



Jamyang Foundation



FAQ

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What jobs exist for volunteers?

Teaching

Most of our volunteers teach English. The nuns study English for many reasons. Some of the reasons are:

! English is widely used in Indian business and government ! English is the language of the world economy ! In India, English is considered a mark of a good education ! Most of Jamyang Foundation's funding comes from the English-speaking countries ! The nuns will be able to communicate with sponsors and volunteers

The nuns are also eager to study many subjects besides English: computers, social studies, mathematics, world history, science, art, health, environment, and much more. Do you have any special interests? You do not have to be an expert to teach a subject, since most of the nuns had little schooling before the Jamyang Foundation programs began. Nearly all of the nuns are at an elementary-school level in math and English, and most have next to no knowledge of science. They are interested in everything, capable, and excited to learn new things!

The nuns at all the programs are interested in learning English and most have had some introductory instruction, but it has been periodic, dependent on the availability of volunteers. They have also studied some basic arithmetic. Most can speak basic Hindi and Tibetan, as well as their native languages. At some schools, the nuns have sorted themselves into classes at different levels. To set up a class in a new subject, first clear it with the director. We welcome your ideas!

If you have not mastered the English language, we would appreciate your time as a teacher of another subject, or as a non-teaching volunteer.

Gardening and Other Endeavors

Volunteers can do more than teach classes. For example, volunteers have worked in the garden and grounds, helped with the website, started a math program, set up computer and typing classes, planted trees, helped with construction, and even worked with the local bureaucracy to try to get a water pump installed. One knowledgeable volunteer spent a summer building a greenhouse in Spiti. Let us know if you would like to contribute to such efforts.

Help with the garden and orchards is always appreciated! The nuns are interested in raising their own vegetables, for reasons of economy, health, and self-sufficiency. At most of the projects, there are trees and vegetable beds, which require careful attention. Volunteers can help with planting and caring for trees, flowers, and vegetables. It would be very helpful if volunteers coordinated and participated in a daily effort to pull weeds. Please tell us if you have experience with farming, composting, or any such work.

Students are required to work one hour each day. The tasks vary throughout the year and usually involve grounds work or kitchen duty. Volunteers may help with these tasks, if they choose. Manual labor, sadly, is regarded as low status; so, if you are eager to do this work, you may need to insist.

If you think of something else that needs to be done, or if you have an idea for improvements, please write to us. We welcome ideas from volunteers. If we give you the go-ahead, we will also do our best to support your project.

Communications

Volunteers are our best source of information about what is going on in the monasteries, since communications with these remote mountain areas is difficult. It's lovely when volunteers act as a liaison between the director and the nuns; you could spend as much or as little effort on this as you wish. Some questions can only be answered by someone who is actually at the monasteries. How is everyone's health? Are classes being held as scheduled? Are the students working one hour a day, as they agreed? What supplies should we put on the Wish List? Who is in charge of the garden? What system do the nuns have for managing the garden and grounds? And, of course, do you have suggestions for how we can best help the volunteers?

What is the application process?

A background in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) is helpful, but not required. The most important qualifications for teachers are patience, reliability, and a willingness to teach.

To apply, please send us a resume and a letter of recommendation from a professor or employer. You may apply via e-mail or post. Please apply after you are ready to make a commitment. You will need to get your passport, tickets, visa, and inoculations, which may take six to eight weeks. Plan to submit your application well in advance of your intended departure date.

How much time should I commit to?

We ask volunteers to make a time commitment of at least one month at the monastery. The length of time beyond that is entirely up to you. Continuity is important, so a long-term stay would be great! The typical Indian tourist visa allows for a stay of six months.

Kindly give us definite starting and ending dates for your work, so that we can arrange for a replacement when you leave. Of course, travel in India includes the possibility that you may be delayed by illness or transportation problems. The nuns understand this; the most important thing is to be clear with us and them about your plans. If your plans change while you are en route or at the monastery, please tell us and the nuns as soon as possible. Our goal is to avoid a lengthy break between teachers.

When making your plans, remember that travel takes time. It takes several days to travel go from Delhi to the schools in Kinnaur and Spiti. The journey to Zangskar may take a week. If you have had problems with altitude in the past, or if you've never traveled at high altitudes, you should give yourself some more time to travel to Spiti or Zangskar; allow a few days to rest at a lower altitude on the way. As a precaution, doctors recommend that travelers take a tablet of diomoxin the day before traveling to higher altitudes.

