

Faith IN Action

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL'S SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM

*What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith
but does not have works? Can that faith save him?
If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day,
and one of you says to them,
"Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,"
but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it?
So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

*Indeed someone might say,
"You have faith and I have works."
Demonstrate your faith to me without works,
and I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works.*

James 2:14-18

St. Mary School's Service Learning Program has four components:

- ❖ Faith Family Groups
- ❖ Classroom Outreach
- ❖ School-wide Outreach & Advocacy
- ❖ Middle School Service Block

Each component works together to provide opportunities for students, families, faculty, staff, and parishioners to further the Catholic social teaching themes of:

- ❖ Life and Dignity of the Human Person
- ❖ Call to Family, Community, and Participation
- ❖ Rights and Responsibilities
- ❖ Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
- ❖ The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
- ❖ Solidarity
- ❖ Care for God's Creation

AND instills the values identified in our Schoolwide Learning Expectations (SLEs), values expected of our graduates.

A St. Mary School Graduate...

...is a person of **COMPASSION**

...who seeks to actively **CONTRIBUTE**
to his or her own intellectual and personal growth and the growth of others

...and fosters a **CONNECTION**
to become stewards of his or her own community and the greater world.

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The program seeks to connect students to the greater community, beginning with one another in Faith Family Groups, and the parish, the greater community, and the global society through participation in outreach programs and Service Block opportunities.

All programs and projects must be approved and discussed with the Religion Coordinator.

FAITH FAMILY GROUPS

Faith Families are comprised of students from across grade levels, with an eighth grader as its leader-facilitator. Once a month, the school gathers together at an assembly where groups engage in the discussion of that assembly's focus. Each class is responsible for preparing and leading an assembly, which focuses on a variation on the school's theme for the year.

CLASSROOM OUTREACH

Each classroom is invited to develop an outreach program that is age-appropriate and which ties seamlessly to the Christian Living segment of the diocesan religion outcomes. Classroom outreach coordinators work with religion and/or homeroom teachers to make the experience meaningful for the students. Each outreach activity is led by the class, but may be promoted for participation by the school and parish. Classroom outreach must be approved by the Religion Coordinator.

SCHOOL-WIDE OUTREACH & ADVOCACY

The school, in partnership with the parish, will develop school-wide outreach at least twice a year: once during the season of Advent and another during the season of Lent. The school and parish staff will select the projects. Student Ambassadors and the Student Council Commissioner of Philanthropy will publicize and coordinate the efforts.

In the spring, a Parish and School Day of Service and Advocacy may be planned where school and parish families come together to learn more about Catholic social teaching initiatives and advocacy opportunities. As part of the day, families work together to perform direct service and/or assemble goods to donate to local charities.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SERVICE BLOCK (Grades 5-8)

Together with their families, students in grades 5-8 seek out opportunities to serve the greater community outside of the school day. Hours obtained are reported and recorded by the homeroom/religion teacher. Each student writes a reflection regarding the transformative experience gained in the act of service.

Students who complete the 25-hour requirement will be recognized with a Service Block at the following scheduled Honors Assembly. At the Graduation Ceremony, Service Block honorees get the privilege to wear a Red Cord to signify their achievement.

Opportunities include:

- ❖ Service towards the Country Fair* (only those that are beyond the shift requirements)
- ❖ Service as Playways helper
- ❖ Service to approved organizations such as:
 - Sacred Heart Community Services
 - St. Luke's Pantry
 - St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish (excludes service in liturgical ministry)
 - Loaves and Fishes
 - Catholic Charities
 - EHC Life Builders
 - Sobrato Family Centers
 - Casa de Clara
 - Day Worker Centers
 - Learning and Loving Center
 - Adult Day/Senior Centers
 - Other Service Moderator approved organizations and initiatives.

For the 2016-17 school year, our second year of introduction, the following required hours for those seeking a Service Block are as follows:

- Current 8th Grade: 10 hours
- Current 7th Grade: 15 hours
- Current 6th Grade: 20 hours

Beginning the 2016-17 school year, all students entering 5th grade are required to complete and document 25 hours of service in order to receive a Service Block prior to graduation in 8th grade.



St. Mary's School Service Learning Program for Middle Grades (5-8)

SERVICE BLOCK RECORD & REFLECTION

Name:	Grade:
Organization Served:	Supervisor:

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISOR:

Date/s of Service:	Total Hours Served:
Description of Service Provided:	
How well did the student serve your community?	

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT:

Describe your experience. Be specific about the transformative nature of this experience. How are you a better person because of this? How will you continue to serve? Describe the most meaningful encounter or relationship that you gained from this experience? On the back of this sheet, write a short letter to a friend to let them know why he or she should serve this community/organization. *(Attach additional sheet/s if needed.)*

Return the completed form to the Service Block Moderator to receive credit for hours served.