2027 Gesu Honduras Immersion Trip
Information and Policies

*It is the responsibility of each participant to read and understand the information below. Contact Amy Zucca, Gesu's Outreach Coordinator, at azucca@churchofthegesu.org with any questions.

1) **Objective**
   Through the experience of an immersion trip, participants will contribute significantly to many needs of the Honduran people. Participants will engage in construction projects and hands-on community service while building meaningful relationships with the people of Honduras and their fellow participants. The trip will also expand one's view of the Creator, the great need in the world, and the relative unimportance of "things" in our lives. This will be a trip of "reverse mission" where we learn some of life's most important lessons from the poorest of the poor.
2) **Trip Leaders**
   Gesu will have at least two trip leaders to provide support and resources for trip participants before, during and after the immersion trip.
3) **Airline Ticketing**
   2026 Flight Information for reference for the 2027 trip.
   American Airlines
   AA 2887 06/9/26 CLE-MIA 6:01am— 8:56am 2 hr 39 min layover
   AA 517 06/9/26 MIA-XPL 11:35am— 12:11pm
   AA 376 06/16/26 XPL-MIA 1:13pm— 5:48pm 3 hr 8 min layover
   AA 363 06/16/26 MIA-CLE 8:56pm— 11:59pm
   Meet at the airport NO LATER THAN 4:30 AM
   Having all participants on the same flights is the highest priority.
   Bring food to hold you over – we will not eat lunch until we arrive at the Honduras airport and board the bus
4) **Travel Documents**
   You are required to have the following pieces of personal identification:
   a) **Passport**: Applications can be made at the Post Office or at some local libraries (including the Beachwood Library at Richmond and Shaker). Always check http://travel.state.gov/ for the most up to date information on passports. **Important: If your passport will expire within 6 months of your travel date you MUST renew your passport.**
   b) **Required back-up ID**: You should copy the inside of your passport which includes your picture and personal information. It should be carried separately from your passport (see below). You may also bring your state ID/driver's license.
   c) **Passport copies**: Make 3 copies. Submit two to Gesu at January 28, 2027 Pre-Trip Meeting #1, bring and pack one in your suitcase or wallet.
5) **Immunizations** Contact Fritz Montague at montaguedrogo@gmail.com with any questions.
   a) Be sure you are up to date on all routine vaccines as recommended for life in the United States including Tetanus (should be updated every ten years).
   b) You should also be up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines.
   c) Prescription medicine to prevent malaria is strongly recommended. Depending on the medicine you take, you will need to start taking this medicine multiple days before the trip, as well as

during and after the trip. Talk to your primary care doctor about which malaria medication you should take. You can also email Dr. Drogo "Fritz" Montague at montaguedrogo@gmail.com with the following information: name, birthdate, and pharmacy phone number and he can prescribe it for you.

d) Typhoid is acquired through eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water, neither of which should happen on our trip, but pill or shot vaccines are available.

e) Hepatitis Type A

f) Other vaccines to consider may be found on the CDC's website at https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/honduras.

6) Health and Hygiene

Sanitary conditions throughout Honduras are poor. Parasites and microorganisms cause many health problems for the Honduran people. These can cause intestinal disorders, such as diarrhea, in foreigners. To remain healthy, carefully observe the directions below.

a) **Water**: Drink only bottled water. Tap water is unsafe to drink. DO NOT EVEN USE IT TO BRUSH YOUR TEETH. Ice made from tap water is also unsafe.

b) **Hand Sanitizer:** Hand sanitizer gel is great and convenient to use when water is not readily available.

c) **Toilet Tissue:** In Nuevo Paraíso, toilet tissue is provided. However, it is not flushed down the commode; rather it is deposited in a container next to the commode.

7) Living Conditions

a) **Housing**: During your stay in Honduras, your Home Base will be comfortable. In Nuevo Paraíso, beds are available and include the necessary linens and pillows. Showers are available.

b) **Food:** Three meals a day are prepared by Honduran cooks who are associated with the organization. Hondurans show their love and affection for others through their cooking. They appreciate hearing that you enjoyed your meal. DO NOT BUY FOOD FROM STREET VENDORS. In Nuevo Paraíso there is a Pulperia where you can buy pop and Honduran snacks.

c) **Weather:** The temperature is likely to be in the 90s in the heat of the day. Dehydration can easily occur under these conditions. Drinking plenty of bottled water (supplied) is a must; a water bottle is required so that individuals can obtain clean water from the Home Base. Sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) is recommended along with lip protection. A hat for all participants is necessary. We will often be in Honduras during the rainy season, which can increase the number of mosquitoes present; pack a strong bug spray (preferably with DEET).