When volunteers go to India, they may wish to take time to travel to other location before, after, and sometimes even in the middle of their teaching time. The important thing is to be clear and reliable about your plans.

If you decide that you'd like to stay longer than planned, we welcome you! Please just check with us if you decide to extend your stay, so we can make arrangements, in case someone is coming

to take your place. The nuns are very sweet and smart, and volunteers often don't want to leave! India can be quite chaotic and the monasteries are restful havens from the fray.

What expenses are involved and how can I cover them?

Since Jamyang Foundation is a non-profit organization and its programs run entirely on donations, unfortunately we are unable to offer financial support to our volunteers. However, all projects provide simple food and housing to volunteer teachers. Living expenses in India are fortunately quite low.

Unlike many other programs, Jamyang Foundation does not charge volunteers anything, but you are responsible for your own travel and personal expenses: plane ticket, bus fare, stamps, toothpaste, etc. The schools are in Himalayan mountain areas without much of a market place, so there is not much to spend money on. Only in cities and towns on the way are there opportunities to use the internet, shop for gifts, and buy snacks and meals, etc. Your biggest expense will be your plane ticket to India. If you go to Zangskar, the plane ticket to Leh is about \$120 round trip, which is highly recommended. Please see our travel section for advice on obtaining inexpensive tickets.

A good rule of thumb for budget travel in India is to bring US \$250 per month, and extra for gifts. This figure is for traveling; when you are staying in one place, you'll spend much less. One volunteer kept track of her expenses and found that she lived comfortably on US \$50 a month. This figure included local bus fare and necessities, and the occasional trip to town for Western food and e-mail, but not gifts.

If you find you'd like to buy something for the school, please check with Karma Lekshe Tsomo. Some expenses can be reimbursed from Jamyang Foundation upon your return. Expenses for items like books, classroom supplies, a globe, and a bookcase have been reimbursable in the past. While planning your trip, see if friends would be interested in providing elementary English books or other educational supplies for these remote schools.

Volunteers may be able to secure a scholarship or grant. A good source of information is the Foundation Center, at www.fdncenter.org. The Center provides free grant-research libraries in New York and San Francisco. If you are a student, check with your university's financial aid office. Graduate students may be eligible for a FLAS (Foreign Language and Area Scholarship) grant, especially if you plan to learn Hindi or Tibetan while in India. Antioch College students can inquire about the Chatterjee Peace Scholarship. If you learn of any other sources of funding, kindly let us know so that we can help future volunteers.

Jamyang Foundation will be glad to write letters of support for qualified long-term volunteers.

What is the calendar year and daily schedule?

Each school follows its own daily schedule, but the following timetable is typical. The nuns generally wake up at 6 am. Around 7 am, they hold morning services (puja) and eat breakfast of tea and chapatis. They then do chores around the monastery until classes begin. The one-hour classes usually run from 9 to 11 am, followed by lunch at 11:30. After lunch there is a rest period, a work period, and tea. Classes resume around 2 pm, with classes and homework until dinner at 5:30. In the evening, the nuns hold evening services. After that, they study, chat, memorize prayers, and meditate. Volunteers may eat lunch and dinner with the nuns, and attend services anytime they like.

Classes are generally held six days a week, with a holiday on Sundays. Volunteers and students together work out a teaching schedule for their classes. Most volunteers teach two, three, or four classes, starting in the morning and lasting until about 5 pm, with breaks for meals and tea. Volunteers have free time when students attend philosophy or grammar classes.

There is plenty to do outside of class and prep time. Volunteers read and write letters, go to visit the local villagers, sit and chat with the nuns, take walks around the area in the daytime, and may pitch in with the cooking, gardening, and other tasks. Sundays are a day for errands, visiting, day trips, and trekking around the area.

The calendar year at the monasteries remains much the same throughout the year. There is a holiday around Losar, the Tibetan New Year, which is the first lunar month of the year (February or March). Some years the nuns go on pilgrimage to Bodhgaya or for teachings with H.H. Dalai Lama at the height of winter. Most volunteers will visit the projects during the summer months, however, when the roads into the area are cleared of snow. The road to Kinnaur is usually open year round, though winters are cold. There are two roads to Spiti, one through Kinnaur and one through Manali. The road through Kinnaur is sometimes open during the winter. The road through Manali is open when the snows melt on the Rohtang Pass (usually between July 1 and 15). For details on access, see Getting There.

Scheduling at the projects may be a bit confusing, due to the lack of a director or administrator on site. If you experience some confusion, we would be grateful if you inform us.

How do I choose a school?

