



SAINT FRANCIS CATHOLIC ACADEMY

The mission of Saint Francis Catholic Academy is to inspire all students to Serve others, to preach the gospel through our Catholic Faith, to live a life of Charity as God's instruments, and to seek understanding through Academic excellence in the tradition of St. Francis.



Christian Service Program

Personal and Social Responsibility

Saint Francis Catholic Academy is committed to the education of the whole person. As a Catholic school, it is our unique mission to guide young people in developing a Christian social consciousness and a commitment to a life of justice and peace.

The Gospel mandates that we serve our neighbor, especially the most vulnerable in society. In addition, participation in the Christian Service Program aids students attempting to qualify for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship. Guidelines for Christian Service are as follows:

- All students must complete a minimum of 25 hours of Christian Service each year they attend Saint Francis Catholic Academy. All service hours must be documented as volunteer (non-paid) and completed outside school hours. The verification form must be signed by an official representative of the organization where the service is performed, and a contact information must be provided.
- Each year the time frame for performing Christian Service will be June 1 through April 30. (Service hours completed during the month of May may be counted for the following school year).
- Parents are strongly encouraged to monitor their child's progress regarding this requirement. All verified and recorded service hours appear on FACTS via the parent portal. This will go a long way toward helping your child meet this requirement and avoid any unnecessary negative consequences for their failure to comply with this school policy.
- Service hours will be adjusted on a sliding scale to accommodate transfer students. For example, transfer students who enroll at the start of the second semester are expected to complete 1/2 of the annual requirement or at least 12 1/2 hours.

Guidelines to Earn Service Hours

- Students may earn service hours at their Church and at non-profit organizations or agencies (501 C-3) whose mission does not contradict the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Volunteer hours at any business or "for-profit" organizations do not qualify as service hours.
- Service hours cannot be earned during the school day, unless at school-sponsored events pre-approved by the Campus Minister.

Chores/service performed in the home or in a family-operated business (such as lawn mowing, painting, babysitting, clean dishes...) is a laudable activity but does not qualify as service hours.

- Supervisor of the service hours can never be a student's parent or family member.
- Attendance to club activities, club fundraising, ordinary help to individual teachers do not qualify as service hours.
- Students cannot earn service hours if they are paid or tipped for the service they are performing.
- Students can earn up to 5 service hours per day. One hour of service corresponds to one hour of credit; recognition of extra hours is not allowed. Hours exceeding the 5 per day rule count only after fulfilling the minimum requirement of the 25 service hours per year.
- Students who participate in mission trips will earn service hours only while working, and not for the whole day (time spent sleeping, eating, traveling does not count as service). When on mission trips, the 5 service hours-per-day's rule still applies.
- Collection of items or money does not qualify as service hours.
- Credit for participation in parish liturgical celebrations (e.g., altar serving, ushering, lector, choir) are all laudable activities and may be applied to the service requirement only after the minimum requirement of 25 hours has been completed.
- When in doubt about the appropriateness of a service opportunity, and in order to prevent unnecessary misunderstandings or disappointments, students are encouraged to first discuss their plans with the Campus Minister.

Reporting Procedures

- It is the student's responsibility to completely fill out and submit a Record of Christian Service to the Campus Minister as documentation of each completed service project. Forms are available in the office of Campus Ministry, in theology classrooms, and in the front office. Downloadable forms are available on the school website.
- Service hours must be turned in to the Campus Minister for approval within 15 calendar days from the date service was performed. For service hours performed during summer, forms must be turned in for approval within the first 15 calendar days of school. After those deadlines, service hours will not be approved.
- The Campus Minister may approve one additional service hour per each project, based on the student reflection in the Record of Christian Service.

- The following is the schedule for students to turn in service hours throughout the school year:
 - by the end of the first quarter: a total of at least 7 hours
 - by the end of the second quarter: a total of at least 14 hours
 - the end of the third quarter: a total of at least 20 hours
 - by April 30: a total of at least 25 hours
- Students who do not satisfy the required hours for each quarter will receive a grade of INCOMPLETE in Theology until the requirement is satisfied. The grade of INCOMPLETE will convert to the grade earned for the quarter/year once verification of service has been submitted to the Campus Minister. INCOMPLETE grades not cleared within 15 days will be recorded as an "F".
- Completion of service hours is a requirement for individual student exemption from senior final exams.
- In the case of seniors, caps and gowns will not be issued until the requirement is satisfied.

Examples of Pre-Approved Service Opportunities: if your intended service project is not listed below, please check with the Campus Minister or your Theology teacher before completing it.

Service to Church

- Vacation Bible School
- Classroom Assistance for CCF
- Assistance provided at the Parish for local events and/or festivals

Service to School

- Golf Tournament
- Open House
- Souper Fun Sunday
- Assistance at athletic events
- Volunteering during cleanup days

Service to Community

- Catholic Charities
- Grace Marketplace & St. Francis House
- Soup kitchens
- Ronald MacDonald House
- Assistance in nursing homes
- Animal Shelter
- Special Olympics
- Church-sponsored or School-sponsored mission trip and summer camp
- Convalescent homes
- Home-building projects
- VolunTeen Program