

St. Charles School
Christian Service Handbook
2022-2023



For it is in giving that we receive.” – Francis of Assisi



St. Charles School Christian Service Program

Dear 7th and 8th Grade Parents,

Welcome to the Christian service program.

We'd like to remind parents that the primary objective of our Christian Service Program is to involve the students 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 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 time 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 logs or lack of final presentation will be reflected in the student's profile and ultimately, the High School Letter of Recommendation.
- Student 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 of agency.
- Parent chaperones may receive credit for their time/service under the Parent Service Program.

The Parent/Student acknowledge form must be signed and returned by Tuesday, September 13.

Thank you for your support of this very important program. We are confident that their service experience will enrich their lives and the lives of those around them.

Fr. Dave Ghiorso
Pastor

Megan Armando
Principal

Colleen Langridge
Vice Principal



St. Charles School Christian Service Program

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 the lives and relates to concepts learned in religion classes.
 - To give students a better understanding of the serve themes of Catholic Social Teaching and how they are relevant to serving others.
- To underscore to the parents and student 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 Chris in their daily lives.

Service Guidelines:

Our primary expectation is that all students willingly see 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 will be enacted:

- Students will be required to maintain an ongoing log of their volunteer hours with some reflection on their experience. They will be required to complete a final reflection/project in May.
- A Youth Guide featuring lists 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 may offer service opportunities both on and off campus.
- Logs will be collected at the end of each trimester and reviewed by the Vice Principal. Service hours are monitored and kept by the Vice Principal. Together the final project and service hours log will count for 100 points of the 3rd trimester religion grade. **It is highly recommended that the majority of your hours be completed by the end of the 2nd trimester.** Incomplete hours, incomplete logs, or missed deadlines will be reflected in the Letter of Recommendation and your 3rd trimester Religion grade. Likewise, exemplary effort will be fully noted.

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 the 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 demonstrated 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 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
- Presented their science project or other topic of self interest
- Assisted with on-site events
- Craft projects

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 a brief reflection will be collected at the end of each trimester, and then with the final project/reflection in May. **It is highly recommended that the majority of your hours be completed by the end of the second trimester.** 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 the Fall Festival?

- Yes, but the **combined total** amount you may earn is limited to five (5) hours.

May I receive credit for Altar Serving, Scripture Camp, or helping with Religious Education Classes?

- Yes. A combined total of five (5) 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) but are deserving of credit. As such, students may document these efforts under the "other" category. **"Other" hours will not take place of the program requirements**, but will be considered upon preparations of the High School Letter of Recommendation.

What would we do "on-campus"?

- Typical activities included assisting with parish or school mailings, office or class projects (under the direction of a member of the 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 as seen under the Parent Service 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?

- 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 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.
- Our program is modeled after most high schools attended by our graduates. Each requires between 50 and 100 service hours over the course of four years.