

Our Lady of the Elms SERVICE PROGRAM OVERVIEW High School

Jesus calls us to love as He loved. This high calling is communicated clearly in Scripture. Our Lady of the Elms school believes that service to others is at the heart of a Christian way of life. Because of this, our Service Program is an essential element of the OLE curriculum.

VISION: The Service Program is designed to meet these objectives:

1. To educate girls and young women to serve compassionately.
2. To develop student's faith and conscience by witnessing to the presence of Jesus Christ through the Christian values of truth, justice, and peace.
3. To root students in the Dominican tradition of Community, Prayer, Study, and Preaching by becoming a community of compassion committed to justice and serving others.
4. To provide students with the opportunity to reflect upon and learn from their service experience by writing a Theological Reflection paper as part of their fourth quarter theology grade.

GUIDELINES:

1. Reflect on the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. The Corporal Works of Mercy attend to the physical needs of others. Some of these are: feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned. Some of the Spiritual Works of Mercy are: instructing, advising, consoling, and comforting. (Catechism of the Catholic Church #2447)
2. Carefully reflect upon and identify your personal gifts, talents, and interests. Examples are: interpersonal skills, artistic abilities, athleticism, social skills, and academic talents.
3. In deciding what service you will do, priority should always be given to serving those who are economically poor and to those in special need. A good rule of thumb: **If the service helps the poor, the elderly, the sick, or those in need, it is most likely an acceptable type of service.**
4. Look at the needs in the community, school, and place of worship. **Non-profit organizations** such as soup kitchens, shelters for the homeless, food banks, nursing homes, hospitals, and mission trips/programs are good places to find those in need. There are many events at **Our Lady of Elms** each year that need student volunteers. Volunteering at **your place of worship** (church, synagogue, mosque, or temple) is also a good place to do your service hours.
5. Find a match between your gifts, talents, and interests, and the human needs within the community. (Please note - **you are permitted to serve at animal shelters and rescues, but only up to 5 hours per year.**)
6. Some service opportunities are listed on the bulletin board outside room 124, and announced during the afternoon school announcements.
7. Check with your theology teacher to ensure that your proposed service is approved for the Service Program.

8. Contact the service agency to arrange for times to perform your service. Print out the Service Log sheet and take it with you. Be sure to have your on-site supervisor sign your service log when you are done. (It may be virtually impossible to find that person later.)
9. **Juniors and seniors must complete 10 hours of “hands on” service with the poor and needy as part of their required 35 hours. This means you must come into contact with the people you are serving. Office work, such as filing, does not qualify. Soup kitchens, hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, any agency that serves the mentally or physically disabled, or tutoring of low-income children, to name a few, qualify.**
10. **The fulfillment of both the service documentation and the reflection paper are required both to pass to the next grade level and to graduate from Our Lady of the Elms.** Our service program is an essential element of the OLE curriculum. Turning in the Service Log Q2 and Q4 with the required number of hours will be graded for compliance to the due dates. The Theological Reflection paper is graded according to the Elms grading scale and incorporated into the Q4 Theology grade.

EXAMPLES OF APPROVED SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES (including, but not limited to):

- Soup kitchens and shelters for the homeless
- Food bank and pantries
- Visiting the sick in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities (including Encores performances at such facilities)
- Tutoring
- Special Olympics
- Donating blood and/or working Elms sponsored American Red Cross blood drives
- Participation in church sponsored mission trips
- Volunteering at your place of worship: Assisting with religious education classes, Lector, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, choir, musician, serving meals during special feast days, etc.
- CYO coaching
- Humane Society or animal rescue facilities (up to 5 hours permitted)
- Our Lady of the Elms events: Open Houses, February Fantasy, Seventh Grade Visitation, Girls Night Out, Mass on the Grass, etc.
- Please note: your service may not be linked, directly or indirectly, to any political campaign.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

1. COMPLETE YOUR SERVICE REQUIREMENT.

Service hours are to be completed over a twelve month period beginning May 1. Service hours should be performed at non-profit organizations such as public service agencies, environmental groups, and places of worship. Students should also consider the many volunteer opportunities at Our Lady of the Elms such as, Open Houses, February Fantasy and Seventh Grade Visitation, to name a few.

*** NEW FOR 2016-2017 - You must complete a number of your service hours by the end of Q2 or points will be deducted from your Q2 Theology grade.**

Grades 9 & 10: 10 hours

Grades 11 & 12: 15 hours

By May 1 you will complete the remaining hours for the following totals:

Grades 9 & 10: Remaining 15 hours for a total of 25 hours

Grades 11 & 12: Remaining 20 hours for a total of 35 hours. *10 of these hours must be done at an agency that provides "hands on" service with the poor or needy.*

2. KEEP TRACK.

- **Do not wait until the day before your paper is due to secure your signatures.**
- When you are done with your service, have the **supervisor** from your service location sign the Service Log to verify the number of hours you have completed.
- Be sure you also have a signature for Service Hours completed at the Elms.
- If your service organization provides you with a signed letter detailing your hours, that may be used in place of the Service Log.
- Parents are not permitted to sign the Service Log - unless a parent is the supervisor of the agency.

3. BY THE END OF Q2 turn in:

- 1) Your **Service Log** documenting the number of hours you need to have completed (**Grades 9 & 10: 10 hours; Grades 11 & 12: 15 hours**). List the places served, the number of hours, a description of the work you did, and the **signature of your supervisor** from each location. The fulfillment of the service requirement will be added to your Q2 theology grade. **Do not wait until the day before your Service Log is due to secure your signatures.**

4. ON, OR BEFORE, MAY 1, turn in:

- 1) Your **Service Log** documenting the remaining number of hours you need to complete (**Grades 9 & 10: 15 hours; Grades 11 & 12: 20 hours**). List the places served, the number of hours, a description of the work you did, and the **signature of your supervisor** from each location. The fulfillment of the service requirement will be added to your Q4 theology grade. **Do not wait until the day before your Service Log is due to secure your signatures.**
- 2) A typed **Theological Reflection paper** about your service experience, using the rubric provided. This reflection paper will be graded and added to your Q4 theology graded.

Note: Turning in any portion of the requirements late will result in an **8% deduction per day**. Theological Reflection Papers will only be accepted up to **3 days late**, or result in a failing grade which will be added to your Q4 Theology grade.

The fulfillment of both the service documentation and the reflection paper are **required both to pass to the next grade level and to graduate from Our Lady of the Elms**. Our service program is an essential element of the OLE curriculum.



Thanks for
your service
to others!