Have you been to India before? This question is important in choosing your school. For volunteers who are traveling to India for the first time, we recommend teaching in one of the Jamyang Choling schools in Dharamsala: jamyangcholing@yahoo.com or other projects. These projects are located near hotels, guesthouses, and other amenities. Contact us for information on volunteer opportunities for teaching nuns in Thailand and Nepal, too.

Consider how important Western-style comfort is to you. The six Jamyang Foundation projects in Spiti, Kinnaur, and Zangskar will definitely be an adventure! These places offer an amazing experience for experienced travelers, but lack the comforts of home. Food and accommodations for volunteers are very simple and there are few opportunities for luxuries of any kind. A stay at one of these projects is similar to camping. It is important that volunteers at these projects have a cheerful attitude about inconveniences and simple living.

What time of year can you come? The projects are not all accessible year-round. The Zangskar schools are accessible only in summer. Kinnaur and Spiti may be accessible year-round from the Shimla side, but the trip in winter is not for the faint of heart or for those who are pressed for time. One adventurous teacher snowshoed up to Spiti in winter! For a first visit to these mountain areas, we definitely recommend the summer months. How much time do you have? We ask for a minimum commitment of one month, in addition to travel time. The journey from Delhi to Spiti, Kinnaur, or Zangskar may take a week or longer, depending on road conditions and your sensitivity to altitude. India is full of potential delays; if you feel ill or there is a roadblock, the journey may take longer. So, if you'd like to teach at one of these remote schools, we recommend planning to be in India for at least 6 to 7 weeks.

May I teach at more than one school?

We welcome and support those who would like to travel between the projects! A tour of the Jamyang Foundation projects can be a great way to see the Indian Himalayas, as well as a wonderful source of information for the project directors in the U.S. Volunteers may wish to allow more time for acclimating in Delhi or Dharamsala, before traveling to the mountains or waiting for the snows to melt.

While you're in India, if you decide to volunteer at a different project, please help us let the nuns know you are coming. You can send a letter to the monastery and also try to send messages with friends of the nuns who may be going that way. Send several letters and messages in hopes that one will arrive safely. There is no need to translate your letters to the nuns. They can always find someone to read simple English, if you write clearly.

May I teach with a friend, partner, or child? Are male volunteers welcome?

Volunteers may certainly bring a friend, sharing or perhaps team teaching the classes. All of the projects which offer housing have enough room, and enough work, for two teachers. If this is your first time in India, we suggest going with a friend or traveling with another volunteer for companionship. We strongly recommend that women travel with a companion in India. Friends or couples could also teach at different projects in the same area.

Jamyang Foundation welcomes both male and female volunteers. The permanent teachers at the nunneries are often male. The nuns tend to be more shy with men than with women, but they are used to having men around. Volunteers have brought their children in the past. Feel free to contact us for further information.

Couples have taught at the same school before, though male and female teachers generally stay in separate rooms. It is essential that couples observe appropriate conduct, out of respect for local customs and the nature of monastic life.

How are the accommodations?

Living arrangements are different at each nunnery. Depending on availability, volunteers may have a single room or may share with another volunteer. Please let us know if you have a strong preference for a single room. Volunteers live in the same building as the nuns or nearby, and bathrooms are shared. Bathroom facilities are very basic: Indian-style pit toilets and bathing from a bucket. Bath water can be heated in the sun. There is no room heating.

Simple vegetarian meals are provided. Breakfast is tea and chapatis (flat bread). Lunch is usually dal (lentils), rice, and simple vegetables. Dinner is generally noodle soup or steamed bread with vegetables. Some of the monasteries have electricity, which provides for simple lighting. The current is 220 V, so you will need an adapter if you plan to bring items that run on 110 V current. The electricity is not 100% reliable, however, so you will need to bring a flashlight and batteries. Candles and matches provide light in your room. Most volunteers do their own laundry, by hand, but it may be possible to pay neighbors for laundry service.

Should I learn some Hindi, Urdu, or Tibetan? How?

It is not necessary for volunteers to speak Tibetan or an Indian language. However, if you do know some Hindi, Urdu, Tibetan, or the local languages, it will definitely be useful. Learning phrases of these languages not only facilitates communications, it is also a respectful way to be a guest in a new culture. Sign language becomes quite important sometimes in any case!

Language study can be very enjoyable, especially when you can practice with the nuns.

