



**Archdiocese of Indianapolis - Catholic Charities**  
**Introduction to**  
**Parish Social Ministry**

## **XIV. Volunteers**

Below are some tips for inviting and working with volunteers.

- Personal Invitation! Don't underestimate the beauty of personal connection. Get to know the person. What brings them joy? What ministries are important to them?
- A table at the Coffee and Doughnuts that highlights the work of the PSM. When people can ask questions and hear about the tangible work of the PSM, they are more likely to volunteer.
- When recruiting for the PSM sub-committees, make sure you are not recruiting someone just to fill a "hole" on the committee.
- Make sure all volunteers have a clear understanding of what is Catholic Social Teaching; how their volunteer time is tied into their faith and their spiritual lives.
- Provide the volunteer with clear directions on what they are being asked to do. No one likes to volunteer to end up only standing around because of lack of direction.
- Provide a start time and end time for volunteers.
- Make sure you do not forget about reaching out and providing volunteer opportunities for the elderly, the homebound, young families, school families, new parishioners or RCIA candidates.
- Follow up with the volunteers after their designated volunteer time. Ask for their feedback: what did they enjoy or did not enjoy? Was there an impactful moment they would like to share about their volunteer time? Do they have any suggestions on ways something could have been structured more effectively?
- Let the volunteer know how their time and talent had an impact on our parish and surrounding communities.
- **VERY IMPORTANT: Celebrate your Volunteers!!!**

Suggestion: Adapted from Our Lady of Perpetual Help in New Albany, IN.

Celebrate volunteers each year during designated weekend masses. Each of the ministries within the parish are named and as they are named, people who have volunteered for those mentioned ministries, whether it was for 10 minutes or several hours, are asked to stand to be recognized by their parish community. Not only does this act as a way to list all the parish (and school) ministries, but helps those who have volunteered know they are appreciated and valued. A parish could then host a Ministry Fair after all the masses.