

Foundational Concepts

Simple Lifestyle

The living of a simple lifestyle, in which nonessentials and luxuries are pared away, allows participants to see more clearly what is truly important in life. It also liberates us from distractions that can stifle deep and meaningful conversation and relationship. The inspiration for utilizing this type of immersion approach comes from "liberation theology" - particularly Latin American liberation theologians like Gustavo Gutierrez and Leonardo Boff. For them, and for us at S.W.I.M. to the Border, solidarity means compassion - "to suffer with." When living like the poor we do not idealize poverty, rather as Gutierrez states, it is "a way of identifying oneself with the interests of the oppressed classes and challenging the exploitation that victimized them." More simply put, by living and working with the poor, we see the world as they see it and we begin to better understand their lives.

Spirituality

The S.W.I.M. to the Border experience is grounded in the values of Christ's social gospel and Catholic Social Teaching. The process of

spiritual reflection is carried out through a "praxis" approach - that is, an ongoing relationship between reflection and action. The lessons learned come out of actively working with the poor and reflecting upon the Gospel message in light of that service

Direct Service

The Los Embajadores' experience is grounded in service work. However this work, important as it is by itself, ultimately serves as a conduit through which the S.W.I.M. to the Border program flows. It is through our work that we build relationship with and share in the lives of the community of Vicente Guerrero. Our service work is an act of working with the people of Mexico and not for them - sharing our labor as they share their food, their homes, and their lives with us. As such this direct service is often a humbling experience

Supportive Community

The dynamics of a supportive community made up of peers and experienced leaders are essential to the success of this immersion experience. The Early Church as described in "The Acts of the Apostles" is a model we try to emulate. We share facilities, eat common

meals, pray, work, and play together as a community. By sharing our resources and our energy we find we are able to accomplish more than we could as individuals. We also learn that community resources that once appeared limited and insufficient become plentiful when shared. As such our small S.W.I.M. to the Border community can become a witness and exemplar to the global reality demanded by our world.

Social Justice

There are two formal concepts that relate to social justice - social analysis and structural change. First, social analysis is the formal study of the causes of injustice. The attempt to end the injustice is the second key element - structural change. Whereas direct service is helping people survive and improve upon their present situation, structural change is aimed at removing the root causes of the problem. The S.W.I.M. to the Border experience will inspire and empower us to do further work for justice. We can only place so many bandages on a wound before questioning what is causing the bleeding.

Trip Particulars

Join us for 7 days in rural *Vincente Guerrero*, which is in the Baja peninsula of Mexico, as we take a wholistic approach to building relationships between ourselves and the people of Mexico.

Dates: July 03-09, 2006

Cost: \$950 + airfare

Minimum of 15 people needed

Includes: room and board in Mexico, materials, adult chaperones, mini-vans, airfare, formation program, and fun times!

Formation program consists of gatherings in the two months before our trip to build relationships and examine the issues between the U.S. and Mexico in preparation for our immersion mission.

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Or visit
www.paxjoliet.org
www.losembajadores.org

Summer Witness in Mission

The Peace and Social Justice Ministry of the Diocese of Joliet sponsors Summer Witness in Mission (S.W.I.M.).

S.W.I.M. offers high school teens an opportunity to participate in Christian service based out of the Joliet Diocese. This experience involves youth physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

The goals of the S.W.I.M. program are:

- To call young people, their families, parish communities and the Diocese of Joliet into awareness of our call as Catholic Christians to go forth in mission.
- To recognize and name the gifts of our young people in the Body of Christ and teach them how to use these for the good of the local Church and beyond.
- To disciple the young as Jesus discipled, by offering them an opportunity for Christian service and reflection.
- To build bridges of understanding, faith and material support by immersing people of all backgrounds in the shared Gospel message.

**Now going
International!**

S.W.I.M. TO THE BORDER

Service work

Relationship building

**Mission trip to work
alongside the Franciscans in
Vincente Guerrero, Mexico**

This trip is facilitated by the Diocese of Joliet S.W.I.M. program. We will be traveling with the Los Embajadores Immersion program.