

# Questions to Ask: Discerning your call to service

Whether you decide to volunteer for a week or three years, committing yourself to service is a big step. Your time spent as a volunteer will have a big impact upon you and upon others. Here are some questions to help you reflect upon the decision to volunteer.

There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Each person is motivated by their own personal talents, experiences, and goals. It helps to be aware of what is calling you to service, so that you can express this to yourself as well as the programs to which you are applying.

## *Ask Yourself*

### **Why do I want to be a volunteer?**

Everybody decides to volunteer for different reasons. Are you idealistic? Do you want to deepen your relationship with God? Are you committed to social justice? Do you anticipate personal growth? Do you want to change your life?

### **What are my expectations?**

What do you want to experience during your time as a volunteer? What do you hope to gain? What do you expect from your program and specific placement?

### **What do I have to offer?**

What gifts can you share with others? What are your strengths/weaknesses? What professional skills do you bring?

### **How do I handle changes?**

A volunteer year involves a lot of change. Not only will you be living in a new place with new people, but you won't be earning a salary. How do you handle change? Have you ever been far from your family and support system? How will you adjust to living simply?

### **How do I relate with others?**

Many volunteers find living in community to be the most difficult part of their volunteer year. How do you interact with others? How do you deal with problems and disagreements? Do you have a sense of humor?

### **What gives me satisfaction?**

At the end of the day, what makes you feel good? What do you find comfort in? What do you like to do with others? How do you spend your time when you're alone?