

Our Lady Academy

Ministry Project Guidelines

“God requires that we should be shining lamps giving light to all around us”-Mother Catherine McAuley

Service Learning Our Lady Academy seeks to create a Christ-centered community that is rooted in the Gospel values and fostered by the charisms of the Sisters of Mercy. Preparation of life is not just found between the covers of a book. We desire to develop in our students an awareness of those in need and a sense of compassion and justice. Through our service learning program, we hope to instill the core belief that every human life is created by God and deserves love and respect. By offering assistance to those in need, students provide a valuable social service and grow to be women who make service an integral part of their lives.

*Students should keep in mind the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy in choosing service projects. **In addition to the service performed, the student must turn in a verification of Service Hours signed by the supervisor (may not be signed by the student’s parent), and a reflective response. Reflection forms must be turned in during the quarter they are completed, or they will not be accepted. SUMMER SERVICE PROJECT REFLECTIONS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 8. FINAL SERVICE LEARNING REPORTS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN APRIL 29 of the school year. Reflections will count as a test grade for the fourth quarter Religion grading period. Students not completing required number of service hours and reflections will not receive Religion credit for the year until hours are completed.** Information regarding the report will be distributed to students during the first week of Religion class.*

How many hours are required?

<i>7th grade= 5 hours</i>	<i>10th grade = 20 hours</i>
<i>8th grade= 10 hours</i>	<i>11th grade = 25 hours</i>
<i>9th grade= 15 hours</i>	<i>12th grade = 25 hours</i>

How do I find a service project?

The first step is to think about your gifts and interests? In Matthew 5:14-16, Jesus says, “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to the whole house. In the same way let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in Heaven.” How can you use those gifts to bring the light of Jesus to others? How can serving Jesus help you grow in your own faith? True service is more than just volunteer work, and you want your service to make a difference! Answering these questions will help you decide which type of service you are called to perform.

After deciding which type of service to perform, the next step is to consult local agencies and projects planned by school and church clubs and groups to pick a project. If you are in doubt about an activity, or are having trouble finding one, consult your Religion teacher before you begin. Your teacher can help you find a project that will use your gifts and fit the mission of service. Here are some examples as you begin looking for service projects:

Spiritual Works of Mercy:

- lead or participate in Bible Study, Lectio Divina, or praying the Rosary (this can be done as a family, but should be planned and led by the student earning the hours)*
- participate in your church’s youth group or LifeTeen activities*
- assist with CCD or SRE for your church*
- participate in the liturgy as an altar server, lector, song leader*
- offer an hour in Adoration*
- Vacation Bible School*
- Serve at Church Bazaars, Fairs, etc...*

Corporal Works of Mercy:

- *tutor younger students*
- *offer childcare during mass or church activity, or for a family in need (as arranged through the church and approved in advance)*
- *create blessing bags for the homeless, Cassa, women's shelter, etc...*
- *make and deliver a meal as part of a meal train for someone in need*
- *go shopping or run errands for an elderly person or someone who is homebound*
- *assist in cleaning or decorating the church for services*
- *Summer Camp as offered by a partner elementary school*
- *any work for a 501(c)3 non-profit organization such as:*
 - *Gaits to Success, Feed My Sheep, Loaves and Fishes, King's Kitchen*
 - *St. Gerard and Morning Star Crisis Pregnancy Centers*
 - *Humane Society of South Mississippi*
 - *Dunbar and Dixie Whitehouse Nursing Villages*
 - *Hancock and Harrison County Food Pantries*
 - *St. Vincent dePaul Society at your local Church Parish*
 - *St. Joseph's Helping Hands at your local Church Parish*
 - *Red Cross Blood Drives*
 - *Lynn Meadows Discovery Center*
 - *Buddy Ball*
 - *Boys and Girls Club*
 - *Organizations supporting Catholic Education*
 - *OLA project involving service may be sponsored by OLA Ambassadors and Campus Ministry*

Organizations and projects should be in line with Catholic Social Teaching and Doctrine.

*We are aware that students put in valuable time volunteering for a variety of needs, however, not all of these needs meet the criteria for service for this experience. While OLA encourages volunteerism, the following activities are **not acceptable** for the requirements of this program:*

- *anything where the student receives compensation or payment*
- *Private/family/ or for profit businesses*
- *Tutoring siblings or friends*
- *Private/ for profit offices, businesses, dancing schools, etc..*
- *Politically affiliated groups/activities*
- *Concession Stands*

If you have any questions regarding service projects, please see your Religion teacher for answers. Forms to be signed supervisor and service reflection guidelines will be provided during the first week of Religion classes.

Sign and return your acknowledgement by the end of the first week of school.

We have read and understand the Service Project Guidelines for the Our Lady Academy Service Hours Program and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Parent's Signature _____ ***Date*** _____

Student's Signature _____ ***Date*** _____