

On December 13, Madrid hosted a gathering filled with enthusiasm, formation, and spirit of service for the Saint Anne Volunteering Program. The day was designed to accompany, guide, and strengthen those who feel called to live an experience of volunteering, especially in the international field.

The morning began with a deeply inspiring presentation by Sister Susana of the congregation, who offered a clear and engaging explanation of the origins of the Saint Anne Volunteering Program and the charism that sustains it. Through her testimony, attendees understood how the congregation's history lives on in every act of service and how volunteering is a concrete way to embody the Gospel in diverse contexts around the world.

Following this, one of the volunteers, Maria Jose Lahoz, along with Jose Carlos Navarro, responsible for the projects in the John Bonal Foundation, addressed more practical, yet equally essential, aspects of the program. In this second part, the requirements for volunteering were explained, along with the registration and preparation process, and the essential legal information everyone should know before embarking on an international volunteer experience. Special emphasis was placed on the importance of traveling responsibly, knowledgeably, and respectfully toward the destination countries, taking care of both personal safety and the legal framework of each experience.

In the afternoon, the meeting became more dynamic and participatory. The volunteers participated in a practical exercise, navigating the various official websites that contain the information explained in the morning: consulates, visa requirements, necessary vaccinations, safety recommendations, and other key resources. This session allowed them to resolve specific questions and provided participants with practical tools for their upcoming mission.

The meeting concluded in an atmosphere of gratitude and shared joy. It was, without a doubt, a very enriching day, combining formation, personal experiences, and camaraderie. The participants returned home very happy, with their hearts full of motivation and a renewed desire to continue walking together in service to others, faithful to the spirit of the Saint Anne Volunteering Program.