

CHRISTIAN SERVICE PROJECT SYLLABUS:
JUNIOR YEAR DESCRIPTION & REQUIREMENTS

PURPOSE & GOALS OF JUNIOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

From the St. Charles Campus Ministry Brochure:

“Students participate in a formal Service Program as a means of increasing their awareness of what Jesus asked of his disciples. The social relations encouraged are, in essence, Christian relations and include service to others as a necessary aspect. Participation in this program is expected so that students increase their awareness of the needs of others. St. Charles requires each student to complete at least forty hours of service by the end of junior year. These constitute a requirement for graduation from St. Charles. In addition to building a sense of community and responsibility to others, the service program at all levels constitutes part of the overall religion grade...”

“Juniors complete at least twenty-four hours of service. These self-initiated, person-centered projects are selected by the student with faculty guidance for service beyond St. Charles. Juniors are required to keep a written journal of service experiences. Further, these projects utilize service learning to help students incorporate Christian service with their talents, interests, and hopes for the future. This is promoted by the Catholic Church and is a focal point of junior religion.”

In addition to the basic purpose laid out in the Campus Ministry Brochure, your Junior year Christian Service serves the following goals: To grow as Christian leaders, making a difference in the world around us by living our faith out in service to those who are most in need. To become **Men-for-Others** ~ Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J. summed it up best by challenging us to become “men-for-others; men who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ ... men who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors.”

The valuable experience of serving and working with those who are in greatest need of your help and assistance is the essence of Christian leadership. This experience is to be one in which you open yourself to the poor, interact with the hungry, and listen to those who nobody wants to acknowledge. Not every experience of service will be easy, positive, or life changing, but if you are persistent, generous, and open-minded you will be sure to have an effect and you will surely be affected.

TWO ESSENTIALS OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE: CHARITY & JUSTICE

One popular quote distinguishes Charity & Justice by saying “One provides an immediate but temporary hand-out to those in poverty, while the other provides a necessary and permanent way out from poverty.” Below is a diagram that illustrates the characteristics and necessity of both Charity & Justice in the Christian life:

3 CONNECTIONS OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE:

- 1) **Relationships with Others:** Connecting your direct service with actually getting to know the PEOPLE you are serving. Building a capacity for empathy, concern for the poor & those in need.
- 2) **Faith in Christ:** Connecting your direct service with the person, teachings and ministry of Jesus, who is supreme model of Christian Service which must engage the whole of the person, spiritually & physically.
- 3) **Commitment to Justice:** Becoming aware of what injustice looks like, feels like, and sometimes "smells like." Christian Service is both participating in charity as well as learning how to help transform systems of injustice. This involves connecting your direct service with Catholic Social Teaching and the academic content of our Junior Course.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS:

1. 24 Hours of Direct Service: (Must be completed by Thursday, May 19th, 2010)

The 24 hours of direct service must be completed by students as part of their service learning project. These hours must be completed in the context of a unified project doing a specific activity at a single service organization (such as Habitat for Humanity). The service must be person-centered. Further, the student must have a clearly designated supervisor who is able to certify that the 24 hours were indeed completed. More specifically, the following activities are not allowed (this list is not meant to be exhaustive):

- Coaching
- Cleaning up the church grounds/facilities
- Being an RCIA sponsor
- Youth Group leadership
- Any work done for money
- Work done as a pre-requisite for membership into student groups that will benefit the student.

The spirit of these parameters is that your service be directly involved with people in need and take you outside your comfort zone. Further information regarding acceptable projects and help in directing students to different service organizations will be provided during the course of the junior year. Specific questions on projects should be directed to Mr. Warner outside of class time.

A. *Service Proposals:* DUE Friday, October 1st, 2010 (by 8:00am)

A formal Service Proposal must be submitted via **E-MAIL** with the following information:

1. Name & Contact Information of Agency & Supervisor
(title of supervisor, e-mail, phone #, & address)
2. Potential Dates & Hours of Service
3. Description of Service (as specific as you can estimate)
4. Reasons for Choosing Agency (and hopes that you have for serving there)

2. *Christian Service Project Packet:* (Due: May 19th, 2010)

In these packets, students will still do an assessment of the organization(s) where they worked. Supervisors for whom they worked will assess them. Finally, students will continue to keep an official log of the twenty-four hours minimum they spend at each location, and a designated adult must sign off on each log entry.

3. *Christian Service Journal*: This is not a requirement but a strong recommendation. The purpose of this journal is to reflect on your experience as you are going through it by recording stories, feelings, and reactions to events in your service. This will give you a wider and more specific pool of memories from which to write your Christian Service Paper. It is recommended that students write in their journals after each visit to their service project site.

4. *Christian Service Project Paper (Due Friday, May 13th, 2010:*

This four to five page paper is the students' written reflection & analysis of what they did in their Christian Service project. As such, it has the following requirements in terms of content:

Part I - Description of the Service Project

What was the service work like? What tasks did you do? What were the "high points" and "low points?" Who did you work with and how well did you work with them? What do you feel was your special contribution of your talents or services?

Part II - Evaluation of the Service: Looking back on the People, the Work, and the Effects

What sacrifices did you make in order to complete this service project? What did you learn from those people you served? What did you learn about yourself during the project? If you didn't feel like you learned anything, what might have changed that experience? Did the others whom you tried to serve have a positive experience because of your efforts? Would you return to this agency again? Why or why not?

Part III - Serving for Justice: Analysis of injustices & insights from Catholic Social Teaching

Connect your experience to a major social justice theme/concept that we have discussed in this course so far. Analyze the structural elements behind the injustices you are working to remedy. Incorporate insights from the body of Catholic Social Teaching to help your analysis. For example: How does economic injustice or racial discrimination perpetuate the injustices you faced in your service? How did you encounter the effects of social sin? How would a Consistent Ethic of Life approach the suffering, disadvantage, or poverty you encountered?

Part IV - Christian Leadership: Making a Difference Now & in the Future

Connect your service with living your entire life as a Christian Leader. Reflecting on what you learned from your service experience, what can you change about your practices now in order to make a positive difference in your own life and in the lives of others? What can you do now to grow into your role as a Christian Leader & a Man for Others? With an eye towards your future occupation, what is God calling you to do to make a difference in the lives of those around you? How can you approach your potential vocation through the lens of social justice?