



St. Charles School Christian Service Program Guidelines

The Christian Service Program is designed to embrace the philosophy of our patron Saint Charles Borromeo, who believed in the need to humbly serve others and unselfishly give of ourselves. As devoted Christians, we can reach out in special ways to help those around us and make the face of God more real in the world. If done wholeheartedly our selfless serving can change the world.

The Christian Service Program has been designed to achieve the following goals:

- To offer each student the opportunity to reflect on the teachings of Jesus Christ in relation to serving others.
- To foster awareness of the needs of others, coupled with the opportunity to make a difference in our community.
- To help students reflect on their own volunteer work and how it affects their lives and relates to concepts learned in religion classes.
- To give students a better understanding of the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching and how they are relevant to serving others.
- To underscore to the parents and students the importance St. Charles School places on service to those who are in some way disadvantaged.

Established to enable students to become contributing members of society, our service program, above all else, affords our students the opportunity to reflect on the principles of Christ in their daily lives.

Service Guidelines:

Our primary expectation is that all students willingly seek opportunities to volunteer, and when volunteering, appropriately represent St. Charles School and Parish. Consideration will be given to a student's level of commitment upon preparation of High School Letters of Recommendation. The extent to which a student managed this responsibility and contributed his/her best effort will be reflected in the recommendation.

To promote and monitor activities throughout the year, the following guidelines will be enacted:

- Students will be required to maintain an ongoing journal of their volunteering experiences on their service logs and will be required to complete a final journal reflection in May.
 - Journals should demonstrate an understanding of how student-volunteering experiences model our Catholic Social Teachings
- A Youth Guide featuring a list of agencies for Community Outreach activities will be available in the homeroom class, school office and on the school website.
- Throughout the year, the Community Service Club will routinely provide students with service opportunities, both on and off campus.
- Journals will be collected at the end of the year and reviewed by the Vice Principal. Service hour records are monitored and kept by the Vice Principal. Together the final reflection and service hour record forms count for 100 points of the 4th quarter religion grade. **It is highly recommended that the majority of your hours be completed by the end of the second quarter.** Incomplete hours, incomplete journal, or missed deadlines will be reflected in the Letter of Recommendation and your fourth quarter Religion grade. Likewise, exemplary effort will be duly noted.

Service Requirements

Activities	Required Hours	
	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
Community Outreach	5	10
<p><i>See Youth Guide for opportunities. Activities which fall outside the suggested Youth Guide must be pre-approved by the Principal, Vice Principal, or Service Commissioner.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hours must fall within the guidelines for the following two categories: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Elder Care, Youth, Hunger/Homelessness, Healing</u> “Hands on” work directly with people who are disadvantaged in some way and who are not friends, relatives, or neighbors. 2. <u>Environmental Stewardship</u> Working for a cause that requires individual labor as a participant in an agency organized event (e.g. beach clean-up, trail clearing, San Carlos Community Projects, etc.) • Students must not receive pay or other compensation. 	10	10
School / Parish		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be completed <u>outside</u> normal class hours. • All activities must be pre-approved by a member of St. Charles School Faculty or Staff, or St. Charles Parish Staff. • A maximum of 5 hours may be earned at the Fall Festival and Auction. (Five total hours for <u>both</u>.) • A maximum of 5 hours may be earned for any combination of Scripture Camp, CCD assistance or weekend altar serving. (Five total hours.) 		
Other	0	0
<p>Volunteer efforts that fall outside the above guidelines can be documented in the journal and will be considered as part of the overall review of a student’s level of commitment to serving the community. These hours will not take the place of the requirements outlined above. Reflection write-up optional.</p>		

Students are encouraged to volunteer and support our local community whenever possible, and their efforts in this area can be addressed through their journal responses. However, the primary objective of the Community Outreach portion of our program is to involve the student with “hands on” work **directly with people who are disadvantaged in some way and who are not friends, relatives, or neighbors.** The exception is Environmental Stewardship projects where **individual labor as a participant in an agency organized event is required.** We hope to broaden our students’ awareness of the needs of the less fortunate around us, and expose them to the benefits of collaborating with others in their community for the common good.

We realize that this effort may push students outside their comfort zones, and may even at times be inconvenient, but it is this very effort that best serves their individual growth and the needs of others. As such,

we ask that you guide your child in seeking opportunities that expose him or her to the true needs of others, and the true spirit of this program.

All students may earn hours beginning on the day after the end of the prior school year through May of the current school year. The student will be given credit for the minimum number of hours required per category, per year. **Hours completed in excess of the minimum, or in the "other" category will be noted, but may not be carried over to the following year.** The extent to which a student demonstrates exemplary effort will be reflected in the High School Letter of Recommendation.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to find my own activities?

- *Community Outreach:* opportunities may be found in the Youth Guide, available on-line, in your homeroom class and at the school office. These agencies have been selected based upon their suitability to the objectives of our program and our ability to meet their needs. Opportunities outside this list must be presented for prior approval, as noted above under the Community Outreach section. The Service Commissioner may routinely publicize other activities, including on-campus projects.
- *School/Parish:* hours may be found by asking by a member of St. Charles School Faculty or Staff, or St. Charles Parish Staff.

** Community Outreach efforts that fall outside the list provided in the Youth Guide **must have prior approval.** School/Parish work such as Scripture Camp, Altar Serving or other on-campus help need only be authorized by the supervising adult (whose signature is to be obtained for the journal.)

The Senior Centers seem to be a popular opportunity. What happens at these places and what can I do?

