

10-day Leda Eco-Service Tour for seniors in the Pantanal region of Paraguay

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We are excited to announce that from July 22 to 31, 2016, a 10-day Leda Eco-Service Tour for seniors 55 and older will take place in the Pantanal region of Paraguay.

If you want to better understand and experience the heart and hope behind True Parents' investment in building cooperation between South and North America, this program is for you. This project is also for those seniors who have watched their children travel to far-off places for service projects and wished that they could have that same experience. It is for those who perhaps find themselves empty-nesting and want to do something different, as well as for those seeking spiritual refreshment and renewal through a pure and simple life experience.

This Eco-Service project provides time to discover and contribute to the work that has been done in the Leda Settlement, which covers an area larger than New York City. Work in the fields of aquaculture, agriculture and animal husbandry is focusing on the goal of creating a sustainable settlement or, as True Father referred to it, "the New Garden of Eden."

Initially participants will arrive for a short orientation in Paraguay's capital, Asuncion, where they later will return for the closing day of the program. The activities in the capital will provide opportunities to meet our local Family Federation members, build friendships, and have invaluable experiences with the rich culture of Paraguay.

After the participants leave Asuncion, a stop will be made in Loma Plata, a Mennonite settlement. There we will study its establishment, structure and development as a thriving spiritual community. Once the group arrives in the region of Alto Paraguay (Leda), participants will spend a day visiting one of the indigenous villages and socializing with its children and adult members. The indigenous villages are without running water and electricity, yet the warmth of the local residents makes up for any inconvenience one might experience. The experiences of meeting and getting to know the villagers are always life-enriching for everyone involved.

During the one-week stay at the Leda Settlement, afternoons and evenings are slated as free time, and there will be opportunities to enjoy the natural beauty of the region through fishing, horseback riding, swimming, bird watching and hiking. There also will be time to reflect, journal and photograph. During morning hours, participants will take part in work service and gain experience with fish farming, which provides many insights into engineering sustainability through agro-ecological farming and plant conservation.

Upon return to the capital, the participants will have the option to make a side trip to one of the new Seven Wonders of the World, the spectacular Iguazu Falls. For those who are interested, information and a registration form are provided at our website. <http://www.ledaproject.com/>

Senior Eco-Service Tour

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We are excited to announce that at the end of July 22 – 31, 2016, a 10-day Leda Eco-service Tour will take place in the Pantanal region of Paraguay. The program's participants will have the opportunity to learn about the history of Paraguay in the capital city of Asuncion. A stop will be made in Loma Plata, a Mennonite Settlement to study its establishment, structure and development as a thriving community. Once the group arrives in the region of Alto Paraguay, participants will visit one of the indigenous villages and socialize with its children and adult community members for one day. Participants will spend one week in Leda where they will experience daily life at the Leda Settlement. Upon our return to the capital, an optional side trip can be made to one of the new Seven Wonders of the World, the spectacular Iguazu Falls.

While staying at the Leda Settlement, participants will provide work services and gain insights and experiences with aquaculture, agriculture, animal husbandry and tree plantations. Many opportunities will be available to enjoy the natural beauty of the region through fishing, horseback riding and hiking.

The indigenous villages are without running water or electricity, yet the warmth of the local residents makes up for any inconvenience one might experience. The experiences of working and sharing with the villagers are always life-enriching for everyone involved.

Asuncion - Participants will first arrive for a short orientation in the capital city of Asuncion and finally return there in the closing days of the program. The activities in the capital will provide opportunities to meet and share with our local Family Federation members, build friendships, and provide invaluable experiences the rich culture of Paraguay.

Eligibility

Age

Seniors 55+

Interests

Applicants of all backgrounds are welcome to apply.

Keep in Mind

All volunteers must be in good health and willing to do physical work. The primary language of the project will be English but some Spanish translation will be made available. Participants should be motivated by a desire to contribute to society and work together as a global community. This initial program is open to only FFWPU members at this time and is alcohol and drug free. Men and women are expected to act respectfully with each other and with all those who they come in contact with.

