

Dominica Service-Learning Project Covenant

2011

The Dominica Service Project seeks to promote growth in the participants as well as in those who they serve by working with the poor and marginalized. In order to foster this goal we ask all participants to live simply and in community with each other, to examine the causes of social injustice and to experience, in the most real way possible, the reality of being a person rooted in a particular culture. We hope that upon returning from the trip all participants retain this new perspective and share it with their own communities. We ask that each participant adopt and respect the four pillars of the program:

Simplicity of Life and Cultural Sensitivity

- ❖ seek to live the richness of life more simply focused on people and their needs rather than on material things
- ❖ strive to remain open to differences of opinion and behavior as they present themselves in encounters with those of another culture
- ❖ enroll in REL 100: “Catholic Theological Reflection on Service” and
 1. fulfill the course requirements in Dominica as a means of reflecting upon the service project experience
 2. fulfill the course requirements in a timely manner upon return to the U.S. as specified in the course syllabus.

Promotion of Justice

- ❖ work with the poor in pursuit of solidarity toward the goal of making changes in the world
- ❖ strive to become just in your own thoughts, language and actions so that your work for justice will have credibility
- ❖ seek to know the truth of situations rather than rely on prejudices and biases

Community Life

- ❖ be open and honest with other community members, be willing to share part of your life with them
- ❖ take part in the project’s activities including its meetings
- ❖ not make decisions that affect the group or the program independently of the group

Spirituality

The project is enriched by faith and spirituality. All spiritualities rooted in love and the desire for the promotion of justice are welcome. We require that all participants be open to each other's beliefs and be willing to share their own.

- ❖ participate in the community time of prayer and reflection, bringing your own gifts of life and experience and cherishing those of others

The Dominica Service Project requires you to accept the following rules:

- 1. No Dating** of project members during the trip. This is to promote participation in the life of the entire community. This includes blatant separations among the group of a few individuals, e.g. cliques, or any action which results in a breakdown of community.
- 2. No Illegal Drugs or Alcohol** are to be used during the trip, as specified in the Le Moyne College Handbook.

The Dominica Service Project is not a mandatory activity. Any violations of the rules may be reported to the College which has the right to suspend or limit participation in the program. Please review the program's beliefs and goals to see if they correspond to your own and if they are something you wish to adopt. If you choose to apply to the project you agree to accept and respect these terms. There is no compromise. By signing below, you are agreeing that the pillars of the program and the resulting rules are also your own while you participate in the project. Violation of the rules will result in your immediate departure from the project at your own expense.

The Fine Print

In preparation for trip

- To attend all meetings. The trip to Dominica requires a tremendous amount of preparation and is a major undertaking. It must be a priority in one's allocation of time. Exceptions, of course, occur, but they must be truly exceptional.
- To engage in fundraising. Le Moyne College does not subsidize this trip. Participants are responsible for all costs. Different participants may have different capabilities in raising funds.
- Actively participate in the course "Catholic Theological Reflection on Service."

While in Dominica

- To work a full day along with Dominican colleagues. This will generally involve working six hours a day. In so far as possible, work placements will involve working with Dominicans and will not be projects in which only Le Moyne students are engaged.
- To use opportunities to meet Dominicans and to become acquainted with their culture. Examples of such activities include exploring public markets, making contact with local youth groups, participating in local festivals. This will help participants to avoid superfi-

cial tourism. The group will also visit culturally important sites and have the opportunity for recreation.

- To participate in regular reflection activities. This will involve being open to a variety of religious faiths and beliefs. While in Dominica all are encouraged but not required to attend a church service at least once.
- To abide by the Covenant. Participants agree to refrain from the consumption of all alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs during the project.
- To eat the simple food of Dominica and to live in simple lodging. The faculty members on the trip will determine the definition of “simple food.”
- To live a simple lifestyle as defined by the faculty members on the trip. Students will not go to restaurants, bars or clubs. They should not expect the same level of communication with their families that they have while they are in the United States.
- To be sensitive and attentive to the other members of the Le Moyne group, including
 - not forming cliques
 - being careful that no one ever feels left out of activities.

Finances

In preparation for trip

–Each participant must raise a minimum amount of our travel expenses at periodic intervals. That minimum will be determined by the cost of the trip.

–Any participant who does not raise the minimum amount of funds at the designated time either

- pays that amount out of pocket
- withdraws from the project

— All funds are common property. No student will claim a right to funds that he or she has personally raised.

Common Funds

•The project will pay for

- Transportation to and from Syracuse and the U.S. airport of embarkation when participants travel with the group. The project does not cover the cost of private transportation arrangements to and from airports in the U.S.
- Transportation between the airport and the site where the group will be living in Dominica
- The hiring of a mini-bus and driver in Dominica for two days when the group is not working in order to explore the country and become acquainted with its culture. The project will also pay for admission to parks, museums or cultural events when such visits are sponsored by the project.
- Food and lodging for the group while in Dominica

Individual Finances

•Individual participants are responsible for

- Tourist activities not sponsored by the group. If they involve expenses which are beyond the means of most Dominicans, they are discouraged.
- The cost of travel documents, e.g. passport, visa etc.
- Meals during travel between the U.S. and Dominica
- Souvenirs, snacks.

During travel

•Participants recognize that an important component of the project is the experience of sharing the life of the poor. Further, the participants recognize that most of our funds are donations. Therefore

- We will take modes of transportation which people of slender means take.
- The modes of transportation used will be safe but they may involve inconveniences such as transporting luggage up and down stairs and taking public transportation which may be cramped.
- We may spend the night in transit in safe but simple conditions

Signature