

SAINT STANISLAUS

Service Program 2016 - 2017

September 9, 2016

Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.'

Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?

When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you?

When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?'

And the king will say to them in reply,

'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'

- Matthew 25: 34-20

Dear Saint Stanislaus parents and guardians,

Last year, our students collectively logged over 6,500 hours of service of some type to our community! That is an average of 18 hours per student. Those are impressive numbers, especially considering that the most we ask our students, the senior class, to accomplish is 20 hours in one year. The purpose of SSC's service program is for our young men to begin to recognize the importance of serving others, especially when our students have nothing tangible to gain from it. The aim is both to serve those in need and to find fulfillment in the very act of giving of oneself. As a Catholic writer once noted, "If we want to meet God, we will find Him in service to others who can do nothing for us, because He came here in service to us, who can do nothing for Him." To a certain degree, we accomplished that goal last year, as a number of students went above and beyond our requirements and ultimately organized our student-led service organization, SHouT (**S**ervice **HOU**rs **T**eam) to spur others to action.

This year, we hope to take another step toward service becoming an integral part of our identity and culture. Our ultimate goal is for each student to work in direct contact with others in need, thereby cultivating a lifelong habit of service in everyone in the SSC community. As the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops explains: "The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus and give us a model for how we should treat all others, as if they were Christ in disguise. They are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs."

At the same time, we are keenly aware of the challenges involved in your son volunteering: time constraints, challenges in finding volunteer agencies, and travel, to name a few. One of the issues that resulted from this last year was the submission of service hours that

did not meet our criteria. While we will never discourage students from helping their neighbor move boxes or do a beach clean-up, these types of service do not get at the heart of Christ's call to assist those in need. Our focus this year is on making sure that students are seeking out **direct contact** (see definition below) opportunities, as often as possible, while recognizing that those can be hard to come by.

We therefore continue to adapt our program to the realities of our students' and families' lives, as well as those of our community. While we expect our students to take the initiative in finding and fulfilling their service hours, we will maintain our support of your son's efforts with the help of our Service Program Coordinator, Mr. Tim Roberts, his religion teacher, and our SHOUT volunteers. As our young men engage in helping others, we pray that they will become, as Pope Francis put it, "real champions in the service of others."

Service Requirement Details:

In order to clarify our expectations, we are moving to a simple distinction between types of services: **Direct Contact Hours** or **Indirect Contact Hours**.

Direct Contact means: Service hours that take place directly working with individuals or organizations that care for the poor, hungry or disadvantaged, the elderly, sick, disabled, or individuals with special needs.

Examples: Homeless shelter, food pantry work, hospital work, hospice care, mission trips, Boys and Girls Club, etc.

Indirect Contact means: Service hours that do not involve direct interaction with individuals or organizations that serve the groups listed under direct hours of service.

Examples: fundraisers, walkathons, animal care (not in contact with people), school/parish festivals or meals, wetland restoration, beach cleanup, bake sales, serving as an altar boy, etc.

7th graders are asked to complete a minimum of **six (6) hours** of service work, with a minimum of three (3) accomplished through direct contact with individuals or organizations that care for those in need.

8th graders are asked to complete a minimum of **eight (8) hours** of service work, with a minimum of four (4) accomplished through direct contact with individuals or organizations that care for those in need.

9th graders are asked to complete a minimum of **ten (10) hours** of service work, with a minimum of six (6) accomplished through direct contact with individuals or organizations that care for those in need.

10th graders are asked to complete a minimum of **twelve (12) hours** of service work, with a minimum of ten (10) accomplished through direct contact with individuals or organizations that care for those in need.

11th graders are asked to complete a minimum of **sixteen (16) hours** of service work, with a minimum of twelve (12) accomplished through direct contact with individuals or organizations that care for those in need.

12th graders are asked to complete a minimum of **twenty (20) hours** of service work, with a minimum of fifteen (15) of those accomplished through direct contact with individuals or organizations that care for those in need.

Additional Notes:

Your son will receive service hours forms from his religion teacher. As he completes projects, he should turn in a form for each set of hours served and should include on it the required information (supervisor signature and contact information, hours served, location, evaluation). He may also submit them via email to troberts@ststan.com. In order to encourage consistent volunteering throughout the year, there will be **two deadlines: one at the end of the first semester (December 2nd) and the other at the end of the second semester (May 5th)**. The first deadline requires that at least half of the hours needed be completed. To ensure accountability, **he will not be allowed to take his semester religion exam if he has not completed the required amount of service hours.**

Service hours must be completed at a non-profit organization/agency after school hours, on weekends, and/or during summer and vacation periods. Private residences and businesses do not qualify as sites for service. If the service opportunity your son is interested in is not for a non-profit, it must be pre-approved by the Service Program Coordinator.

Neighborliness and family-related help are not normally considered service – the rationale being that both are considered givens, and an outreach to one's wider community is not made. The same rationale applies to what a student does for his/her own school, e.g. sports team manager, open house, freshmen orientation, or setting up for a school function. Finally, hours will also not count if a student receives any form of remuneration.

Of course, the hours required are the **minimum** and we encourage all of our young men to exceed these expectations, as they often do. I am including in this letter several service agencies where your son may volunteer. If you have any additional questions or comments, feel free to contact Mr. Tim Roberts, Service Program Coordinator at extension 516.

As always, I thank you for your support and example as a servant to others in your family and community.

In His Heart,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patrick McGrath". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Patrick McGrath
Principal

Partial List of Service Options

Gaits to Success (228-255-5368)

An equestrian center for physically challenged individuals located in the Kiln

Feed My Sheep (228-864-2701)

A food center for homeless individuals in downtown Gulfport

Goodwill Centers of Gulfport and Bay Saint Louis (228-863-2323)

A thrift store that employs and serves the needs of the physically and mentally challenged

Humane Society of South Mississippi (228- 863-4394)

An animal shelter that houses and cares for abandoned or mistreated animals

Waveland Animal Shelter (228-467-8050)

The only animal shelter serving the needs of the Bay-Waveland area

Loaves and Fishes (228-436-6172)

A food distribution center for homeless individuals in the downtown Biloxi area

Dunbar Village (228-466-3099)

A residential home for elderly individuals

Dixie White House (228-452-4344)

A residential home for elderly individuals

Woodlawn Village (228-255-4832)

A residential home for elderly individuals

Hancock County Food Pantry (228-467-2790)

Emergency canned / dry food distribution center for families in need

Shepherd's Kitchen (228-467-8047)

A food distribution center for the elderly and indigent in the Bay-Waveland area

Twelve Baskets Food Pantry (228-822-0836)

Emergency dry / canned food distribution center for families in need

Salvation Army Gulfport (228-868-1188)

Various service programs for the poor, homeless and indigent people in the Gulfport area

Back Bay Mission (228-432-0301)

A large multi-dimensional agency that runs an emergency food distribution center and thrift store in downtown Biloxi

El Pueblo (228-436-3986)

A drop-in center for homeless and migrant workers offering English classes, legal assistance and counseling

New Orleans Mission (504-523-2116)

A homeless shelter and food distribution center in Downtown New Orleans

Ozanam Inn (504-523-1184)

A homeless shelter and food distribution center in Downtown New Orleans

Children's Hospital of New Orleans (504-896-9486)

Volunteer program to visit with the patients, help do clerical work in the office and work at the hospital gift shop

Saint Vincent de Paul Store of Baton Rouge (225-365-5158)

A thrift store in Baton Rouge that redistributes the profits to individuals and families in need

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) (225-8598)

Volunteer program working with children in foster care settings