those decisions impact others. You will find it is quite the challenge to live simply when surrounded by so much.
- ✓ **Working for social justice.**
Poverty and injustice do not exist in a vacuum. Serving the poor and marginalized is a means of raising your own awareness about the institutions and structures that contribute to economic and social inequalities.
- ✓ **Stipend, room, and board.**
All programs ensure that their volunteers have the necessities. However, stipend and room and board will vary from program to program.
- ✓ **Health insurance.**
Most programs will provide you with health insurance during your term of service. Be sure to ask the particular program in which you are interested what their policy is.
- ✓ **Student loan deferment.**
In most programs, during your time of service, you will not have to make payments on your student loans. Again, be sure to ask the particular program in which you are interested what their policy is.
- ✓ **AmeriCorps Education Award.**
Some programs participate in this program which provides education funds to apply to your student loans or to advance your education.

Taken from Catholic Network of Volunteer Services (www.cnvs.org)