Deadlines and Important Dates

14 December 2015: Registration Opens

15 April 2016: Registration Closes*

*Space is limited 15 participants. Registration will remain open until all spaces are filled.

Expenses

The international travel to the program orientation in Asuncion, Paraguay is the responsibility of participants. To cover domestic transportation, housing, food and program expenses, a participant fee of \$1100 is required. An optional trip to Iguazu Falls will cost an additional \$200. *If the decision to attend the side trip to Iguazu Falls is made, arrange to leave by August 2nd.*

*Please indicate in your registration email whether you are interested in attending the option trip to Iguazu Falls.

Questions

Questions regarding application or program specifics can be sent via contact form below or our [Contact Us](#) page. Otherwise, please review our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Registration

Registration requests should be sent to [Carol Pobanz](mailto:CarolPobanz@gmail.com) at CarolPobanz@gmail.com. A visa is required for travel to Paraguay and can be obtained at the nearest Embassy or Consulate of Paraguay. Typical turnaround for visas is one business day. For additional information, visit the U.S. Department of State US Passports and International Travel page [here](#).



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Frequently Asked Questions

Applications

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Travel

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- Q. Do I need a visa?
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- Q. Will anyone meet us at the airport or bus terminal?
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Country Conditions

- Q. What kind of work will I be expected to do?
- Q. What kind of food will be served and what do I do if I have special needs?
- Q. Will I be able to use the internet and my cell phone?
- Q. Do I need to do hard physical labor?
- Q. What kind of places will we sleep?
- Q. Will I be able to shop for souvenirs?
- Q. What kind of education program will you have?
- Q. What concerns does the Zika Virus pose to those interested in joining a project?

Payments, Fees and Options

- Q. When do I need to pay my fees?
- Q. Do I need to pay for my international travel?

Applications

Q. How do I apply for the project.

Applications can be downloaded from the website. All completed applications should be sent to LedaSettlement@gmail.com. We will review and consider each application in a timely fashion.

Q. What kind of qualities are we looking for in participants?

The Pathways to a Sustainable Future Project is looking for participants that are interested in learning and sharing with others across cultural and national barriers. If you have an interest in environmental care and a concern about the future, this is a plus. Those who want to experience and learn more about agriculture, fishing, aquaculture, and the care and skilled riding of horses would gain from this project. Wanting to serve those in one of the poorest indigenous villages is a plus. If you have special skills that can be shared with others such as, photography, video, art, writing, dance, singing, carpentry, or mechanical skills, we would consider these valuable contributions. Good language skills in Spanish and English is a plus. If you are ready and willing to work with others, to live simply and to discover more about life and the world we live in, you are a good candidate for this project.

Q. When is the deadline for applications?

The deadline for receiving applications is March 31st. Since the number of participants is limited, we recommend that you send your application as soon as you are able.

Q. Does the application need to be fully completed before sending it?

Getting your application in early is important. Sometimes you may be missing a piece of information such as a passport number that may require more time to receive. Please send your nearly complete application in and send us any additional required information as soon as it is available. Your recommendations should be sent by the Respondents.

Q. How well do I need to speak and understand English?

The project requires a basic ability to speak and understand the English language. Some translation will be available but a basic understanding of the language is very important.

Q. How well do I need to speak and understand Spanish?

The more you can speak and communicate in Spanish, the better. Even a limited ability to communicate in Spanish is a plus but it is not a requirement.

Q. Are all applicants accepted?

Our program receives more applications than it can accept so we will review each application and weigh them taking into account a variety of factors. We consider your experiences, education, ability to work with people, your special contributions and other factors. Special care is given in reviewing your essays and the recommendations you receive. Since we are looking to realize a stimulating diversity among the international applicants, we may not be able to accept all qualified applicants.

Q. When will we find out if we are accepted?

We will try to respond within 30 days of receiving your application. All applicants will be notified of their acceptance or non-acceptance no later than May 1.

Q. Is this program open to people from various religions?

This program is interreligious and is seeking men and women of excellent character who care to make the world a better place for all.

