



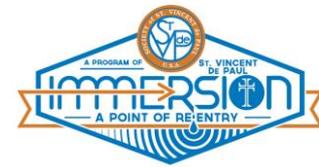
A PROGRAM OF

ST. VINCENT  
DE PAUL

**IMMERSION**

A POINT OF RE-ENTRY





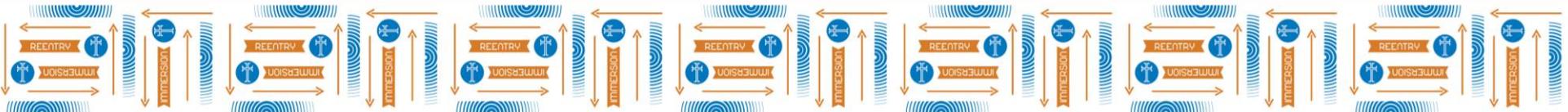
# Prayer for a More Just World

Loving God, move us to love in concrete ways  
As we seek a better future for all of your children.  
Open our eyes to the values of the social teaching of the Church;  
Give us the energy and the courage to reject fatalism.  
Grant that we may be guided by Catholic Social Teaching  
So we may be a part of creating  
The systems and structures of grace  
That will allow all human life to flourish.  
Nurture hope in our hearts, guide us forward  
And give us a sustaining vision  
Of a renewed human community  
In a renewed Creation.

**Amen**

*Jane Deren, Ph.D.*

Copyright © 2020, Education for Justice, a project of the Ignatian Solidarity Network.



# Scriptural Basis for Immersion...

*...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.*

*Matthew 25:35-36.*



# Catholic Social Teaching basis...



Life and Dignity of the Human Person\*



Call to Family, Community and Participation\*



Rights and Responsibilities\*



Option for the Poor and Vulnerable\*



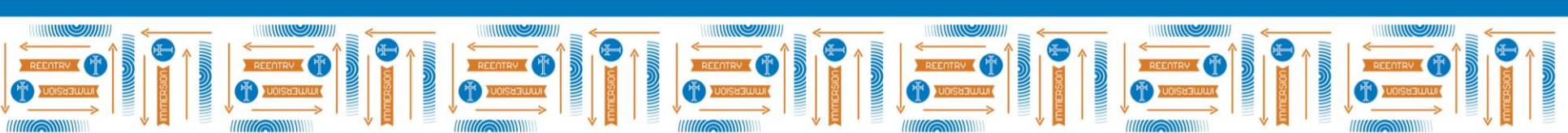
The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers\*



Solidarity\*



Care for God's Creation





# Immersion

## Mission Statement

A network of friends  
called to holiness  
by walking with  
the formerly incarcerated  
as they reenter their communities.

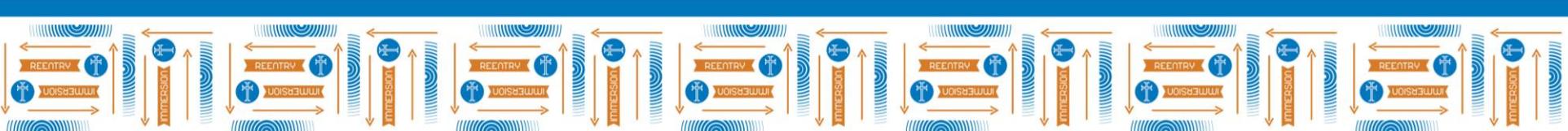


# Terminology

- **Returning Citizen:** any person returning from some type of incarceration into the community.
- **Reentry:** referring to the transitional process of formerly incarcerated persons returning to a community.

