

## 2019-2020 LOURDES ACADEMY CATHOLIC MINISTRY PROGRAM

More and more, middle schoolers around the country are being required to perform community service hours as part of their learning experience.

If students can get involved in giving back to a cause or helping their community in a way that matters to them, the lasting benefits can be far-reaching. As anyone who has ever volunteered knows, the satisfaction that comes from helping others can be life-changing.

*Parental involvement is of great importance. Catholic Ministry Verification Forms will not be accepted without a valid parent's signature confirming that the work was completed in accordance with to the guidelines set forth in this document. Parents are encouraged to assist their children in the process of choosing a ministry site and are also advised to thoroughly investigate the site and/or organization to ensure their child's safety.*

### **5 Community Service Ideas for Middle Schoolers**

**1. Animals:** Local animal shelters are always in need of volunteers even for simple tasks such as cleaning cages, answering phones, or making holiday decorations for the shelter waiting room. Contact a local shelter and speak with a volunteer coordinator to see what help is needed.

**2. Seniors:** Every community has senior citizens who would appreciate the time and help that a teen could lend. Most communities have a senior center or a private nursing home where volunteers are needed. The recreation director who helps plans activities for the seniors is a good person to contact. Even a small amount of time with a senior can make a difference.

**3. Helping other kids:** For student athletes, a great way to give back to others is to volunteer at a Special Olympics event. There are hundreds of Special Olympics offices and all of them need volunteers at various times during the year. Denise Breneman is the Volusia County Director. Check on upcoming events at <https://specialolympicsflorida.org>. Another good organization is Surfers for Autism at [www.surfersforautism.org](http://www.surfersforautism.org)

**4. Troop support:** Volunteering to help support active duty U.S. servicemen and women is a great initiative. Begin by contacting an organization that ships packages to troops, such as [Operation Gratitude](#) or [Operation Troop Support](#). These and other organizations collect donated items, which they package and send to individually named service members deployed in hostile regions. As the holidays approach, these organizations are also looking for volunteers to help wrap gifts to ship to servicewomen and men.

**5. The environment:** Many teens care deeply about the threats facing our environment and may have an interest in helping their community “go green.” Community service ideas include planting a neighborhood garden or a tree for all to enjoy, launching a campaign to get friends to put their computers and other electronic devices in sleep mode before going to bed, thereby saving energy; organizing and participating in a community cleanup day; or helping clear hiking trails or performing beach cleanups.

## STUDENT VOLUNTEER SERVICE GUIDELINES

The easiest way to establish if a facility fits the criteria would be:

- Is it a non-profit or service agency?
- Does it further the corporal works of mercy? The Corporal Works of Mercy are the kind of acts by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs. They are: feed the hungry; shelter the homeless; clothe the naked; visit the sick and imprisoned; bury the dead; give alms to the poor.
- Does it further Catholic Social Teaching?
- Is it an organization that exists to profit the owners, such as a family business? If so, it would **not** fit the criteria.

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### Activities/Hours That Count

- United Way agencies
- Nonprofit agencies
- Special Olympics
- School volunteer programs
- Nursing homes, hospitals, nonprofit clinics
- Museums
- Libraries
- Service club activities that provide a benefit to the community
- Our Lady of Lourdes Italian Festival
- Pregnancy Crisis Center
- Helping Hands

### Activities/Hours That Do Not Count

- Regular practice time and meeting times for extra-curricular activities and clubs
- Detention work detail
- Service performed for pay
- School musical or dramatic production where credit is earned
- Job shadowing
- Material donations such as money, food, etc.
- Activities required for academic coursework

\*\*\* Ministry Verification Forms MUST be signed by the supervisor/coordinator of the project or non-profit organization. **PARENTS MAY NOT SIGN VERIFICATION FORMS AS THE SUPERVISOR.** You need a separate Verification Form for each organization where you perform service hours. You also need a separate Verification Form for each supervisor/coordinator who supervises or coordinates the performance of your service if you do multiple types of service at one organization. Forms are available online.

*If you have any questions regarding your activity, please contact Mrs. Sturm.*

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**DUE DATE for completed Ministry Verification Form**

**May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020**