8) Clothing

It is important, out of respect for Hondurans, that we comply with their standards. Please use discretion and common sense; keep modesty in mind. Wearing clothes that are tattered is a sign of disrespect. Cool, comfortable clothing is recommended; cotton clothing is most appropriate. Hospital scrubs are ideal for both the Home Base and the work sites.

a) **Male Attire**: Lightweight work pants, slacks, and jeans are appropriate. Shorts may only be worn at the Home Base, not to the work area or off-site. Short -sleeved shirts or t- shirts may be worn, however they must not contain any questionable logos, such as beer, cigarettes, or rock groups. For church, a collared shirt and casual pants are recommended. Tennis shoes and boots are recommended foot attire. Sandals/flip–flops can be used at the Home Base and are excellent for showering.

b) **Female Attire:** Jeans, slacks, and dresses/skirts may be worn. Shorts and tank tops can only be worn at the Home Base, not to the work area or off-site. Skin revealing attire is not appropriate. For church, dress/skirt or casual slacks and blouse are recommended. Tennis shoes and boots

are recommended foot attire. Sandals/flip-flops can be used at the Home Base and are excellent for showering.

c) **Laundering:** During the week, the women at the Home Base will wash your clothing. This service is included as part of your trip cost.

9) **Make-Up and Jewelry**

Keep make-up to a minimum. Leave expensive jewelry at home. Inexpensive watches are recommended for everyone. Please keep in mind that jewelry may be an attraction for you to be robbed.

10) **Packing**

Pack lightly; you will only be gone for a week. Do not take anything you cannot afford to lose. You may bring one carry-on (it is recommended that your carry-on is a backpack), and a personal item. Nametags need to be on all baggage (these will be supplied by Gesu). **It is recommended that you visit the airline's website prior to the trip to be sure regulations concerning luggage have not changed.**

a) **Personal Item** American Airlines - Backpack must fit under the seat in front of you. Dimensions should not exceed 18 x 14 x 8 inches.

- **i)** Passport
- **ii)** Gesu shirt (to be worn to the airport)
- **iii)** Driver's license or back-up ID
- **iv)** Cash - $75 - $100 is sufficient for the week, unless you plan on spending more on souvenirs
- **v)** Change of clothes in case your luggage is lost
- **vi)** Camera
- **vii)** Mobile phones, iPods, and other small electronic devices, as well as items such as playing cards are allowed if desired but not necessary. Participants are permitted to use mobile phones to take photos, but are expected to keep them off or on airplane mode during our time in Honduras.
- **viii)** Reusable water bottle
- **ix)** Hand Sanitizer
- **x)** Medications: Imodium or Ciprofloxacin for diarrhea. If you are prone to motion sickness, Dramamine is recommended. **Remember all personal medications.**
- **xi)** Health insurance card
- **xii)** Sunglasses
- **xiii)** Snacks

b) **Carry-on Bag** American Airlines - Shouldn't exceed 22 x 14 x 9 inches. Be sure to pack any items you do not want to lose in this bag.

- **i)** Clothing - Pack light. There is laundry service and you can wear your clothing more than one time. Remember, everything must fit into a carry-on bag.
  1. Copy of your passport
  2. One nice outfit for Mass - pants, polo shirt, blouse, long skirt, long dress, shoulders covered (no strapless or spaghetti strap or bra showing)
  3. Work pants (2 pairs) - scrubs or lightweight pajama pants are great for work pants
  4. T-shirts - you will likely go through at least 2 a day - one for work/one for play
  5. Tank tops

(6) Shorts are acceptable. Very short running shorts ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE. You will be asked to change if shorts are too short. Soccer and basketball shorts are the best options.
(7) One sweatshirt/long sleeve t-shirt
(8) Work shoes can be a pair of sneakers (not your favorite, brand new pair) or work boots if you have space to pack
(9) Have a pair of sandals for the shower and down time
(10) Another pair of sneakers is ideal for play time
(11) Crocs (or any shoe that is easily washable) are a great option, especially if it rains
(12) Jewelry and makeup are not necessary and it is suggested to pack erring on the side of simplicity

ii) Hat for protection from the sun, 2 hats if possible
iii) Contact lenses (bring an extra pair). Glasses are preferred at construction sites.
iv) Light rain jacket or umbrella
v) Snacks (granola bars, crackers, hard candy in resealable Ziploc bags)
vi) Flashlight
vii) Insect repellent with DEET is highly recommended and can typically be found in the outdoor section of Target, Walmart, etc. (can be put into the donation suitcase that will be checked)
viii) Work gloves (at least 2 pairs), garden gloves will work
ix) Sunblock SPF 30 or higher is recommended (can be put into the donation suitcase that will be checked)
x) Toiletries - shampoo, toothpaste, bodywash (if liquid quantity is too large it can be put into your checked bag)
(1) You are allowed to bring a quart-sized bag of liquids, aerosols, gels, creams and pastes in your carry-on bag and through the checkpoint. These are limited to travel-sized containers that are 3.4 ounces (100 milliliters) or less per item. Placing these items in the small bag and separating from your carry-on baggage facilitates the screening process. Pack items that are in containers larger than 3.4 ounces or 100 milliliters in checked baggage.
xi) Ladies note: Come prepared with feminine products. These items are not always easily accessible in Honduras.
xii) Bags - grocery plastic bags for laundry, drawstring bag for worksite, ziplock bag for phone