The local languages of the Himalayas are related, sometimes distantly, to Tibetan. The nuns use Tibetan language for chanting and studying Buddhist texts. Hindi and Urdu are the other main languages of Northern India. Hindi uses the Devanagari scripts, and derives its “high” vocabulary from Sanskrit. Urdu is written in Arabic script, and its “high” vocabulary comes from Farsi and Arabic. Hindi will be useful when traveling in Kinnaur, Spiti, and the rest of India; Urdu will be useful in Zangskar. For basic communication, the two languages are similar. The book *Teach Yourself Hindi* by Snell and Weightman is by far the best print resource. The *Lonely Planet Tibetan Phrasebook: Complete Course* (by Sandup Tsering) and *Learning Practical Tibetan* (by Andrew Bloomfield, Yanki Tshering, Yanki Tsering) are recommended for Tibetan. These books are available from amazon.com. Books can't replace the advice of a native speaker, however, since precise pronunciation is crucial.

Tibetan will be most useful when you are teaching; Hindi will be most useful when you are traveling. Most of the nuns did not grow up speaking Tibetan, but it is the language of religious instruction, including classes in philosophy and grammar. Please write to us with your questions about language. We may be able to recommend classes or additional resources.

What about health and safety concerns?

Health and safety are valid concerns! The way of life in India is quite different from what you may be used to and it is good to take precautions.

Safety

Like every country with large numbers of tourists, India has pickpockets. Wherever you stay or travel in India, be sure to keep your passport, tickets, and money in a safe place on your body. Just keep small amounts (Rs. 200-300 in small denominations) in your bag for incidental expenses. Be sure to watch your belongings carefully at all times.

Even though the schools are in rural and generally very safe areas, there could be some risk from outsiders. Especially for women, it is best not to be out after dark and to walk with a companion between villages. All volunteers should use their common sense when trekking and traveling by road.

Health

Most travelers to India experience some health difficulties. Most illnesses - colds, stomach upsets, skin rashes - are temporary and nothing to worry about. Some serious diseases do exist, however, so it's important to educate yourself about health.

Plan to consult a travel doctor weeks or months before you go. Vaccines are not required for the Indian visa, but some may be important nonetheless. It is good to get a tetanus/diphtheria injection, and a Hepatitis A (gamoglobulin) injection may also be worthwhile. Some vaccines require follow-ups a few months later. Hepatitis A and B boosters must be purchased in pharmacies in Indian cities or abroad, if needed. In India, the usual system is to bring your medicine to the hospital, where someone will inject it for you. If you are going to the remote schools, bring all medicines and vaccine boosters with you. You may also wish to bring malaria pills and insect repellent.

Health care in India is extremely inexpensive. If you have time before returning home, you might try to get a checkup or at least a stool analysis; these are expensive in the West, and the Indian doctors are more attuned to Indian illnesses.

If you have health insurance, ask your company whether it will cover you overseas. If you are a student or 25 years of age or younger, Council Travel can issue you a US \$20 identification card. If you are hospitalized, Council will reimburse your expenses upon your return. It is a good idea to keep a record of any illnesses and treatments. If you know of other insurance options, please let us know.

Tap water in India is not safe to drink. The nuns will boil water for you. If you don't think they are boiling the water long enough, please ask them to boil it longer. When buying bottled water, check the seal on the cap. It is good to bring iodine water purification pills (Potable Aqua is a good brand) for traveling and emergencies.

There is very little risk of malaria in the mountains, because the climate is too cold for malarial mosquitoes. There have, however, a few cases of malaria have been reported in Himachal Pradesh in the past few years. The risk is greater if you travel extensively outside major cities in lower elevations. Quinine tablets are the most common prophylactic for malaria. Lariam (mefloquin) is the standard preventative for quinine-resistant malaria, found in northeastern India, but its side effects are quite unpleasant for some people. A travel doctor can give you more information.

Some travelers are prone to altitude sickness. Symptoms are headaches, loss of appetite, and nausea. If you are going Spiti or Zangskar, take care! Travel slowly as you increase altitude. Spend the night where you can, rather than bus straight through. Not everybody gets altitude sickness, but if this is your first trip to the Himalayas, don't chance it. Bring a prescription of diomoxin high altitude medicine with you, just in case. Altitude sickness may be harmless, but it's no fun! If you feel seriously ill, descend to a lower altitude as soon as you can.

How can I communicate with home?

