



# All Things Ignatian



## Discovering Peru: Church, Language, and Society in Context

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- 9 Credits
- 6 weeks in South America
- May 25—July 3, 2014

Villa El Salvador, Peru is uniquely situated to provide an excellent learning opportunity about the Catholic Church in Latin America, the Spanish language, and an understanding of Peruvian society. Through intensive and intentional community-based learning, Ignatian reflection and home stays, students learn about the life of Peru's urban poor.

### The Church of Peru

The theology section of this program begins with Vatican II's *Gaudium et spes* and moves through *Populorum progressio* to the Medellin and Puebla conferences. Various letters from Third World Bishops and Latin American Priests are studied so that students begin to see the Church in Latin America making connections that came much later to North America.



Following Medellin, we enter more deeply into Peruvian reality through Jeffrey Klaiber's *The Catholic Church in Peru, 1821-1985*, and Joseph Nangle's *Birth of a Church*. Both are excellent sources for a good overview of the Church in Peru and the challenges it has faced.

Finally, we take students to 2-3 community liturgies a week either at Nuestra Senora de la Paz or San Ignacio. We discuss homilies and how the themes of the homilies either did or did not include material from Medellin and Puebla. Throughout this "experiential" section of the course we are also reading *People of God* by Joseph Comblin, *Toward a Theology of Liberation* by Gustavo Gutierrez, and the class received guest lecturers from *Centro Bartolomeo de las Casas*.

### Spanish

*Discovering Peru* is a unique experience that allows students to learn Spanish through service-focused interactions with the people of Villa El Salvador. When students first step off the plane in Peru, they are often confronted with a mass of sounds and words that initially seem incomprehensible. They quickly realize that language transforms from being just another school subject into the key to understanding our humanity through service to others. Ignatius' Christ-centered philosophy of being for and with others gives meaning to one's language-learning experience. As our students interact with the women and children in the *Asociación de Madres y Niños*, or with the patients at the *Centro Médico Parroquial 'San Martín de Porros'*,

they are able to take the various elements of language studied in our course—vocabulary, grammar, syntax, etc—and create a bond between themselves, the people they served, and God. As a direct consequence of their service-oriented language experience, students begin to step out of their comfort zones, break down barriers to their confidence, and be bold in their communication. For most of them, six weeks serving among the people is far more productive to their language development than an entire year in a traditional classroom setting. By encompassing the Jesuit ideals in their learning experience, students not only absorb the language at a much more accelerated pace, but become individuals more closely connected to God.



### Sociology

This course seeks to provide a framework for the analysis of social problems in Peru and the U.S. Students explore a myriad of issues that give rise to conflict in society. This is possible through an increase of knowledge and understanding of the relationship

between, class, status and power, as it applies to different ethnic and racial groups as well as differences in gender and sexual orientation. Students will explore social problems in Peru, comparing these concerns with similar issues in the United States. By analyzing current academic literature as it relates to social problems, students develop their own opinion about poverty, gender inequality, human rights, racial and ethnic discrimination, political violence, access to education and health care both nationally and internationally. Students recognize the implications of social inequalities and consider potential policy implications, formulating their own theories of social change. Finally, this course helps students to see the world in a larger frame. In so doing, community based learning in Peru asks students to consider their own response to the injustices and challenges that they confront in our world.



*Sponsored by the Creighton University Jesuit Community, in association with the Deglman Center for Ignatian Spirituality.*