



Parish & Community Groups

This trip offers travelers the natural beauty of the Andes Mountains, the large capital city of Quito, the quaint small towns and their colorful markets, as well as the juxtaposed poverty one finds in this breathtaking developing country. This is a unique opportunity to be in communion with and serve the most vulnerable of the vulnerable. More importantly, you get insight into the Center’s integral family programming that offers those most vulnerable the hope and opportunity to escape the cycle of poverty and empower their lives through faith, education, and community support. Reflective guidance among friends, in comfortable Center surroundings, lets the group discuss what they have witnessed and experienced as they wind down after each busy day. With accommodations at the Center’s modern Community House, you will travel each day in the Center’s bus to various locations arranged to give you a real picture of the beauty of Ecuador and the well-established family development mission that began in 1964.

Sample Spiritual Journey Itinerary

<p>DAY 1 Wednesday</p>	<p>Upon evening arrival, the group will be met by the Community Director at the airport. The Center bus will take you to The Center – A Family of Families’ Community House where you will stay during your spiritual journey. There, you will receive a short house tour & given time to unwind after your travels.</p>
<p>DAY 2 Thursday</p>	<p>After enjoying the continental breakfast, the Community Director will give the group the Center orientation, including information about the Center’s longstanding history and descriptions of Center programming and services. With that base knowledge, you will then go on a tour of the Center, assist with lunch preparations for our members & enjoy lunch with the families. Your afternoon activities could include: attending the Technical Education workshops, going to the Equator & standing on both hemispheres, or “climbing” up Pichincha (a dormant volcano) in the TelefériQo, a gondola lift, to view Quito from a bird’s-eye view. Dinner at the volunteer house will be followed by social time with the volunteers, Community Director and other visitors.</p>

<p>DAY 3 Friday</p>	<p>After enjoying breakfast, your group will go on house visits, accompanied by the Community Director and a Center Family Promoter. These visits are not only to gain context about our members, but more importantly to check in with our families, talk about their experiences and be in communion. Your afternoon activities could include: attending the Technical Education workshops, going to the Equator & standing on both hemispheres, or “climbing” up Pichincha (a dormant volcano) in the TelefériQo, a gondola lift, to view Quito from a bird’s-eye view. That evening you will enjoy a wine and cheese party with the year long volunteers to hear more about their service experience at Center. The evening will end with a home-cooked dinner and socializing.</p>
<p>DAY 4 Saturday</p>	<p>You will take a full-day private bus tour through the Andes Mountains and take in all the gorgeous scenery. You will have a rest-stop to try the delicious bizcochos & cheese and continue on your adventure to Lake Cuicocha - if there’s time, you may even have the chance for a boat ride on the crater lake. You’ll then drive to Otavalo, the largest outdoor market in South America for fantastic souvenir shopping! Upon return to the house, you’ll have dinner and time for a bit of relaxation.</p>
<p>DAY 5 Sunday</p>	<p>On Sunday, your group has a few options to choose from: 1) participate in a <i>minga</i> - a construction project on a member family’s house ...and depending on what you have done earlier in the week: 2) go to the Equator & standing on both hemispheres, and/or 3) “climb up” Pichincha (a dormant volcano) in the TelefériQo, a gondola lift, to view Quito from a bird’s-eye view</p>
<p>DAY 6 Monday</p>	<p>Your group will enjoy a full day tour of Quito’s Historic Center, a UNESCO World Heritage site & the best-preserved, least altered historic center in Latin America. You will tour the Basilica of the National Vow, followed by a tour of the Compañía Church where the Center first began. After a light lunch and some tasty local treats, we will head to a chocolate museum for some dessert! Upon return to the Center, you’ll have some free time for relaxation or group reflection.</p>
<p>DAY 7 Tuesday</p>	<p>Enjoy an all-day shadow experience with our year long volunteers! You will have the opportunity to get into the classrooms, interact with students & participate in the learning process. *Timing and schedules will vary with each volunteer - Community Director will help in coordination.</p>

DAY 8
Wednesday

In the morning, after breakfast, you will have a half-day onsite project. This could be cleaning out a classroom, sanding and painting, sorting and organizing the bodega, etc. Your afternoon will be free to pack your bags. You'll enjoy a goodbye dinner with the Center volunteers, Community Director and any other visitors. The group will travel home together after enjoying a rewarding service trip to The Center – A Family of Families. At this point you will be official ambassadors for our wonderful mission!

Practical Information to Note

- **PASSPORT:** It is very important to check the expiration date on passports. A passport must not be expiring within six months of travel to and your return from Quito. This is the law and there are no exceptions made by the US authorities.
- **IMMUNIZATIONS:** Whether to receive shots before your trip is a personal decision. Consult your physician. We will be in the arid mountain range and not traveling into the Amazon, so most Center visitors do not receive any special immunizations.
- **ALTITUDE SICKNESS:** Most visitors typically adjust to the altitude of nearly 10,000 feet after the first couple of days. We recommend you take a couple of aspirin and drink lots of water the night you arrive (and throughout your trip) to help with the adjustment. You may be slightly short of breath on and off if you exert yourself.
- **WHAT TO BRING/WEAR:** Casual dress is acceptable. Layered clothing is suggested due to fluctuations in temperature throughout typical Quito days. Most visitors wear jeans, capri pants, t-shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters, and comfortable shoes or tennis shoes. You should also bring personal toiletries. *Towels and bedding are provided.
- **SUN EXPOSURE:** Because of the high altitude and the proximity to the equator, the sun is fierce even when it is cloudy, so the use of sun screen, sun glasses and SPF lip balm is highly recommended.
- **ROOM AND BOARD:** You will stay in a modern, spacious and comfortable facility where Center's Year Long Volunteers and C4WF Community Director reside. Each room has a private bath. During your trip you will likely share a room with another visitor of the same sex. You will also receive a continental breakfast during the week and a delicious home cooked meal Monday through Saturday. Visitors are asked to prayerfully consider a donation to the Center after the spiritual journey experience – this donation will remain confidential and should be written out to: Center for Working Families.

- **TRIP COST:** Your spiritual journey cost will be the purchase of your airline ticket and the per diem amount of \$65 plus a flat transportation fee of \$50. Airfare ranges from \$900-\$1,200 depending on the airline, and the time of purchase (e.g. during holidays).
- **ITEMS TO DONATE:** Often times trip participants ask if they could bring along donated items. If you are interested in doing something, we welcome school supplies, new twin sheet sets, gently used clothing for all ages (children and adults), and/or bath towels.
- **MISCELLANEOUS:** The electricity is same voltage as in the US, the Ecuadorian currency is US dollars and credit cards are accepted. Wireless internet access is available throughout the Community House and long distance phone service is available within one block of the Center's campus. Many visitors bring along a smartphone/laptop to check in with family throughout their visit. Check with your cell phone carrier for information on usage as not all carriers are supported in Quito. We will provide you with the Community House phone number for family members to call in case of an emergency.
- **SIGHTSEEING:** We will be traveling in one of the most picturesque countries in the world. A backpack or fanny pack to carry a water bottle, an extra sweatshirt, a granola bar and your camera would be very useful.
- **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE:** A private bus will meet you at the airport when you arrive in Quito and will also transport you on the day of your departure.

Questions? Please contact Olivia Young, Community Director at communityoutreach@c4wf.org