

Proverb 28:27 “He who gives to the poor suffers no want; He who ignores the poor has many curses!”

Tips for developing a Missionary Heart

1. **Have an attitude of gratitude.** “In all things give thanks!” Let us out-do one another in service. No grumbling!
 - a. Nothing sinks a ship like grumbling.
 - b. Phrase comments in a positive way.
 - c. Reports are not grumbling. i.e. The toilet is overflowing or even more important “I have cramps and diarrhea.” We want to know those things ASAP!!

2. **Respect the Haitian culture.** Look upon this week as an intense and very special learning experience. We’re not going there to change them.
 - a. We’re going there to give them a hand up.
 - b. We’re also going as guests of some very special people that we have had the privilege to work alongside with.
3. **Be careful not to exclude anyone** –
 - a. Smile! Make friends.
 - b. Body language and inclusion are important.
4. **Submit to leadership** -
 - a. Seek peace. Unity comes in working towards the common good.
 - b. It is difficult to move a group around so try to be attentive & prompt to directives
 - c. There will be lots of “hurry up and wait” but love being on Haitian time!!
6. **Eat what is set before you** –
 - a. This is a scriptural admonition that is very important. Fr. Joe, Tete, and the entire staff will work very hard to make your stay enjoyable and pleasant.
 - b. Expand your cuisine world - at least try a little of everything that they prepare.
7. **God has called you specifically.**
 - a. There is someone out there who would not receive God’s word, God’s love, God’s goodness if you didn’t go.
 - b. You are called. You will be a blessing and will be blessed!
 - c. Thanks for saying “Yes!”
8. **Refresh with rest.** Rest makes almost everything better. Goals are great but rest is best. Work hard but know when to rest. Don’t try to work too hard. Zeal is commendable but it can lead to burnout and illness. Recognize that you are a human being who can’t do it all and has more limitations than you would like to admit/

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Ten tips for a missionary-to-be (Long term)

1. **Go Deep with God** – Put God first always! Our relationship with Jesus should be our number one priority. We’re in a spiritual war with the ultimate victory promised. Nothing else will matter in life if this area is not in order. Guard your time with God! Along with intimacy with God, God’s word and sacrament of the Eucharist are of the essence. Spend time in meditation. Base everything you know and do on the Word of God. It will keep you steady in hard times. Pursue Him in prayer. The greatest way the powers of darkness attack us is by placing doubts in our minds about who we are in Christ. Realizing that the power of the body and blood of Christ can overcome anything, using the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently and receiving the Eucharist is the key to fighting the good fight and keeping the faith.
2. **Commit to Character**. Live the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew’s Gospel, Chapter 5 through 7. Commit to live a holy life. Develop loveliness. There is attractiveness in godliness. Develop spiritual maturity which comes through trials and daily life. It’s how I choose to respond that allows my heart to change and others to see Christ in the way I live. Develop a heart of sacrifice and endurance. Sacrifice requires me to go and do that which I may not want to do. (John 15:13, Phil 2). Exercise self-discipline in work habits, responsibility, promptness and reliability. Remain humble. Bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit – love, joy, patience, kindness, generosity, long-suffering and chastity. Keep your eyes open, don’t judge, let things run off your shoulders, walk in forgiveness, find something good in every situation and share these good things with people. Who you are is more important than what you do.
3. **Live Flexibly**. “Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not break or be bent out of shape.” Relax! Enjoy the journey: don’t take it too seriously, go with the flow! Without flexibility, a missionary can end up returning home disappointed and unfulfilled. Recognize that things won’t always go your way. Let the Lord do the leading.
4. **Confirm your call**. Without confirmation of a strong call, you may be confused and frustrated. Ask God for a clear call – He will give you one. Receive confirmation through the mission leadership.
5. **Comprehend Culture** – Most missionaries recommend cultural training before working overseas. Training should include language, culture, ministry skills, prayer, interpersonal skills and how to keep spiritually fit with prayer and the sacraments.
6. **Learn the language** – Begin learning the language as soon as practical. Get a bible in that language and begin to read it along with your English bible. Ask God to help you. He will.
7. **Build a support base**. Raising funds is one of the most important of all tasks. Building relationships is vital. If you just ask, many of your family and friends will offer to support the mission. Ask for prayer partners.
8. **Take time for others** – Be gracious, especially about intrusions into your personal space. Our patient, caring love is what leads people to understand God’s love. Talk to strangers, even if you can’t speak their language. A smile and kind words are a universal language.
9. **Refresh with rest**. Rest makes almost everything better. Goals are great but rest is best. Work hard but know when to rest. Don’t try to work too hard. Zeal is commendable but it can lead to burnout and illness. Recognize that you are a human being who can’t do it all and has more limitations than you would like to admit/
10. **Embrace the culture** – Come not only to understand but also to appreciate the culture, and then you can find ways to share in a culturally relevant way with the people whom we are visiting and working with. Work hard to be culturally sensitive. Adjust your lifestyle to the situation and the culture. Leave your culture behind. Get to know their culture, embrace it where and when possible, and become like the people as much as you can. Jesus identified with us, and must do

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the same where we serve. Develop cultural etiquette which is good and acceptable manners in a particular culture. Needless to say, never have a superior attitude. All are precious in the sight of God! (Romans 12:2; II Cor 3:18)

These tips have been a blessing to us and many other missionaries. Following these suggestions in your way and understanding will make you come away with a better experience. God will bless you for your desire to help Him in his work of caring for the poor and forgotten.

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PRAYER PARTNERS – Each of you should have at least one prayer partner who will commit to praying for you daily as you prepare to visit your mission site and when you are there in Haiti. Prayer is necessary for God’s blessing on you as well as your ministry. Keep your prayer partner (s) informed as to your needs: financial; physical; and spiritual. Communicate your concerns and fears along with your desires and aspirations.

PRAYER WILL BE YOUR SOURCE OF:

- God’s guidance in a culture that is very different from your own.
- Strength to deal with newness of everything
- Health because of the change in climate, altitude, food, etc.
- Good team relationships
- Good relationships with Haitians.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4:6

Listen more than you speak. Take the posture of a learner rather than a teacher. It is best to be an observer, at least on your first visit and avoid being opinionated and judgmental. In the midst of another culture, things often are not what they seem to be.

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2

Last, but far from least, learn to laugh at yourself? Do not take yourself too seriously. Humor is a wonderful remedy for most everything! Humor has carried many missionaries through very difficult times and it will do the same for you.

“A cheerful heart is good medicine.” Proverbs 17:22

Intestinal problems – Despite all the precautions, visitors sometimes end up with a bout of diarrhea. This is generally caused by the change in diet. Everyday the group leader will check how everyone is doing. Please let him/her know ASAP if you have any stomach cramping or diarrhea so that the appropriate medication can be given.

Medication – Any needed medication should be taken with you in your carry-on luggage. It is wise to take an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses. Because of the dust, some prefer to wear glasses.

Malaria prevention medication – Is optional but not necessary in the area which we work. Check with your doctor.

Sunbathing – Tropical sun is not at all like the typical US sun and can do much harm in a very little time. Haiti’s sun can make you sick! It can give you fever, diarrhea, cramps, not to mention heat stroke. We do our best to keep you out of the sun at midday and suggest hats and long sleeve shirts for long stints in the sun.

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