

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM
NOTRE DAME JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

As a Catholic Christian community, Notre Dame encourages all its members to live out in their own lives the teachings of Jesus Christ. As followers of the Gospel, we are called to act toward others as we would have them act toward ourselves. Even more, we are told by Jesus, by both word and example, to “do unto others as I have done to you.”

At the Last Supper, Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. The depth of this service becomes even more meaningful when considered in the context of the time. In this culture, it was customary, whenever people entered a home after walking the dusty roads barefoot or in sandals, to provide someone to wash and dry their feet. The task was usually entrusted to the lowest of the servants in the household. That Jesus chose to perform such a service as an example to us implies strongly that we, if we wish to be his followers, must place ourselves at the service of all those in need.

It is in this spirit that we inaugurate a community service requirement and program at Notre Dame. Almost all service done outside the family home, whether for Church, school, or the broader community can be used to fulfill the requirement. Students (especially 11th and 12 graders) are encouraged to move outside their everyday “comfort zone” in order to give service to those who are in greater need. A supplementary sheet will speak more specifically about policies, requirements and procedures.

While the most important rationale for asking students at Notre Dame to do (and validate) community service is that of helping the individual grow in the image of Christ, there are numerous other positive aspects to such a requirement. These include, but are certainly not limited to the following:

1. Such activities can provide positive enhancement for a resume, whether for college or a job.
2. Apart from a resume, experience gained in a volunteer setting will often help a person learn skills needed for other, paying, jobs.
3. Supervisors of volunteers can be excellent sources for recommendations.
4. Service hours are required for those applying to National Honor Society, as well as for those enrolled in the ROTC program.
5. Frequently, students discover a previously unrecognized talent for or an interest in a particular field due to a volunteer experience.

Questions regarding this program may be addressed to either Sr. Paula, who will be the program coordinator, or to Sr. Anna Mae. For those of you (students or parents) who want specific information about possible service opportunities, suggestions will be posted on the school web site, or you may contact Sr. Paula directly, preferably by email (pgallant@syrdiocese.org).

