

GUIDELINES FOR LIVING THE GOSPEL
SKUTT CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

"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. . . Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least of mine, you did it for me." Matthew 25:35-40

"Action on behalf of justice (is). . . a constitutive. . . dimension of the preaching of the Gospel" Justice in the World, Synod of Catholic Bishops, Rome 1971

Living the Gospel at Skutt Catholic High School is a program designed with the religious formation of the students in mind. The objective of the program is to encourage and guide the students to living out the message of Jesus Christ. As such it has a much more narrow focus than other programs which might be termed "community service" or "volunteerism."

Jesus' message and ministry centered around two main objectives:
bringing forth the kingdom of God and
reaching out to the poor, vulnerable and marginalized in society.

Accordingly, Living the Gospel takes the message of Jesus seriously and requires students to do projects that are directly related to these two objectives.

Many good works that people do are admirable and worthy, but do not focus on these two concerns. We expect Skutt Catholic students to help their families, friends and neighbors; to contribute to their community; to care for the environment and God's creatures. We expect that they will do this as a matter of course because they are generous, thoughtful citizens and contributing members of human society. However, these things do not bring into clear focus the particular issues of Jesus and the Gospel. As a result, some types of service that would be good and praiseworthy in a "community service" context will not meet the guidelines of Living the Gospel.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

In general students will receive credit for Living the Gospel hours if their service:

1. Is in direct support of (a) those marginalized by society, e.g. the poor, homeless, sick, disabled, unborn, abused or (b) building the kingdom of God, e.g. service to Skutt Catholic High School, parishes, churches. (Note: service in the school category, including SCHS, is limited to 20% of total hours).
2. Preferably involves working directly with people, rather than doing administrative or clerical tasks.
3. Encourages students to move outside their "comfort zone," where they will meet people they would not normally meet and do things that they would not normally do. Service for family/friends is not usually credited.
4. Is done in conjunction with established agencies or organizations to ensure student safety and effectiveness.
5. Students who do not satisfactorily complete their service requirements for the year will receive an F in service from their advisor. This will result in the assignment of new service hours equal to double the requirement for the year in which they failed and the loss of activities eligibility according to school policy. Details will be explained to students by their advisor.

REQUIRED HOURS: Grade 9 - 5 hours; Grade 10 - 10 hours; Grade 11 - 15 hours; Grade 12 - 20 hours.
SERVICE OF AT LEAST ONE HOUR IN TWO DIFFERENT CATEGORIES IS REQUIRED EACH YEAR. (E.g. Poor & Disabled; School & Homeless; Parish & Sick) No more than 20% of credit hours may be in the "school" category.

(over)

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

In order to eliminate misunderstandings and disappointments, some specific examples of service which meets or does not meet the guidelines is provided.

MEETS GUIDELINES

Serving dinner at homeless shelter
Visiting/playing games at nursing home
Working for Habitat for Humanity
Visiting patients at hospital
Delivering food for Operation Others
Volunteering at Ronald McDonald House
Assisting special needs kids to play sports
Collecting for the needy at church
Being a mentor for underprivileged youth

DOES NOT MEET GUIDELINES

Volunteering at Humane Society
Picking up trash
Working at a library
Visiting a sick relative
Shoveling snow for free
Baby-sitting for free for friend, neighbor, relative
Coaching or helping with sports team or clinic
Projects done for other requirements (Confirmation, Scouts, etc.)
Fundraisers for civic causes

No set of guidelines can speak to every possible situation and special circumstances can be considered on an individual basis. However students should seek prior approval from their advisor for any project which might be questionable. Seeking clarification or approval just before the deadline for submission of hours could result in negative consequences for the student. There are always appropriate service opportunities posted on the service bulletin board around the corner from the Campus Ministry/Theology office.

SOME IMPORTANT POINTS FOR THE 2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR:

1. Make sure the service form you are using is current. Old forms will not be accepted. Current service forms can be obtained from your advisor, from the Campus Ministry/Theology office, from the school office, from your Theology teacher, or on the school web site.
2. All service reports must be completely filled out and turned in within two weeks of the date of the service experience if you wish to gain credit. Forms turned in after this will not be accepted. See your advisor if you are doing service at regular intervals (e.g. every week at the same place). Service done over the summer will be accepted through September 1, 2011.
3. Your advisor may require pre-approval of service hours before you do them. Check with your advisor to see what the policy is for your group.
4. One half of your total service hours must be completed and turned in by November 15, 2011. If you are a senior, the second half of your service hours must be completed and turned in by March 1, 2012. If you are a freshman, sophomore or junior, the second half of your service hours must be completed and turned in by April 17, 2012. You have not completed your "Living the Gospel" service hours until the forms are completed, with proper comments and signatures, and turned in to your advisor.
5. Students are encouraged to turn in all service work that they do, credit and non-credit, even after the requirements have been met. Outstanding Christian Service awards are given to those students who significantly exceed the minimum requirements.
6. Students are encouraged to do "direct" service work, which involves direct interaction with disadvantaged people. Some advisors may require a minimum number of "direct" hours.
7. SCHS policy is that camps and service trips will be given a maximum of 8 hours per day credit.

I have read and understand the guidelines for "Living the Gospel" at Skutt Catholic High School.

Student signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date