

Community Service Hours General Information for Trinity Catholic Junior High School

- updated 08/2016-

Service hours are meant to help form our students into true disciples of Christ. Service is the natural expression of our discipleship. It helps one to grow in holiness after the image of Jesus who “came to serve and not to be served” (Matt 20:28). We hope the following guidelines will ensure that the purpose of service hours is being met at TCHS.

Beginning in the 2016-2017 School Year, Trinity Catholic Junior High School students will be required to complete 10 hours of service. Five hours are required in the family category, and an additional 5 hours in any of the remaining three categories: parish, school, community.

- Service hours constitute approximately 5% of the religion grade each semester. All the hours must be completed in their entirety in order to receive full credit.
- If any portion of the required service hours are not completed by the assigned due date in each semester, then the student risks the loss of 5% of the student’s earned grade within their religion class for that semester.
- All service must be performed outside of school hours. The student may not be paid for the service or receive any form of compensation. Nor can it be service done as a punishment.
- A total of five **family** hours will be due the first Friday in December and the other half will be due the first Friday in May.
- International students are exempt from doing service hours if it is their first year; returning international students must complete the service hours according to their grade.
- Students can count hours for the upcoming school year starting in June.
- For each activity the appropriate form (found on the TCHS website) needs to be filled out in its entirety to receive credit. The purposes of the service hour forms are two-fold: 1) to testify that the student performed satisfactory service that benefited another; 2) to help the student realize that when we give to others, we ourselves benefit. Therefore, a properly filled out form is required for credit. If the student records that s/he “learned nothing” from the experience, then the purpose of the hours has not been met, and the student will not receive credit. Answers such as “I learned that cleaning the house is boring,” or “I learned how to make tacos” are also unacceptable.
- **A Note on Required Signatures:** Only the adult supervising the work may sign the form. Fellow students may not sign forms. With the exception of the family hours, parents may not sign the form. An improperly filled out form, forms turned in after the deadline, an unacceptable signature, or service that does not fulfill the requirements for the category will not receive credit.
- If a question arises in regards to service hours please ask your child’s religion teacher prior to the end of the semester. If necessary the religion teacher will consult the TCHS Administration.

- Pet sitting or adopting in any form, for any organization or family does not count for any type of service hours.
- 7th and 8th grade students can complete 15 hours above the required 10 (a total of 25 hours or more) for an award at the end of the year.

Penalties

- If a student is reported to be lazy, negative, or defiant, the student will be required to repeat those hours.
- Parish coordinators, organizations, and volunteer services spend much time and effort planning and arranging schedules. When students do not follow through with their commitment it causes those organizations serious frustrations. If a student commits to a certain number of hours and does not show up without prior cancelation, the student will double the hours he or she has missed.

Family Hours

- This is work which directly benefits a family member that is outside the normal household duties and goes beyond what the parents normally expect. An adult member of the family must sign the form.
- If you are helping your family at a parish, school or community event, it should be applied to one of those categories, not home service. (This means service to one's family, not simply with one's family.)
- Family hours are completed by serving anyone to whom the student is biologically or legally related.
- Ideas for Service (This list is not an exhaustive list but just to provide ideas.):
 - Painting the house, spring cleaning, babysitting younger siblings, lead a family Rosary, plan/arrange a family game night, prepare dinner for your family, do EXTRA chores in addition to the ones you already have, assisting with elderly or disabled relatives, anything the parent(s) deem as over and above what is normally required.

School Hours

- Only service performed for Trinity Catholic High School qualifies. Only Trinity employees or volunteers who organize and supervise the activity may sign the form. Shannan Miller has many ideas for school service, and many teachers would appreciate assistance before or after school.
- Activities at TCHS will not necessarily merit school service unless that service directly affects TCHS.
- Hours must be done outside of school time and may not include work done in class unless approved in advance by the student's current religion teacher and/or administration.

- General school fundraisers, such as the auction, count toward school service because they are of less direct benefit to the individual student. Fundraisers for school organizations (sports teams, clubs, etc.) do not count, as these are of a more direct benefit to the student. Exceptions may include an organization that is raising funds that goes to the school at large so please seek preapproval. Students may count work done at a fundraiser for an organization to which they do not belong and from which they do not directly benefit.
- Ideas for Service (This list is not an exhaustive list but just to provide ideas.):
 - Cleaning school building or grounds, helping a teacher in his/her classroom before or after school, auction (contact Shannon Miller)
- Benefit breakfasts for seminarians, or families of TCHS do not count as school hours but community because the proceeds go to the family or seminarian and not to TCHS.

Parish Hours

- Service must be performed for your home parish (the parish that pays your tuition) and must directly help the parish.
- The service must be performed outside one's Sunday Mass obligation, even if one is performing a liturgical function at that Mass. (Exceptions: If one fulfills a liturgical role at a weekend Mass, one may not count the Mass itself, but may count the preparation or practice time.)
- If someone attends a second Mass on a Sunday to perform a liturgical function, then the entire Mass counts.
- Hours spent in adoration: When one is adoring Our Lord, one receives more than one gives. For this reason, if a student substitutes for an hour of adoration or has a regularly scheduled hour of adoration, the student may count 15 minutes of service for each hour of adoration, up to four hours of adoration and one hour of service.
- The form must be signed by your parish priest or the parish employee/volunteer who organized and supervised the activity.
- If your parish has a grade school, work for that school counts for parish hours, not school.
- Non Catholic students may choose to do parish hours for the church they attend. If that is not possible they need to make arrangements with their religion teacher toward the beginning of each semester.
- Hours can include any service hours to the parish that are required for Confirmation preparation.
- Ideas for Service (This list is not an exhaustive list but just to provide ideas.):
 - Parish dinner or picnic, activities at the grade school, cleaning church or parish grounds, teaching PSR, leading other parish classes or working at them (not merely attending), working at a parish fundraiser (but not just a parish group to which you belong; ex: CYM fundraiser), coffee and rolls

Please Note: Holy Cross Parishioners may have a separate due date besides the TCHS due date. Ask your religion teacher or Diane Kelsey for details.

Community

- Any work done for needy or socially marginalized and/or secular (in the sense of who is served), non-profit organization
 - “Needy” is defined as a person who is incapable of carrying out necessary duties due to physical incapability, age, illness, or handicap. They cannot be related to you to count for community hours. If they are, it counts as family hours.
 - “Socially marginalized” is defined as a person who is poor, homeless, homebound, or infirm. Again, if they are related to you, it counts as family hours.
 - “Secular, non-profit Organization” is defined as an organization who serves people of all faiths and receives no monetary benefit for their services.
- Service must be performed outside your family, parish and school.
- To aid in the assurance that community service is being performed for the benefit of the greater community, preapproval of the organization is strongly recommended. Without preapproval, the student accepts the risk that such service will not be counted toward the student’s community hours’ requirements.
- A student who attends a mission trip with his or her parish may be allowed to count the actual hours worked (not preparing, traveling, praying, playing, eating, socializing and other attendant activities) as community service hours; provided, however, the student obtains approval prior to departing for the mission trip to assure that such hours actually worked will count towards their community service hours’ requirement.
- Ideas for Service (This list is not an exhaustive list but just to provide ideas.):
 - Service through retirement homes or centers, group homes for mentally or physically handicapped, day care for mentally or physically handicapped, Adult day care, Catholic Charities, Big Brother and Big Sisters, service through Mennonite Housing Rehabilitation, the Leukemia Society, tutoring in non-Catholic school with an at-risk child, Meals on Wheels, any nonprofit hospital, soup kitchen, United Way

We have read and understood the service hour requirements for TCHS.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____