

Saint Catherine of Siena Catholic Church

Confirmation Preparation: Required Summer Service Project

Who is responsible for completing a summer service project?

Each Confirmation student in both the summers following the 7th and 8th grade school years is required to complete a service project. In preparation, students are to discuss with parents how service will be incorporated into the summer plans. Students and parents should consider the student's individual God-given strengths and talents, as well as current family commitments. Students should also consider the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, and their service project should incorporate some of these.

What are some examples of Works of Mercy?

Serving the needs of others as a witness of the Corporal Works of Mercy might include: assisting at a homeless shelter; serving at a soup kitchen; visiting an orphanage or nursing home; or, assisting at a food pantry or with a clothing drive.

Serving the needs of others as a witness of the Spiritual Works of Mercy might include: spending time in Eucharistic Adoration praying for a special family intention, for the Souls in Purgatory, or for those in need who have no one to pray for them; teaching prayers or catechism lessons to a younger sibling or student; working for a vacation Bible camp; or, organizing a family rosary throughout the summer.

Is there service that would NOT fulfill the requirement?

Please remember that other service projects such as school assignments, club or team projects, or current family responsibilities (i.e. cleaning your own room/making your own bed/current chores, etc.) **would not fulfill this service requirement.**

How many hours should be spent doing the service project?

Although we are not asking you to count and record hours, you should set reasonable goals. **(You will be asked to provide an approximate number of hours spent on your service project over the summer in the summary paragraph to be turned in at the beginning of September.)** The student should not be thinking of the minimum hours they can give; students have been blessed with many gifts and a young Catholic preparing for Confirmation should strive to offer time and talents for others sacrificially.

What are some examples of projects completed by students?

Some examples of service projects completed in the summer of 2017 include: volunteered to help preschool children at a local school, and helped with younger children at swim meets; volunteered to use musical talent by playing "Taps" at veterans' funerals; made sandwiches for a local food pantry; helped rebuild "Santa House" in Great Falls; played violin at a local nursing home; helped make school materials for Siena Academy; sorted through donations at a local organization helping women and children; taught 4th graders at a wildlife refuge camp;

packaged meals to be shipped to El Salvador; worked in DC central kitchen and cleaned a nearby church, and prayed the rosary beforehand for the people to be served.

How can I find out about volunteer opportunities in the Diocese of Arlington?

There are a number of age-appropriate volunteer activities sponsored by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington. The contact number for Catholic Charities is: 703-841-3830. Our parish liaisons have prepared a document (which is available through the Office of Religious Education) listing various opportunities. Please email Mrs. Livaudais for further information.

Is there a written assignment?

Yes. The student should document the summer project in a one- to two-paragraph short essay, describing the service performed and evaluating their efforts. They should be able to identify which specific works of mercy they performed. The essay should also include an **approximation** of the number of hours worked.

When is the service project written assignment due?

For students to be confirmed this fall, these short summaries are due at the first mandatory fall Confirmation seminar on **Thursday, September 20, 2018.**

For students entering 8th grade in the fall of 2018, essays are **due on September 10**, the first Monday of religious instruction in the fall.