

REMAINING FAITHFUL
KEEPING THE EXPERIENCE ALIVE

General remarks

Take Twinning for **granted**. (*Respect is a given in this process*)

Remind ourselves: There is no good return without a good going. Travelers must be given the right reason for going. Twinning is **NOT** adoption or charity. Twinning **IS** sharing on an equal basis. Twinning is a **sharing of faith**.

Remaining Faithful deals with the third phase (return), BUT NOT IN A VACUUM. The return is the longest part of the process. It is, indeed, the reason for going.

Good, fruitful return BEGINS WITH A GOOD GOING:

- **Choice of travelers:** the trip is NOT a reward; it is NOT for service.
 - Travelers must be able to tell the story upon return.
 - The purpose for going must be clear.
 - Prep-time before the trip is essential. It creates a much-needed bond among the travelers
 - Study the country - culture, history, politics
- **Planning** the trip: check your motivation. The goal is being vs. doing
- **Firing up people** at home so they are waiting & eager to hear the story
- **Ritualizing** the departure, in the name of the parish. Have a commissioning ceremony at Mass.

Good, fruitful return CONTINUES DURING TRIP WITH:

- **Daily reflection**, journaling both personal and as a group (don't pack schedule)
- **Thinking & Being** over **doing**
 - Do NOTHING – at least the first time. Go to learn.
- Establishing local **contacts** (*local people, not the missionary*)
 - There must be an exchange!
 - It must be mutual!
 - It must be relationship between people
- Asking **questions**
- Ensuring **involvement of twin and plan future contact**

SO NOW YOU ARE BACK

The Parish at large (you have parish council involvement) is waiting:

- **Ritualize** your return
 - Have travelers preach at Mass
- Plan to **invite** twins to your parish. This is getting tough, but should not be dismissed. The visitors should be someone who can tell the story to their people. The same ‘qualities for travelers’ apply to those who come to visit you.
- Know that entire parish will not be fired up.
- **HAVE A PLAN** for follow-up with group (*This is what Remaining Faithful is*)
 - The experience is intense for travelers
 - The experience **changes people** (mind stretched). Find **like-minded** people with whom to talk.

General notes

- We do not **learn** from **doing**, We learn from **Thinking** (*fight urge to do*)
 - Often there are qualified locals who can **DO!** Do not take the job away from local people.
 - We are an added burden on the people we visit. But we must respect their desire to be hospitable. This takes humility!
- We do not learn from **experience**, but from **reflecting on that experience**.
- **“Hold treasure in earthen vessels”** success rests on those who took trip
- **Be at peace** with those travelers who do not return enthused. Some will **not be active in the most important stage of the process**.
- People **not as enthused** as you? Join the crowd!!

Remaining Faithful

Remaining Faithful is available to help you with a successful return. It is set up to do over one year, but that is not necessarily the only way to use it. We all transition at **different speeds**. (*This resource is available from the Archdiocesan Mission Office*)

Two phases that include meeting (*but also individual*)/activities/reflection

- The First month meetings are WEEKLY: mostly to catch breath, make sense of trip, tell story, let it settle
- After that, meetings are monthly
- Use the “WHAT” method for processing experience. These are good journaling tools.

- **WHAT? Facts** - have them down before they become a **memory**
- **SO WHAT?** What **feelings/reactions** did the facts evoke in you?
- **WHAT'S WHAT?** Beyond feelings, what did you **learn**?
- **NOW WHAT?** What are you going **to do** (*important step in parish*)

THE PLAN (use **Remaining Faithful**)

Week 1: People are excited. Get together, picnic, pictures, stories

Week 2: **Your still excited**, people a little less. Write to twins to say thank you. Work on presentation to give to groups. (*various length and content*)

Week 3: Get in touch with **your feelings** (see RF) as you see reality with new eyes. Talk it over with like-minded people

Week 4: Keep flame alive. Any **memory that stands out?** (*What can you do about it?*)
Seek a mentor. Talk to the person who got you to do it;

Covenant. At this point you must decide whether you want to go on or not. If so, how often and in what capacity? Monthly? As a Group? Time? Energy? Ritualize involvement by signing a covenant.

Month 1: Celebrate experience. Use the WHAT method on a **pleasant memory** of your trip (place, person, incident).

Month 2: Gifts of the journey. Don't fall back into routine. Think of a **person** "over there" you are grateful you met. Why grateful?

Month 3: Where is God in All This? In your trip, when did you feel **closest to God**? Why?

Month 4: Hurts- name the pain. Think of an unpleasant memory there, or upon return, or in the group/surroundings. Acknowledge it and **deal positively**: forgiveness, lesson learned, resolutions... It is OK to **disagree**.

Month 5: Integration. After the first enthusiasm, are **you faithful** to what has **changed** you? How has/has not been integrated in your life?

Month 6: Sharing the gift. Identify some **gift** of the journey you have **shared** (*or will soon share*) **with others who did not travel with you**.

Month 7: Wealth & Poverty. “We have lived with **rich people** whom the **world does not see** as rich.” Sound familiar? Identify true poverty vs. psychological poverty. Identify true poverty vs. simple living. Use constructive comparisons

Month 8: More gifts from the journey. Revisit **Month 2** from your new perspective. Growth? Forgot? Anything **new**? FROM (From Mission to Mission) workshop wants people at this stage..

Month 9: Asking But Why? Why are people forced to live in the conditions travelers experienced? Giving and questioning. Read **example** of social analysis;

Month 10: Who is God? In Month 3 Where? Now my **changed view** of God. The farther we go, the **deeper**

Month 11: Who Am I Now? “The Highest reward for a person’s toil is not what they get for it, but what **they become by it**”

Month 12: Personal Mission Statement. Not a “to do” list, but **WHO** have you become, what do you want to live by.

MY LIFE IS MY MESSAGE!

Always remember: “We don’t go to mission to build wells. We go to preach the Good News!”