Travel

Q. What if I do not yet have an updated passport?

You will need a current passport to enter Paraguay. The passport expiration date must be at least six months after your planned arrival date. Passports that expire before January 3rd, 2017 will not be accepted by the host country.

Q. Do I need a visa?

For many participants, a Paraguay visa will need to be obtained. The cost of the visa depends on the country of your passport. Visas can be obtained at the nearest Embassy or Consulate of Paraguay. You can also get a single-entry visa on entering Paraguay at the airport if you have proper identification. Please check the visa requirements to confirm what documents and fees you will need.

Typical turnaround time for visas in the U.S. is one business day. For additional information for those coming from the USA, visit <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/paraguay.html>

Q. Will I need to take any special shots or medication if I go to Paraguay?

Typically, no special vaccinations are needed while you are participating in the program. You are encouraged to bring any medicine that you will need during your stay.

Q. Will anyone meet us at the airport or bus terminal?

Since Participants will inform us of their arrival time and information, we will have a representative meet them at the airport.

Q. Can I arrive before the project or stay after the project?

If you may want to arrive early or remain after the project concludes you will need to take responsibility for your own expenses and well-being. The project will cover your general room and board from the time the project officially starts to the time that it ends.

Country Conditions

Q. What kind of work will I be expected to do?

In the village we will have a variety of manual labor to do, including painting, planting, and light construction work. Those with special skills may be asked to use them. For those who enjoy teaching or working with children, there will also be many less physically intensive jobs.

Q. What kind of food will be served ?

The food in the hotel is substantial. The village food will be cooked by primarily members of the Leda Settlement. This food often suits the tastes of those attending the project since the kitchen there has ample experience in feeding international guests. Please bring any special spices that you may want to add to your meals.

Q. Will I be able to use the Internet and my cell phone?

The Internet will be available most of the time in the hotel, some of the time at the Leda Settlement and never in the village. Cell phones and texting can be done in the city and at Leda but not in the village.

Q. Will I need to do any hard physical labor?

If you have a problem performing "sweat" labor, there are several other ways for you to contribute during a project.

Q. Where will we be sleeping?

In Asuncion, our participants and staff will stay in a suitable hotel that is centrally located. The hotel

has facilities and meeting rooms. Most hotel rooms will be double-occupancy. While in Leda we will live in well-kept dormitories but while working in our village we will live very simply, possibly sleeping on mats in a school, with no running water and limited lighting.

Q. Will I be able to shop for souvenirs?

In Asuncion, some time will be allotted for shopping. Often we organize small groups and shop together. Handcrafts can probably be bought in the Indigenous village.

Q. What kind of education program will you have?

Our participants will be organized in small teams that help facilitate discussions and sharing on various issues including the theme for that day. Some short presentations will be made by experts in their field and these will be followed with a time for questions and answers as well as group discussions. We will present on issues such as sustainable development, history, culture, and contemporary issues facing the people of Paraguay.

Q. What concerns does the Zika Virus pose to those interested in joining the project?

We have been closely examining the current situation in Paraguay with regard to the Zika Virus. The central concern at this time is with those people who are **pregnant or are trying to conceive**. We ask all participants or prospective participants to educate themselves on the topic, so that they are fully aware of any risk coming on the program.

As it relates to our program, we would like to note that the Zika Virus is a domestic virus, meaning the mosquitoes that carry the disease tend to breed in houses and not necessarily out in the country side. All project begins in the capital city, Asuncion, but the majority of the project will take place in Leda, which is located far from the cities and towns, deep in the country. As a general practice we recommend that participants bring mosquito repellent to any and all activities during a project.

Payments, Fees and Options

Q. When do I need to pay my fees?

Once you receive a notification that you have been accepted as a participant, you will be expected to make a nonrefundable deposit of \$100. This deposit will allow us to hold your spot as a participant. The remaining payment must be made by June 15. Arrangements can be made to pay the fees (in US dollars) on arrival.

Q. Do I need to pay for my international travel?

You are expected to purchase your own tickets and make your own flight arrangements. We begin in Asuncion with the project's orientation.

* If your question is not answered on this page, please send us a message through our [Contact Us](#) page. We will answer your question and post additional information if necessary.

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