

ST. JUDE CATHOLIC CHURCH SERVICE HOURS EXPLANATION

JYM CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

WHY SERVICE HOURS?

Giving of oneself to offer Christian service is an opportunity for students to share their Catholic faith through action and deed. These hours are hours spent sharing the love of Jesus Christ with others who may or may not be as fortunate as the person serving. Service to others is an integral part of our call to live out our faith.

Jesus told us in Matthew 25:40 "And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'" The service done through Confirmation preparation and beyond is an answer to the Gospel challenge to love our neighbor as Jesus loves us.

WHY DO SERVICE HOURS GET LOGGED FOR CONFIRMATION PREPARATION?

Preparing for Confirmation is not just about checking boxes and just "getting by" throughout the year; instead, it another period of time in which a student is formed in faith and learns what it truly means to be Catholic in everyday life. By requiring service hours to be recorded and turned in, we are hoping to instill an attitude of service in the candidates, as well as give them opportunities to reflect on what they did.

It is not enough that you only know about your faith. How do you put your faith into practice? How often do you go out of your way to help others? Read the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12.

HOW TO START...

First, the student should think about some of the God-given talents that they have been blessed with, and how those talents can help in the church and community. Ask God for guidance, and have an open heart and mind to His help. Service hours need to be special and not something already being done as part of a daily routine.

Students should also talk to their parents and sponsor to discuss ideas. Find out the needs of people in a neighborhood, parish, school, or other community.

WHAT TYPES OF SERVICE CAN BE DONE?

Students can do many different types of service to earn the required hours. Service hours should fall under the categories of Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. These categories are listed below:

Corporal Works of Mercy

Feed the Hungry
Give Drink to the Thirsty
Clothe the Naked
Visit the Imprisoned
Shelter the Homeless
Visit the Sick
Bury the Dead

Spiritual Works of Mercy

Pray for the Living and the Dead
Instruct the Ignorant
Comfort the Sorrowful
Counsel the Doubtful
Bear Wrongs Patiently
Forgive All Injuries
Admonish the Sinner

On the back of this sheet, there are numerous examples of specific activities that would count for service. If you have a question about something counting, please ask!

Students should also focus on service in different areas of their life. Service should be spread out by serving the Church, their larger community, a neighborhood, etc. Service should not all be done in one place, for the same people, doing only one thing.

IS THERE A MINIMUM NUMBER OF HOURS THAT NEEDS TO BE EARNED?

Yes! All students are required to complete 15 hours of approved service during both the 7th and 8th grade years. This is only a minimum! Students, by all means, are encouraged to do more service and continue practicing their faith through these works even after 15 hours have been attained.

Note: Hours WILL NOT roll over to the next year. The hours will re-set at 0 at the beginning of the 8th grade year, regardless of how many service hours were performed during the 7th grade year.

WHAT ARE PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES?

Parents are responsible for keeping students on track and making sure they are working on service projects regularly throughout the year. It is the parent's responsibility, in addition to the supervisor, to sign the form being turned in.

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WHAT ARE STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES?

It is the responsibility of the student to have a Christian attitude and to authentically serve in whatever way they are being called. Through service hours, students can learn a lot about themselves. The student should be an excellent example of being Christ to others, really putting their Catholic faith into action.

The student is responsible for completing the Service Hour Form for each activity, getting it signed by the appropriate people, and turning it in to their catechist or the Youth Office.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD BE REMEMBERED?

While serving, students are a representation of not only St. Jude's, but the entire Catholic Church! They have a great responsibility, but a blessed one. Their actions should reflect their desire to serve as Christ and to share His love with all those encountered.

Always remember, a student is not alone in doing this! Jesus is with us all. Jesus said, "Here I am among you as one who serves." (Luke 22:27). He never gives you more than you can handle. (1 Corinthians 10:13). He knows you better than you know yourself.

Enjoy the service you do. You will learn a lot, and you will have phenomenal opportunity to grow in faith.

SOME IDEAS FOR SERVICE

(Note this is not an all-inclusive list. These are only ideas. If you have a question about something not on this list, ask!)

- Donate food items to the food pantries, RCIA dinners, and Good Timers luncheons. 1 food donation = 1 hour. You can earn up to 3 hours this way. You can donate more than 3 items, but you would only be able to record 3 hours.
- Donate clothing, accessories, and other items to clothing drives, diaper drives, the Giving Tree, etc. Again, you can only earn up to 3 hours this way. You can donate more than 3 items, but you would only be able to record 3 hours.
- Contact a homeless shelter; ask about ways you can help.
- Help an elderly person who is homebound with yard work or housework.
- Visit a senior citizens home to play bingo, bring cookies, or just sit and visit.
- Visit a children's hospital—taking stuffed animals, coloring books, etc.
- Pray a weekly rosary! You can offer the rosary up for souls in purgatory, the sick, an end to abortion, etc.
- Spend time in Adoration!
- Be an altar server, usher and/or lector.
- Mission Week at St. Jude's.
- Help with VBS.
- Help decorate the church for the Christmas and Easter seasons.
- Volunteer for the St. Jude Carnival.
- Help at an animal shelter.
- Contact a local food/clothing bank and inquire about helping on-site.
- Be a teen aide in a children's ministry class.
- Always keep an eye out for announcements in the bulletin or share via e-mail for upcoming service opportunities.

Examples of service that would NOT count towards the hours earned as part of Confirmation Preparation:

- Anything where there is payment for the action. If a student is paid for helping, the hours cannot count.
- Helping with family chores or helping around at grandma and grandpa's house. These are things already expected of students as their involvement in being a family member.
- Service as part of school organizations—i.e. setting up for the school dance, helping with a school carnival, tutoring, etc.

IF YOU HAVE A QUESTIONS ABOUT SOMETHING COUTING OR NOT...PLEASE ASK!