

Mission unites us

Piarist Volunteer Course

*Education requires that the educator be a man of spirit, who has **a great spirit** to help not only the young people of the schools but also the laity, with example and doctrine, to embrace the true way to paradise. (EP 4321)*



The mission of the Pious Schools is unthinkable without the generous collaboration of thousands of volunteers who offer their qualities and their time to educate in piety and letters. With a great spirit, they contribute to the proclamation of the Gospel and to the reform of society.

To promote Piarist volunteering as a vocation and modality of participation in the Pious Schools, a Piarist volunteer course designed from the reflection of the book "Con Espiritu Grande" by Fr. Javier Alonso began in online mode, together with the experience of some Piarist platforms of interprovincial mission: RPJ (Youth Pastoral Network), Network of Piarist Parishes, Piarist Itaka Network, and Calasanz Movement.

In the course, 9 on-line sessions and readings for reflection are proposed with the following objectives:

1. Deepen the Piarist identity of the volunteers who collaborate in a mission project of the Pious Schools.
2. Know the different projects where the Piarist mission can be exercised.
3. Present a valuable training model to grow in Piarist identity.

The first session on Saturday, April 23, was attended by 120 volunteers from 15 different countries where there is a Piarist presence: Spain, Hungary, Italy, Cameroun, Guinea, USA; Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile. The participants come from different mission areas: catechists, social agents, homes, homework rooms, education in free time, etc. ...

Después de la presentación del curso, escuchamos 6 testimonios que enriquecieron la reflexión del primer tema y tocaron el corazón de todos los que escuchaban.

Santiago Gaviria, como catequista del Movimiento Calasanz de Medellín (Colombia), **Jesús Garrote**, director de las casas escuela Santiago 1 de Salamanca (España), **Luis Zárate** de las Salas de Tarea de Tijuana (México), **Itziar Vaño** de la Red Itaka en Valencia (España), **Rosa Villar** del Movimiento Scout en Albacete (España) y Maira Alcántara del programa de salud de La Romana (República Dominicana)

Next, Fr. Javier Alonso shared a reflection on the Piarist mission and the place of volunteering, as well as the motivations that drove Saint Joseph Calasanz to found the Pious Schools.

Finally, groups were made so that the participants could get to know each other and share the work that each one does and the force that moves them to action.

It was a surprising first session, not only because of the great reception that the course had but also because of the path of communion that opens by connecting so many realities of mission that were born within the Pious Schools. Undoubtedly, the mission unites us and motivates us to broaden the spirit to educate in piety and letters to those most in need.