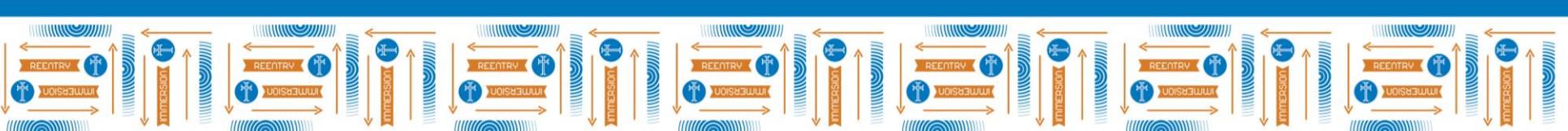


- Recidivism: reincarceration after release into the community. This includes all types of incarceration, i.e., prison or jail (state, federal or local).
- Restorative Justice: a way of understanding criminal offenses in terms of people and relationships that were harmed, rather than the law that was broken. It values human dignity, healing, accountability, and the hope of redemption for all.  
[www.catholicmobilizing.org](http://www.catholicmobilizing.org)6.17.20



# As Vincentians...

- We are committed to the service of the poor and needy. At least 1/3 of all those people we serve are returning citizens or are directly impacted by the effects of incarceration.

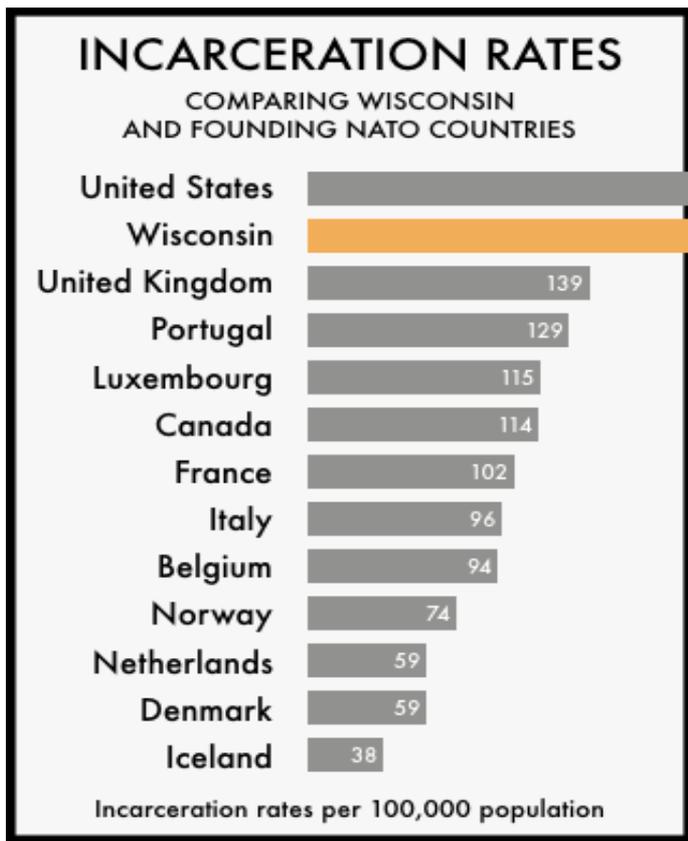


So...

- In recognition of the link between incarceration and poverty, the National Society of St. Vincent de Paul has developed a powerful national program for work in all aspects of reentry – IMMERSION.



# World Incarceration Rates



Source: <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/2018.html>



# Rates of Returning Citizens Coming Home



Nationwide 97% of the people who have been incarcerated will be released.



60% of returning citizens are between the ages of 20 – 30.



# Immersion provides:



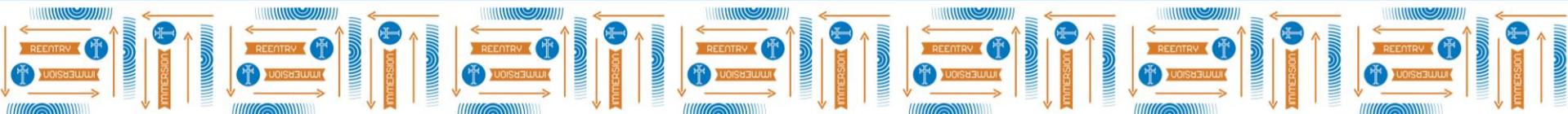
Support for the journey out of incarceration and into our communities.



Support for positive, healthy relationships at home and at work.



Resources that will assist this transition.