Mostly, the residents of the various Senior Centers in our area need companionship. A visit and conversation is the best gift we can give. With prior approval and scheduling from the on-site Volunteer Coordinator students have also:

- Played bingo or other games
- Played a musical instrument, brought in a group to sing or dance
- Presented their Science Project or other topic of special interest
- Assisted with on-site events
- Assisted with manicures
- Organized a craft project
- Brought a pet

How far in advance can I do my hours?

- Students may begin accumulating hours any time after the last day of school.

Who keeps track of my hours and when do my hours need to be completed?

- Each student will document his or her service activities in an individualized hour log. Hour logs, with CST reflections will be collected in December and then with the final reflection in May. **It is highly recommended that the majority of your hours be completed by the end of the second quarter.** Incomplete/late journals will be reflected in the student's profile, effort, and ultimately, the High School Letter of Recommendation.

May I receive credit for working on the Fall Festival?

- Yes. But the combined total amount you may earn is limited to five hours.

May I receive credit for Altar Serving, Scripture Camp or helping with CCD?

- Yes. A combined total of five hours may be earned for these activities.

I belong to a dance troop/choir/scout troop, etc., can I get credit for our community outreach?

- Yes. Organize a visit by your group to one of the Senior Centers or other pre-approved agencies and earn qualified Community Outreach or Environmental Stewardship hours.

Do I get credit if I volunteer for something that doesn't involve working directly with the disadvantaged, but does help my community, like refereeing a soccer game, helping at Hometown Days, helping my softball/baseball/soccer league, etc.?

- Students are encouraged to lend a hand whenever possible. Hours such as these fall outside the specific requirements of the program (see Service Requirements above) but are deserving of credit. As such, students may document these efforts under the "other" category. **"Other" hours will not take the place of the program requirements**, but will be considered upon preparation of the High School Letter of Recommendation.

What would we do "on campus"?

- Typical activities include assisting with parish or school mailings, office or class projects (under the direction of a member of Faculty or Staff) and campus improvement projects (clean-up, gardening, etc.). Work must be pre-approved by a supervising faculty or staff member and be completed outside the normal school hours.

Can I complete all my hours at once?

- No. The student will be given credit for the minimum number of hours required per category, per year. **Completed hours will not carry over to the following year.**

What about parents who chaperone an event/activity?

- Parents can earn credit for their time spent chaperoning or supervising an event under the Parent Service Hour Contract commitment.

The Community Outreach hours seem restrictive. Why does the program focus these hours so specifically on working with the disadvantaged or with an organized environmental stewardship project?

1. We hope to broaden each student's awareness of the needs of the less fortunate around us. We realize that this effort may push students outside their comfort zone, and may even at times be inconvenient, but it is this very effort that best serves their individual growth and the needs of others. As such, we ask parents guide their student in seeking opportunities that expose him or her to the true needs of others, and the true spirit of this program.
2. Our program is modeled after the most popular high schools attended by our graduates. Each requires between 50 and 100 service hours over the course of four years. For more information on these programs, visit the following school websites:

School	Required # of Hours	Website
Notre Dame	100	http://www.ndhsb.org/Campus%20Ministry/Community%20Service.html
Serra	80	http://www.serrahs.com/Campus%20Ministry/christianservice.htm
St. Francis	50	http://www.sfhs.com/campus-Ministry/service.aspx
Sacred Heart	50	http://www.shschools.org/page.cfm?p=426
St. Ignatius	100	http://www.siprep.org/christian_service/about.cfm
Bellarmino	100	http://greco.bcp.org/webs/csp/
Riordan	100	http://www.riordanhs.org/ministry/community_service.php



St. Charles School Christian Service Program

Dear 7th and 8th Grade Parents,

Attached are the materials for the Jr. High Christian Service Program, which include:

- **Program Guidelines** *Expectations and eligibility criteria*
- **Journal** *Questions used for documenting/reflecting on volunteer work*
- **Youth Guide** *Comprehensive list of approved volunteer opportunities (also available on the school website)*

We'd like to remind parents that the primary objective of our Christian Service Program is to involve the student with "hands on" work **directly with people who are disadvantaged in some way and who are not friends, relatives, or neighbors**. The exception is Environmental Stewardship projects where **individual labor as a participant in an agency organized event is required**. We hope to broaden our students' awareness of the needs of the less fortunate around us, and expose them to the benefits of collaborating with others in their community for the common good.

We realize that this effort may push students outside their comfort zones, and may even at times be inconvenient, but it is this very effort that best serves their individual growth and the needs of others. As such, we ask that you guide your child in seeking opportunities that expose him or her to the true needs of others, and the true spirit of this program.

Specific details regarding all aspects of the program can be found in the Guidelines booklet. To support student success please review all materials with your child. **A few important items:**

- Community outreach activities that fall outside the suggested Youth Guide must be pre-approved by the Vice Principal.
- School/Parish activities must be pre-approved by a member of the St. Charles School Faculty or Staff, or St. Charles Parish Staff.
- Incomplete journals, late journals, or lack of a final presentation will be reflected in the student's profile and ultimately, the High School Letter of Recommendation.
- Students must not receive payment or other compensation.
- Hours are to be documented by a legitimate on-site "supervisor", typically an adult affiliated with the organization or agency.
- Parent chaperones may receive credit for their time/service under the Parent Service Program.

The Parent/Student acknowledgment form must be signed and returned by Friday, September 28th

Thank you for your support of this very important program. We are proud of the efforts undertaken by our students thus far, and are confident that their service experience will enrich their lives and the lives of those around them.

Megan Armando
Principal

Fr. Dave Ghiorso
Pastor