

**First Annual
Immersion Chicago
(Darst Center)
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

Located on the Southside of Chicago, the Darst Center (<https://darstcenter.org/>) is unique in providing opportunities for young adults to see more clearly the faces pushed to the margins of our society. During the trip, students will be introduced to parts of Chicago that look and feel very different from the famous images seen in movies. Chicago is a city with a deep, complex and often unsettling history rooted in racial and economic segregation and marginalization.

While the communities visited often suffer from issues like economic disinvestment, mass incarceration, low-achieving schools and high levels of unemployment and poverty, those communities' identities do not fully or simply define these communities or the people living there. During your stay, students will be able to explore and learn more about these complexities through service work, presentations and conversations with people living in Chicago.

Potential activities would be working at a food pantry, men's center and elementary school in an area with a high immigrant population. Topics covered are likely to include immigration, Catholic social teaching, homelessness and the criminal justice system.

Students will travel to each location by van and stay at a retreat center.

The mission trip will be based on the Ignatian paradigm of Experience, Reflection, and Action. From their service experiences students will learn about the needs of the people who live in Chicago. They will begin to understand their own fears and stereotypes of the poor. Ideally, students will begin to see the face of God in the poor, in minorities, and in each other as they reflect upon the gospel in the midst of the members of the marginalized community. The real challenge of the mission experience is for students to apply the lessons of the trip to their lives at home and at St. Xavier.

Applicants should understand that this trip is **NOT** a vacation. Students are expected to participate and contribute fully to the community experience. Applicants should be prepared for a challenging, yet rewarding, experience. Additional information is available in the Community Service Office.

WHEN: June 24 – June 30
TRAVEL: By van
COST: \$750 per student*

****Limited financial aid is available to students who qualify.***