



Here is a summary of questions that people ask about the Parish Internship Program. These answers are a guide and you should check the official application package for further information.

1. How long is the Parish Internship Program?

Answer: the Parish Internship Program starts on 2nd August 2009 and finishes after the WYD11 Pilgrimage on 30th August 2011.

2. What is the role of the Diocese in this program?

Answer: The Diocese will administer the program through the Parish Support Unit. The Diocese will provide the formation and training to all interns over the two year period. The Diocese will be responsible for monitoring the service hours for each intern on a six monthly basis.

3. What is the Volunteer Service Period (VSP)?

Answer: Each person accepted into the program as an intern will have to serve four Volunteer Service Periods. Each VSP takes six months. Each intern will need to complete 100 hours of volunteer ministry in each VSP. Interns will not be able to roll more than 20 hours over into the next VSP. At the end of the four VSP's, each intern will have completed 400 hours of parish based ministry.

4. 400 hours seems like a lot of time, how will I manage it?

Answer: If you break the 400 hours up into the four VSP's, it may still seem like a lot. However if you think of it as 4-5 hours per week it seems much more achievable. These 4-5 hours are easy to fit in around the other commitments in your week. There are some passionate volunteers in our parishes who serve 10 hours per week in parish ministry.

5. How can a parish support the Parish Internship Program?

Answer: Firstly the parish could encourage youth and young adults who may already be involved in ministry to apply for the program. Once the program has begun, the parish can assist the interns by connecting interns with the ministry leaders for the areas that they will serve. The parish could support the interns with mentors who may be interested in sharing their skills with an intern. A parish could also ask the groups to pray for the interns as they begin their ministry within the parish.

6. Should I talk to the Parish Priest about the Parish Internship Program?

Answer: Each person that registers as an intern will have to have their registration endorsed by the Parish Priest of the Parish that they are nominating for. The Parish Priest or his representative will also guide the intern into ministries that suit the skills of the intern and the pastoral needs of the parish.

7. Can I serve in the ministry of my choice?

Answer: Each intern should serve their Volunteer Service Period (VSP) in a ministry that suits their gifts and talents. Some interns will serve in a different ministry for each of the four VSP's. Other interns will serve in the same ministry for the entire internship. Each intern should consider the pastoral needs of the Parish before selecting their ministry area.

8. Do I have to do the same ministry for 400 hours?

Answer: This program is designed to encourage long term sustainable ministry. There is an advantage to the parish if you serve your 400 hours in the same ministry. However you may need to serve in a number of areas before you find the right fit for your skills. Work with your Parish to discover how you can serve the needs of the parish.

9. Do I have to be a leader to be an intern?

Answer: The key word for an intern is servanthood; imagine Jesus washing the disciples' feet. Interns will be trained in ministry leadership but do not have to be leaders when they start the program. The interns are there to serve the parish community in a manner that reflects Jesus as servant leader.

10. I work fulltime, can I be an intern?

Answer: Yes. Each parish already has many ministry leaders who work fulltime outside the parish and serve the parish in their spare time. The Parish Internship Program will conduct all meetings, workshops and training sessions out of normal working hours so that fulltime workers can participate in the program.



11. Can I volunteer in a School?

Answer: This is a parish based program. Several parishes conduct ministry within Catholic and State schools as part of the CCD or Youth Ministry. You may serve your VSP in CCD ministry. If you serve your VSP in a youth ministry which involved school visits then this would count. If you are a school student who is registered as an intern, your normal school activities or volunteer lunchtime activities would not count towards the VSP.

12. What does the Diocese expect to do on the pilgrimage for WYD in 2011?

Answer: The Diocese is looking to travel on pilgrimage to a site of religious significance in Europe, then to Days in the Diocese, WYD week in Madrid Spain followed by a two day post WYD retreat. The pilgrimage is expected to take 10-12 days.

13. What costs will the Diocese cover for the pilgrimage to Madrid Spain in 2011?

Answer: The Diocese will cover airfares, accommodation, registration for WYD11 and transfers (usually bus) between pilgrimage sites. This only applies to Registered participants of the Parish Internship Program that complete the four VSP's.

14. What is not covered in the pilgrimage to Madrid Spain in 2011?

Answer: The Diocese will not cover food, beverages, public transport, sight seeing and travel insurance. The intern will also be responsible to cover their own costs of extending their travel whilst in Europe.

15. What if I am in year 12?

Answer: If you are in Year 12 in 2009 you may start your first Volunteer Service Period (VSP) after you finish your HSC. If you are in Year 12 in 2010 you can serve your VSP around the peak exam times. Extra flexibility will be given to Year 12 students if the VSP change over time occurs during exam times.

16. What if I can't go to WYD 2011?

Answer: The Parish Internship Program is a volunteer program designed for people preparing for WYD 2011. If you can't attend WYD 2011 you could still register for the program so that you can take advantage of the formation and training. However there is no cash payment, wage, remuneration or compensation for any intern who can not make it to WYD11 in August 2011.

17. What if I don't know what I will be doing in 2011?

Answer: The Parish Internship Program doesn't cost anything to join and you can withdraw at anytime by writing to the Parish Support Unit. It will not be possible to join the program half way through, so any interested person should join the program now rather than waiting to see if they are available in 2011. If you withdraw from the program you will have made a difference in your parish and touched the lives of those in the parish.

18. What if I get sick during the two years?

Answer: If you get sick during the two year period for an extended period of time you should write to the Parish Support unit to ask for advice. Given that each VSP allows for 100 hours to be served in a six month period, most interns can make up hours lost due to illness within the six months.

19. Do I get paid anything if I leave the program?

Answer: The Parish Internship Program is a volunteer program. There is no cash payment or wage for time served. If a person withdraws from the program there is no compensation or remuneration. If the Diocese withdraws a person from the program due to inappropriate behaviour or failure to serve their regular hours, the Diocese will not provide compensation or remuneration for time served.

20. Can I go with the Diocese to WYD without being an Intern?

Answer: Yes. The Diocese will organise a pilgrimage to self funded pilgrims. These pilgrims will pay their own costs for travel to WYD 2011. Where possible all diocesan pilgrims will travel on the same or similar pilgrimage with Bishop David.

21. I am currently over 33yrs and I want to go to WYD where do I fit in?

Answer: The Diocese will welcome people over 35 on the Diocese pilgrimage to Madrid in 2011. Parents often like to take their teenage children on pilgrimage to WYD. The guidelines and itinerary for pilgrims on the Diocesan self funded pilgrimage will be available in 2010.