# 8 Foundational Components

Mentoring

Employment

72 Hour  
Transitional  
Programming

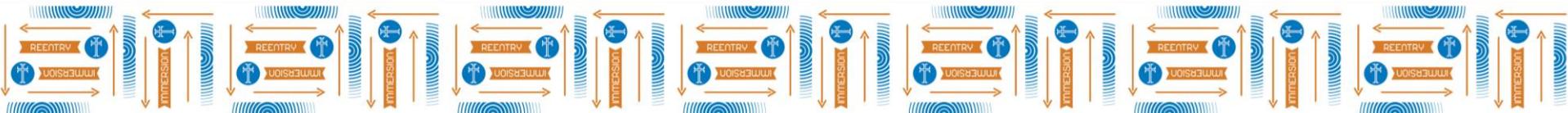
Community  
Partnerships

Formation –  
Vincentians &  
Volunteers

Education –  
Returning Citizens  
& Families

Advocacy

Housing



# Mentoring

---

IMMERSION has a training program to help your site with mentor training.

---

IMMERSION mentors will walk with the returning citizen in their journey back into community.

---

Mentors will be a support to the reentering citizen for at least one year.



# Employment

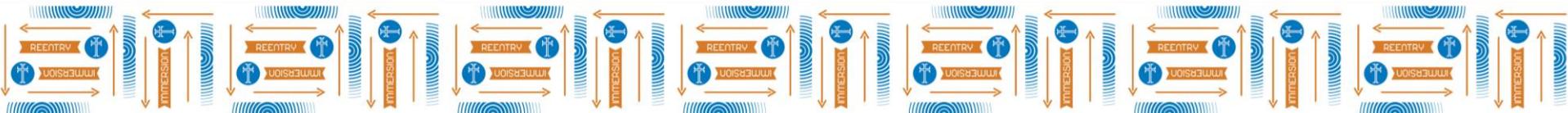
---

Stable employment at a living wage is critical to successful reentry.

---

Employers, training programs, and apprenticeship opportunities are partners working together to realize their career goals.

---



# 72 Hour Transitional Services

---

**The first 72 hours after release are critical for a successful reintegration into community.**

---

Our sites provide a safe environment to welcome the returning citizen home.

---

We provide food, clothing, IDs, hygiene packs, etc., to help this transition during these early hours.

---



# Community Partnerships

---

In cooperation with community partners, we increase the services available to our returning citizens and their families.

---

Examples are working with mental health groups, food pantries; housing groups, health centers and existing reentry programs in the community.



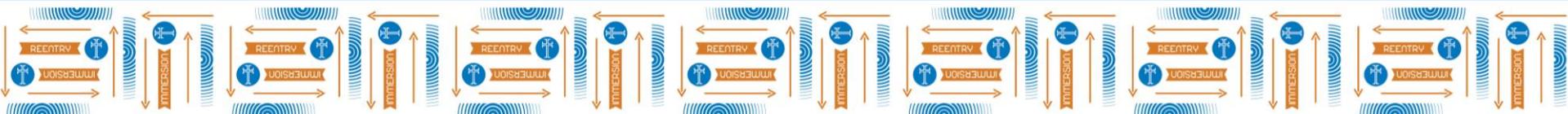
# Formation for Vincentians and Volunteers

---

Formation materials for spirituality, mentorship skills, advocacy, educational services, and Restorative Justice.

---

Fostering growth of Vincentians, to increase understanding of life circumstances after incarceration.



# Education for Returning Citizens and Loved Ones

---

We will educate and practice many Restorative Justice techniques and trauma education.

---

Options include coping strategies, employment skills, self-discovery, and literacy.



# Advocacy

---

In solidarity we seek to influence the systems and institutional policies at the state and county level.

---

With Voice of the Poor, work to strengthen our advocacy efforts and remove barriers.



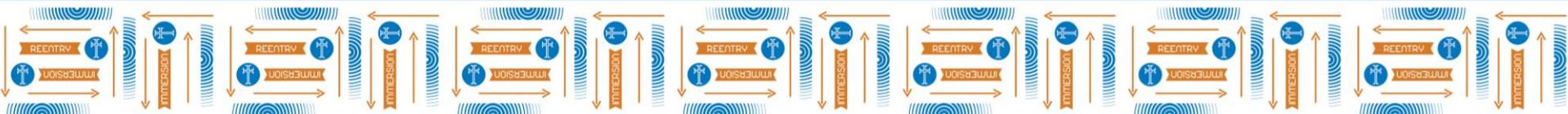
# Housing

---

The lack of affordable and safe housing leads to desperate decision making resulting in a return to incarceration.