Things to bring to Nuevo for fun/down time:

xiii) Journal
xiv) Portable speaker - DOWNLOAD music on your phone
xv) Games- cards, Catch Phrase, Yahtzee, other large group games, etc.
xvi) Book to read for down time
xvii) Bracelets/coloring pages

c) **<u>Checked Bag</u>** You will be asked to bring a large checked bag (max 50lbs and 62" total L+W+H) for donations that the group collected. We would prefer to leave the bag in Honduras. You will need to take out of packages, mix, and roll up can be added to this bag.

- Shoes and Sandals - tennis shoes, Crocs, etc
- Clothing - jeans, shirts, sweatshirts

- Socks
- Underwear (especially boys)
- Bras
- Baseball hats
- Nail Polish
- Things we can play with them during our trip - balls (especially soccer),pump to inflate balls, frisbees, velcro ball & toss games, sidewalk chalk, bubbles, jump rope, coloring books, crayons/colored pencils etc.
- NO toiletries or medicines for donation. Only those for your personal use that exceed fluid limit for carry on (shampoo, insect repellent, sunblock, toothpaste, medicines, etc.)

11) Miscellaneous Information

a) **Communication:** Good communication is essential for preventing and solving problems. If you have any problems or health concerns, please talk with your leader.

b) **Being Sent Home**: If you create a serious problem within the team, you will be required to return home immediately. **The use of drugs or alcohol is unacceptable.**

c) **Working with Interpreters**: The interpreters are vital to the organization. Be sure to go out of your way to treat these individuals as part of your team. We encourage you to get to know them personally.

d) **Currency:** Upon arrival at the airport in Honduras, your leader will exchange American dollars for Lempira. Most team members spend less than $100. Credit cards are accepted at most shops in the city. You will want to bring some money with you for use in the airport and for souvenirs.

e) **Giving to the Poor**: Refrain from giving to beggars, many of whom are professionals; even the children consider begging a game.

12) Gift Giving:

a) If you want to leave some of your personal belongings (clothing), check with your team leader first.

b) If the team leader approves, the item(s) will be given to a Nuevo Paraiso staff member who will (anonymously) present the donation.

c) Never arbitrarily give items away to Hondurans.

d) Giving things away, even candy, can create chaos.

e) It is very important not to add to the disempowerment of the people by creating a begging mentality. The gifts that the team brings down will be distributed by the trip leaders.

13) Shopping: On one of your days in Honduras, there may be an opportunity to shop for souvenirs - basket weaving, leather goods, pottery, hammocks, etc.

14) Team Projects

Construction: Recent teams have worked on projects which have included churches, schools, orphanages, dormitories, hospices, and individual homes. All these projects have one thing in common; they are built out of concrete. This means that most of the team will be carrying tools and materials, mixing and pouring cement and laying concrete blocks. All this work is done "Honduran-style", by hand. Additionally, there is often carpentry, painting, plumbing, and electrical work to do. We have found that men and women of all ages are able to learn and do all the types of work needed to complete these projects. There is plenty of opportunity for light tasks that require no lifting. The rule is that when one is tired, they are expected to get out of the sun, sit down, and rest. On hot days, a cycle of twenty minutes on and twenty minutes off may be appropriate. **Drink**

plenty of water.

15) **Application Process and Withdrawing from the trip**
   - **a)** The latest date to **apply** for the trip will be **January 3, 2027**. After this date additional applications will only be considered on a case by case basis. This is to ensure that there is time for the participant to prepare for the trip, allows the committee to make an educated decision about whether this individual should be permitted to participate, and does not place undue hardship on the individual who is working with the airlines. The exception to this deadline is if Gesu needs to recruit additional trip participants.
   - **b)** All payments are non-refundable.
   - **c)** To apply for the trip, participants must be at least entering the 11th grade at the time of the trip to be eligible.

