

8th Grade Service Hour Program

This program is set up for many reasons. It is designed to get the students to do **service in their community** and also to help them reflect on the **meaning of their faith**. Hopefully their service will be meaningful, so that it will encourage them to continue community service into adulthood. We know that your children are helpful within their own family, but this program is designed to get them out into the community and to get them exposed to charitable organizations that could inspire them and use their help. We want to expand their experiences beyond what they would ordinarily do within their family and neighborhood.

Required service hours for the school year:

8th grade – **MANDATORY** - 20 **community** service hours for Confirmation & Graduation

Since the class will be confirmed this year, please try to keep in mind the corporate and spiritual works of mercy when choosing service. Some common corporal and spiritual works of mercy are:

- To feed the hungry & give drink to the thirsty
- To visit the sick
- To instruct the ignorant
- To counsel the doubtful
- To comfort the afflicted

We would like the students to try to divide their service into four different categories so they can see what kind of experiences they like. Here are some categories of choice and a few ideas for each category.

Helping the Parish Examples may be: Cleaning the church, men's club work day, working fish fries, helping out with the children during Sunday masses, working the rummage sale or auction, etc.

Helping the Poor: Examples may be: Working the soup bus, working the Bishop's Thanksgiving & Christmas dinners, volunteering at the Salvation Army, Crop Walk, etc.

Helping the Community or Charitable Organizations Examples would be: Volunteering for the Red Cross blood drives, helping with organized neighborhood trash pickups, volunteering at the humane society, volunteering at women's shelters etc.

Helping the Sick, the Youth, or the Elderly Examples may be: Scheduled visits or volunteering at nursing homes or hospitals, volunteering at a day care or Sunday school, helping to deliver meals on wheels etc.

You should try to divide your hours evenly into all four categories. Please don't stop doing service when your hours are "done." Hopefully this will motivate you to do more service.

Things that do **not** fit community service categories: babysitting for family or friends, doing yard work for family or friends, jobs that you would ordinarily do or that do not get you out into the community.

Try to volunteer for some organizations that you have interest in. Make it a family project if you don't feel comfortable enough on your own, or go with some friends to make it a group project.

Requirements for service:

You will keep a *notebook service journal* that will be turned in to your teacher by due dates. If there is any question whether your project will be acceptable as a community service project, please ask your teacher. It is also a good idea to turn your journal in to your teacher periodically so you know you are on track and you don't procrastinate.

During some religion classes throughout the year the journals will be discussed and shared with the class.

All students will be responsible for all their required service hours and journal entries.

Any spiral notebook will do, but all service journals must be in one single notebook. Please write entries as close to the date of service as possible so journal entries will be more meaningful and memorable. For each service project you must use a page or more to describe the following things:

- A. Type of service
- B. Date of service
- C. Place of service
- D. Supervisor or parent signature
- E. Write a **paragraph or two** that answers the following questions:
 - What type of work did you do?
 - Who did you work with and what type of people did you help?
 - Describe an experience you had during your service (maybe an example of a conversation you had with someone or something that had an effect on you.)
 - Did you like this service? Why or why not?
 - Is it something you would do again?
 - Which of the four categories of service would it apply to?
 - How does it relate to your Catholic faith?
 - What is the most important thing you got out of this project?
 - What are some feelings or emotions you had during or after this service project?