



## **Instructions for Host Developed by the Board of SPFL**

### **An Overview:**

This document has been developed to help and assist in hosting volunteers of St. Paul's Fellowship of Labor and prepare you for the program. We are excited to work with you and ask that you review this document completely and thoroughly.

### **The Process (We assume for a new program):**

Please fill out an Application form from the website and email it to the main office ([peterpatitsas@gmail.com](mailto:peterpatitsas@gmail.com)). Allow one week for the main office to consider and process your application. The Main Office will then contact you, via email, and your Program Leader/Regional Contact for your area. This person will serve as your main communication link to St. Paul's Fellowship of Labor and assist you in developing the program to your needs.

If you are a monastery or convent, once you have received word that you have been accepted, you must contact the ruling bishop for your area to receive permission (every year without exception).

If you are curious as to whom your Program Leader/Regional Contact is going to be, please go to the website and look under Administration. A listing of regions is provided. Simply go to the Administration page and find your match.

At this point, we assume that you have filled out the application, your application was processed and accepted, that your Bishop agreed to having us, and that you now have a Program Leader/Regional Contact. This person will then call you to discuss the program generally in light of your application. Their job is to confirm information with you and begin securing a budget for your trip, the right people to recruit including skilled laborers, transportation needs, etc.

It is important to recognize that the trip is to be tailored and catered to your needs, there is no pressure. Simply let us know what you can handle and we will adapt. However, the more you help us, the better we can help you.

Of the many important questions, a very important question to discuss with your program leader/regional contact is how much time before the program begins do you need to know the final count for people coming. Many times, we have volunteers come last minute and it is important for us to know how much time we have to fill spots.



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**A list of expectations is provided, so that we can work best together to achieve our goals. As you read these please, keep in mind that your Regional Director/Program Leader will be your go to person during the program to address any needs, problems, etc. And remember that everyone who attends these trips is coming on their own volition and will never be less than 16:**

**1. Policy on SPFL Funding Projects:**

St. Paul's Fellowship of Labor is not responsible for contributing money towards projects. We simply provide labor and lots of it. This means that if a church is being built, structure raised, room renovated, etc these funds need to come from the Host. This way we ensure that everyone is meeting each other half way. And that the projects you pick for us to complete are ones you have developed and budgeted for. However, we are not opposed to fundraising or contributing financially to projects; we have in the past. We just don't make it a common occurrence and don't want it to be an expectation.

**2. Policy on Providing Tools:**

All tools and equipment should be provided by the host; however, if you do have a request we sometimes can arrange to bring certain tools. Tools does not mean work clothing. All volunteers will know what type of attire to bring. However, we do suggest that you provide gloves, and please let us know of any special clothing to bring.

**3. Policy on Accommodations and Food:**

All arrangements of accommodations for volunteers should be made by the Host and should be at no cost to the organization or volunteers. This also applies for food cost during the week and transportation to and from train stations, airports, etc. nearby. For instance, if we are serving a monastery in a major city and someone needs picked up from the train station or airport nearby, the monastery should make arrangements to pick them up.

1. If possible, it would be best to have accommodations that are "on campus" so to speak. Our hope is to remain at the monastery or convent the whole week; and the past has proved to us that living "off campus" changes the dynamic of the trip. It makes for a more harmonious schedule if we are on site.
2. We also will require some facility for showering.



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#### **4. Policy on Funding Activities:**

The organization will cover the cost of evenings out, major site seeing activities, dinners out, etc.

#### **5. Adherence to the Monastic Schedule:**

We strive to adapt to the monastic lifestyle with its services, diet, and schedule. Please be clear as to what the service schedule is exactly for the week with your Regional Director.

- a. We ask that you provide 3 meals a day (we eat what you eat), self serve is not a problem. We will clean dishes and do after meal chores if asked.
- b. We ask you to be understanding to those volunteers who are trying to adapt to a monastic life, especially those for the first time. Meaning, let's say, a volunteer has been working all day, had attended a midnight liturgy the previous night, and doesn't feel up to Small Compline, we ask that that person be given the option of resting.
- c. All volunteers will be asked to go to as many services as they can and to attend all discussions that are held. Please address the Program Leader if someone seems less involved. He/she should be the one inspiring a tired group to keep going.

#### **6. Dealing with Problems and Concerns:**

It is critical that all problems and concerns be discussed with the Program Leader. That person will serve as the authoritative figure towards the group of volunteers while on the trip and represent the interest of SPFL.

#### **7. Evening Meetings:**

It is imperative that every evening the Program Leader, heads of small labor parties, and the monastics meet once a day, for 5-10 minutes, and discuss the day and the strategy and schedule for the following one. These meetings make our stay more effective and harmonious. These meetings are a great opportunity for us to say things like, "we need more water during the day," or for you to say "the workers have been a little too loud during the evening," etc.



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### **8. Evening Discussions:**

We hope that every night there is some opportunity for discussion with clergy or the monastics. These discussions can include videos, presentations, speakers, etc. Please work out a schedule for discussions with your Regional Director/Program Leader in advance to create a list of subjects, etc. These discussions are many times the highlights of the week. It is an opportunity for volunteers to learn, listen, engage in conversation, and have questions answered and issues clarified. In the past, during co-ed programs, we found it beneficial to have one evening where females and males have separate discussions.

### **9. Smoking Policy and Other Related Substances:**

Prior to the arrival of the volunteers, we will be very clear that those that smoke should limit their intake and if smoking should go off the property discretely. Please inform us if we need to give any other statement to them regarding this issue. As for any other substances, they are not allowed to use them or have them.

1. We do know that wine is many times served during meals and this is acceptable.

### **10. Work**

Our hope is that these programs will be an opportunity for volunteers to meet and get to know monastics, other volunteers, and visitors to the monastery as they work. That camaraderie can only be achieved by working with others. With that in mind, we encourage group work. We strongly discourage projects for individuals that would put them by themselves for a long period of time.

### **10. Project Refusal**

Also, the Program Leader will assess all potential work and if need be decide not to pursue it. This situation can be avoided if we know and agree to projects in advance. Before anyone arrives there should be a project listing created that the Program leader can review and agree to. In this way, everyone knows what they are able and willing to do.

### **10. Project Listing**

Having a list of projects that you create and is reviewed by the Regional Director/Program leader in advance is a must. We are famous for getting a lot of work done very fast. If you write down 50 projects and we get through 35 of them that is great; but if you only list 5 down and we aren't prepared to take on the others, then we don't get to do the work for you that we could have.



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Generally speaking, please be flexible and keep in mind that there will be Orthodox and non-orthodox, Americans and non-americans, religious and nonreligious on these trips. All have come because they want to help and learn about Orthodoxy. Keep in mind that this can be a great outreach, and that the lifelong lessons that volunteers will learn through you, is as important as the work itself.

Finally, don't forget to fill out your feedback form after the program.

Sincerely,

Co-Founder and President  
Peter J Patitsas