Mail in India is increasingly reliable in Delhi, but far from ideal in outlying areas! Each of the projects is served by a local post office, but there is no assurance that letters will arrive. Friends and family can send several copies of their letters on different days, to increase the likelihood that one will arrive. Thin letters have a better chance of arriving than thick letters, and aerogrammes are most reliable of all (nothing can be contained in them!) Mail your letters at the post office (not in a drop box) in a major city for best results, and be sure to watch the clerk cancel the stamps (so they can't be steamed off and resold!).

International and long-distance phone calls and faxes are possible from Delhi, Dharamsala, Shimla, Manali, Leh, and sometimes Kinnaur, but not in Spiti or Zangskar. Telephone booths marked STD are common along major thoroughfares. Email is available in Delhi, Dharamsala, Shimla, and Manali, and sometimes in Leh, but has not reached Spiti, Kinnaur, or Zangskar.

Please send us a note or an email message when you arrive in India. We can recommend a good restaurant, hotel, and offer other advice. We are very grateful for news about the projects. We welcome advice, suggestions, and help from the volunteers.

How's the weather? What should I pack?

The weather in India varies greatly at different locations, at different times of year, and different times of day. Delhi is hot in the summer and cold in the winter, but it's not a problem, since you'll only be there for a couple of days. At the monasteries in the Himalayas, the winter climate is icy cold with lots of snow. In the summer, however, the weather is lovely up in the mountains and the nuns will be so grateful to have a teacher! Kinnaur is the only project that is accessible year-round, and the weather there is milder than in Spiti or Zangskar.

Sometimes Jamyang Foundation receives donations of objects such as toothbrushes, solar panels, and books. If volunteers are able to take some of these donations with them, it would be greatly appreciated, since the post is slow and unreliable. If you are interested in bringing a donation of your own, please see the Wish List.

Here are some suggestions when packing for the mountain schools. Since English speakers are few, you might also take some good books! Most of these items (books as well) are easily bought in Dharamsala, so no need to take them there. A good rule of thumb is not to bring anything you would mind losing.

Clothes: Go with the layered look, due to constant changes in temperature, but always keep covered up. Clothes should be loose fitting and non-revealing. Indian clothes (salwaar kameez) or long skirts are good for women, due to a lack of restroom facilities. Warm jacket, 2 sweaters, long johns, comfortable walking shoes and/or sandals, rubber slippers for bathing, warm socks, warm hat, and underwear. A warm shawl often comes in handy, and a wide variety of colors and styles are available in India.

Sleeping Gear: Warm sleeping bag and a sleeping sheet (if you want to keep the bag clean). You may want to bring a sleeping mat and/or sitting cushion.

Equipment: Flashlight/torch, batteries, water bottle (Nalgene makes good ones) that can take boiling water, iodine tablets (if you want to drink cold water), notebook, pen, towel, sunglasses, money belt or pouch, waterless hand sanitizer or baby wipes, six passport photographs, and photocopies of your passport and visa (just in case). **Optional:** day pack, extra prescription glasses, camera and film, FM radio with headphones (for listening to teachings), tape recorder (if you plan any interviews or listen to music).

Pharmaceuticals/Cosmetics: Sunscreen, chapstick, shampoo, enough toilet paper/tissues for your stay (if you'll choose to use them), baby wipes or hand sanitizer, deodorant (out of compassion for sentient beings), toothbrush (ditto), toothpaste, and any other personal items. Vitamins, acidophilus, medicines for colds, stomach upset (Tums, Peptobismo), a broad spectrum antibiotic (for bronchitis or diarrhea), eye drops, band-aids, sulfa or antibiotic ointment, high altitude medicine, and any prescription drugs you take. Pharmaceuticals can be purchased cheaply in Delhi, Manali, or Shimla.

Food: Simple vegetarian food (rice, dal, noodles, tea) is provided for volunteers at our programs. Bring any extra food items you may want, such as tea bags, coffee, nuts, dry fruit, energy bars, granola, muesli, etc. Snack foods, chocolate bars, instant coffee, and milk powder are available in Delhi, Manali, and Shimla. Snacks come in very handy while traveling. Be sure to bring enough to share.

Miscellaneous: Any teaching supplies you might need for your classes. Books and reading material for your stay. Photos (the nuns are really interested in family, and love to see pictures of your family and friends). If you wish to bring gifts for the nuns, please bring enough so that each nun receives the identical donation. Pens, key chains, chapsticks, toothbrushes, socks, and towels are practical ideas. Otherwise, you may wish to donate a gift to the monastery as a whole.

Will I have opportunities for Buddhist practice?

