

“Mercy is the very foundation of the Church’s life. All of her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness she makes present to believers; nothing in her preaching and in her witness to the world can be lacking in mercy. The Church’s very credibility is seen in how she shows merciful and compassionate love. The Church “has an endless desire to show mercy”. The Church is commissioned to announce the mercy of God, the beating heart of the Gospel, which in its own way must penetrate the heart and mind of every person. (Pope Francis, *Vultus misericordiae*, §§10, 12)” We are called, as it is, to be *Merciful like the Father*. “In this Holy Year, we look forward to the experience of opening our hearts to those living on the outermost fringes of society: fringes which modern society itself creates. How many uncertain and painful situations there are in the world today! How many are the wounds borne by the flesh of those who have no voice because their cry is muffled and drowned out by the indifference of the rich! During this Jubilee, the Church will be called even more to heal these wounds, to assuage them with the oil of consolation, to bind them with mercy and cure them with solidarity and vigilant care. Let us not fall into humiliating indifference or a monotonous routine that prevents us from discovering what is new! Let us ward off destructive cynicism! Let us open our eyes and see the misery of the world, the wounds of our brothers and sisters who are denied their dignity, and let us recognize that we are compelled to heed their cry for help! May we reach out to them and support them so they can feel the warmth of our presence, our friendship, and our fraternity! May their cry become our own, and together may we break down the barriers of indifference that too often reign supreme and mask our hypocrisy and egoism! (Pope Francis, *Vultus misericordiae*, §15)”

The Service Hours component of the Catholic education at Saint Patrick's High School is designed to help develop the students into a people of compassion and knowledge, people committed to justice and mercy like our Heavenly Father. During four years at Saint Patrick, students will provide service to the greater community of Maysville and the world. The hope is that through service, the students will become aware of their responsibility to be of service to all. It is my hope that, through serving others, the student will develop the heart of the Father and, consequently, Saint Patrick High School will be known throughout the area as a school dedicated to charitable service. As Pope Saint John Paul II highlights, "Jesus Christ taught that man not only receives and experiences the mercy of God, but that he is also called "to practice mercy" towards others. (Pope Saint John Paul II, *Dives et misericordia*, §14)”

Students will have two components to their service requirement:

- I. Each student will be required to complete **10 service hours per semester**.
 - A. Service hours must receive the approval of the student's religion teacher and/or the school chaplain.
- II. Each student will also be required to complete **1 service project per term/quarter**.
 - A. Each religion class will meet and discuss with their religion teacher a potential service project of considerable merit which will, in a particular, be of benefit to the poor, the sick, the elderly, or the disabled.
 - i. This project should seek to, in light of Matthew 25, feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, invite the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit the imprisoned.
 - ii. This project should be easily identifiable with a Corporal Work of Mercy (feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, harbor the harborless, visit the sick, ransom the captive, bury the dead) or a Spiritual Work of Mercy (instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, admonish sinners, bear wrongs patiently, forgive offenses willingly, comfort the afflicted, pray for the living and the dead)
 - B. Each student will also be required to submit a 500-word reflection paper reflecting on their service experience to their religion teacher.

The service component will account for **15%** of the student's final grade in their religion class each semester. Any student who fails to complete their Service Component Requirement shall receive an “Incomplete” for their Religion grade for the semester.

Procedures

- I. Service hours must be submitted prior to the completion of each semester on the student's *My Students Progress*. Approvals and verifications are to be sought through Mrs. Clos.
- II. The Service Project will follow the following three stages:
 - A. Students, as a class, will meet each term to discuss potential service projects and decide on a potential project and date. This will be done both in conjunction primarily with their homeroom teacher, who will function as their adult supervisor, and their religion teacher.
 - B. The Class President will then submit the Service Project Approval Form (see attached form), at least 3 weeks in advance of the proposed date, to the chaplain for final approval. These can be acquired from the student's Homeroom Teacher or Mrs. Clos.
 - C. Students will then plan and perform their service project, again under the guidance of their homeroom teacher and the chaplain.

N.B. Individual students who find the planned class date impossible or unduly difficult to perform their service project may, on an individual basis, seek out a potential alternate project at the discretion and approval of the chaplain. This is not, however, a guaranteed “pass” on the project.

Service Project Approval Form



Class (circle one): 9 10 11 12

Proposed date: _____

Proposed Project (please describe in space provided): _____

Resources Required (list anything or anyone you might need): _____

Adult Chaperones (list the adults that will be present): _____

Signatures

Class President: _____ Homeroom Teacher: _____

Religion Teacher: _____ Principal: _____

Approved: YES NO

Chaplain: _____