16) **Payment Policy**
   - **a)** The cost of the trip is **$2,000.00**.
   - **b)** The Payment Schedule for the trip will be as follows:
     - **i) Application Fee ($100)**: Due with application no later than application deadline of January 3, 2027
     - **ii) Payment #1 ($900):** Due at Pre-Trip Meeting #1: January 28, 2027
     - **iii) Payment #2 ($1000**): Due March 12, 2027
   - **c) If a participant has not paid $1000 by January 28, 2027, then we will not issue a ticket for them. If their payment comes late, then they risk higher costs and not having an available flight to participate.**
   - **d) Late applicants will have to pay $2000 for the trip PLUS whatever the additional cost of their flight is over what the group purchase price was per flight.**
   - **e)** The total cost of the trip is non-refundable. Flight refunds will be issued in the form of a flight credit.
   - **f)** Payment Information:
     - **i)** Checks should be made out to *Gesu Honduras* and sent to
       Church of the Gesu
       Attn: Amy Zucca
       2470 Miramar Boulevard
       University Heights, Ohio 44118
       With participant name on memo line and deposit, payment #1, or payment #2 indicated.
       Checks can also be dropped off at the front desk of the Parish Offices.
       Credit card payment can be accepted with an additional processing fee. Contact Amy Zucca at azucca@churchofthegesu.org to arrange.

17) **Important Dates**

November 1, 2026
Applications Open
November 19, 2026
Information Meeting for Interested Trip Participants: 6:00–7:00 pm, via Zoom. Register at https://forms.gle/g3S94sJypsm1oAgVA .
January 3, 2027 (will be extended only if Gesu needs to recruit additional trip participants)
Applications and $100 deposit due
January 11, 2027
Participants notified of acceptance on trip
January 28, 2027

Participant Pre-Trip Meeting #1:
6:15–7:30 pm, St. Ignatius Conference Room in Gesu Parish Offices
Payment #1 Due - $900 and 2 Passport Copies Due

March 12, 2027
Trip Payment Balance Due in Full - $1,000 and Trip Forms Due *(*for minor participants the *Authorization to Travel for Youth* must be notarized*)*
May 6, 2027
Participant Pre-Trip Meeting #2:
6:15–7:30 pm, St. Ignatius Conference Room in Gesu Parish Offices
June 6, 2027
Missioning Mass:
10:00am, Church of the Gesu with brief meeting to follow
June 8– June 15, 2027
Honduras!

18) **Travel Alerts/Trip Cancellation**
The health and safety of Gesu Immersion Trip participants are top priorities. There are risks inherent with any international travel. Current U.S. Department of State Travel Alerts and Warnings for Honduras can be found at https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html.html?currencyID=CHF
Honduras is typically at a Travel Advisory Level 3: Reconsider Travel. A U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory Level of 4 for Honduras will result in the cancellation of Gesu's Honduras Immersion Trip.

19) **Required Forms for Participants** Must be turned in to Amy Zucca at the Parish Offices, azucca@churchofthegesu.org. If the participant will be under the age of 18 on June 8, 2027, forms must be signed by a parent/legal guardian.
- **a)** Application - https://gesuchurch.wufoo.com/forms/zzftupb1ujrhfx/
- **b)** Passport – 2 copies due by January 28, 2027 so flights can be booked the first week of February
- **c)** VIRTUS Training and Background Check – Adult
  - **i)** Log onto the Virtus website at https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/reg_0.cfm?theme=0select, select *Begin the registration process*, select *Cleveland, OH (Diocese)*, it will ask if you have previously registered with VIRTUS Online (create an account if you have not), it will provide you with a list of current/available sessions. You must REGISTER for a session in order to be assured of a spot (you cannot just show up). **Register for a session as soon as possible.** Participants must also submit a Background Check through VIRTUS/Selection.com. The charge for this service is typically $25.00 but may vary if the participant has lived in areas of the country with higher Background Check fees.

    If you have any questions regarding the VIRTUS process and your compliance with it, please contact Amy Zucca at azucca@churchofthegesu.org, as she will be able to best guide/direct you.

d) ONLINE FORMS - *must be submitted by March 12, 2027*
-EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE FOR TREATMENT

-CHURCH OF THE GESU HONDURAS IMMERSION TRIP STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY/WAIVER AND RELEASE
-CHURCH OF THE GESU HONDURAS IMMERSION TRIP PHOTO/VIDEO CONSENT AND RELEASE

Link to ADULT forms:
https://gesuchurch.wufoo.com/forms/adult-gesu-honduras-immersion-trip-online-forms/
Link to YOUTH forms:
https://gesuchurch.wufoo.com/forms/youth-gesu-honduras-immersion-trip-online-forms/

e) PAPER FORM
AUTHORIZATION FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL for Youth- must be **notarized** and turned in *by March 12, 2027*

AUTHORIZATION FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL
AUTORIZACIÓN DE VIAJE POR MENORES DE EDAD

Permission is hereby given for _____, to travel to Honduras, with the trip coordinators and leaders of Church of the Gesu. The trip departs Cleveland, OH, USA on 8 June 2027 and returns there on 15 June 2027.

_____ _____ _____ _____
Mother/guardian signature Date Father/guardian signature Date

Subscribed and sworn to me, this _____ day of _____, of the year _____.

Signature of Notary: _____

Expiration Date of Commission: _____

Notary Seal or Stamp