---

IMMERSION seeks to work with community partnerships to provide safe and affordable housing for returning citizens.



# Funding???



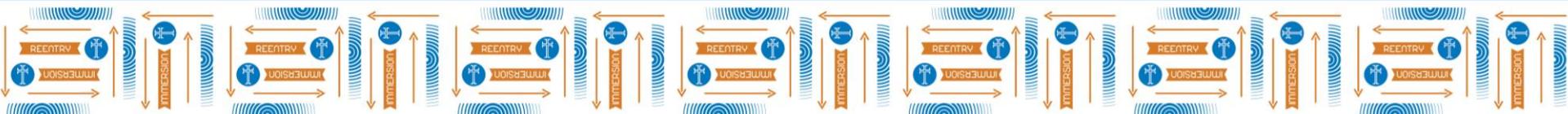
We continually seek grant opportunities to support our sites.



We ask for matching donations from each site.



We will provide training to facilitate grant writing for local funding.



## National Reentry Task Force

---

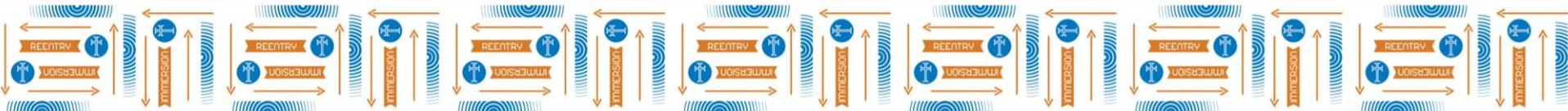
Made up of Vincentians from each region involved in reentry work.

---

Serves as a national resource for support and expansion of the SVDP Immersion program.

---

Task Force is currently being formed-stay tuned!



# Why be a part of Immersion?



Immersion provides a structured foundation, training and tools to serve our returning sisters and brothers



We provide support with and the National Director, Barbara McPherson and the NRTF Chair, Marian Lamoureux and Co-Chair, Steve Havemann.



We assist you with each of the 8 foundational components



We help with funding.



We walk with you.



# How Can You Begin? A checklist...



What are your motivations?

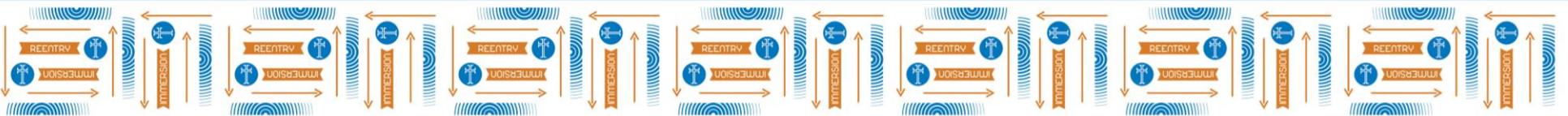
What are you doing now to serve returning citizens already?



Each site must provide an Immersion Coordinator to oversee the Immersion program on a local level in cooperation with the National Director, Barbara McPherson.



You must meet at least 3 of the 8 Immersion Foundational Components to apply to join Immersion.



# For more information:

- [www.immersionreentry.com](http://www.immersionreentry.com)
- Barbara McPherson, Director of Prison Reentry Programs: [bmcpherson@svdpusa.org](mailto:bmcpherson@svdpusa.org)
- Marian Lamoureux, Chair of the NRTF: [nrtfchair@gmail.com](mailto:nrtfchair@gmail.com)
- Steve Havemann, Co-Chair of the NRTF: [ExecDir@svdpdsm.org](mailto:ExecDir@svdpdsm.org)



# A Call to Serve

“Prisoners who are re-entering civic society ought not be punished anew by indifference, or worse, neglect.”

Pope Francis: The redemption of ex-prisoners is a duty of the Catholic Church;  
America Jesuit Magazine Sept. 21, 2017

<https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2017/09/21/redemption-ex-prisoners-duty-catholic-church>





A PROGRAM OF

ST. VINCENT  
DE PAUL

**IMMERSION**

A POINT OF RE-ENTRY