The nuns' practice consists primarily of chanting in Tibetan, mantra recitation, and silent meditation. Teachers are welcome to meditate anytime, in the prayer hall or in their rooms. Some teachers have chosen to sit quietly in the room during the chanting sessions (puja), which create a special atmosphere and good karma. Teachers are often invited to attend pujas on special days, where they can participate by drinking tea, accepting blessed snacks, and throwing rice. It's fun!

If you have your own practice, you'll find the monasteries an ideal quiet place for sitting. In the Dharamsala area, many retreats and classes are available for Westerners.

What teaching supplies are available?

English language instruction books at various levels and some English grammar books are available at the monasteries. If you have favorites, it would be good if you can bring one or two additional books along. These will help you in constructing interesting lesson plans. Elementary English readers would also be helpful for your classes. One volunteer found it very helpful to do short skits in English with the nuns, which they found very enjoyable. Another volunteer used simulated shopping trips and restaurant visits as a good exercise to help the nuns get used to speaking English. Since Kinnaur is our newest school, it does not have many teaching materials yet.

Please bring any teaching tools you may need. English language books, picture books, simple social studies books, dry erase whiteboard marking pens, and colored pencils are very useful. Except for Kinnaur, the schools have a limited supply of elementary English language books, white boards, and a few dictionaries (English/Hindi/Tibetan). Some teaching materials are available in the cities and can easily be purchased. Pens, pencils, blank paper, and notebooks for the students are always appreciated! If you would like to use a tape recorder to use in your lessons, please bring one along.

Students in India generally do their homework in small notebooks. If you assign homework the nuns will give you their whole notebook with the assignment in it. The notebook paper in India is poor quality, however, so you may want to bring a spiral notebook with you. The superior quality paper will be a treat for the nuns to use for final drafts. The nuns don't have binders for compiling their work. Folders for the nuns to keep their classwork in would be very useful.

If you are traveling before you get to the monastery, it may not be feasible to take these things with you; they are just suggestions if you were planning to take anything. On the other hand, if you can spare a little room in your pack, please do contact us. We may have some donated supplies waiting for a courier.

How are the classes taught? Do you have suggestions for the classroom?

Most students are still at a beginning level in their comprehension of English. They know the alphabet, and can read and speak simple sentences. Though their reading and verbal skills are roughly the same, it is advisable to separate the classes into two or more sections, according to abilities. You may discreetly shift the students from class to class, as they progress. Arithmetic classes are difficult for the students, because they are not completely familiar with English numbers.

We try to build speaking, listening, writing and reading skills evenly. Teachers use English as much as possible, both inside and outside the classroom. The nuns need practice in all areas, and especially need encouragement to speak out more bravely! We try to teach through immersion, at least in the class period, so students become saturated with basic English sentence structures and vocabulary. Immersion classes are sometimes difficult, as the nuns like to help each other by translating, sometimes inaccurately. Encourage them to try to understand on their own before translating. The students also help each other with homework, sometimes to the point of sharing work on their assignments. Be very clear with them about the rules for homework assignments in your classes. Homework should reinforce the classroom lesson; provide clear instructions.

At the first few classes, try to assess the students' levels of comprehension and speaking ability. Try to find out what material they covered with their last teacher, and review this extensively. The time between volunteer teachers is unfortunately often quite long, and the students may forget what they have learned.

Successful teachers often balance fun activities with more formal assignments. Mad Libs can be great fun. You might try incorporating art into the lessons, with games like Pictionary or assignments such as writing about a picture. Most of the nuns have never had a chance to learn to draw, and they enjoy it immensely.

It is also helpful for teachers to regularly test the students. Testing is helpful for the students, because it motivates them to study. It is also useful for the teachers who will follow you, because they can look over each student's previous work and not waste time discovering the students' abilities. Please keep the written tests and write down the results of any oral test. There is a small library or office at each monastery where folders containing students' assignments and exams are kept. In some schools, there are also folders with information on each student, including their photos, which will help you learn their names! A very helpful task would be to keep these folders up to date, or to assemble new folders at schools that do not have them yet. This will be a big help to the teacher who follows you. You can design a simple questionnaire to be kept in each folder, which you and the nuns can fill out, with spaces for each nun's name, educational background, health information, interests, etc.

The nuns are not allowed to skip or cancel classes. Please take roll in all of your classes. Let the nuns see that you are doing so, and send us the roll sheets. The nuns are really eager to get an education, but they are not accustomed to school requirements, and like students everywhere, they may test the limits!

Enjoy your teaching! And please feel free to write to us for any reason, especially if there is anything that we can do to help you enjoy your stay.