

WATCH THE FOLLOWING CLIP AND DISCUSS:

*"Preparation is needed."*

*How much time and resources are you willing and able to invest in the preparation of teachers and students to learn about poverty aid and development?*

*"It is a thin line between poverty tourism, voluntourism and real immersion, real learning."*

*How is the student immersion you are conducting ensuring it is not exploitative or encouraging a simple observation or 'tour' of poverty?*

*It is a "mutual learning and a reaching out"*

*How are you preparing your teachers and students to know that the immersion is a mutual learning experience, a reaching out to each other, not an "out reach to a poor community"?*

*How are you preparing students to uphold the dignity of others?*

*How is the mutual learning prioritised over the doing and activities?*

*How is the learning emphasised and the visit made a secondary priority?*

Kath mentions the "adult immersion courses that have 30 hours face to face" Caritas Australia runs 30 hour courses that includes coursework about about social justice, poverty, aid and development, Catholic Social teaching, Charity and Justice and other topics as a pre-requisite to any visit to a community. The visit does not involve any service activity.

Here are some ideas for preparation courses:

- Begin a routine of prayer through community gatherings and celebrations for the host region or country and for those attending.
- Orient participants to life in the region or country and to relevant human development issues of the host community. If a long-term relationship is to be established, explore opportunities and resources for joint orientation.
- Orient participants to the local culture, including art and music, of the host community. In particular, highlight sensitivity needed for significant cultural factors. Remind participants of particular skills that focus on listening, open dialogue, openness to learn, graciousness, flexibility and gratitude.
- Invite people who have attended previous immersion experiences to give presentations.
- Plan a youth retreat about global solidarity or hunger and poverty, supplementing it with information about issues impacting the host community.

*Adapted from Catholic Relief Services (Caritas USA)*

