

Discipleship and Service @ St. Agnes



Family Guide 2023-24

Christian Service or Discipleship is at the core of our Christian life. As disciples, we follow as Jesus leads. We follow by staying in communication with Him (prayer) and acting as He did (in service and compassion). Time and again we see Jesus reaching out to feed the hungry, heal the sick, forgive and teach. He tells us directly that we should go and do the same as we love our neighbors and enemies. In the Gospel of Matthew (25:31-45) we find instruction on just how to serve others and in doing so, we serve God. Our Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy come from this parable.

In the past, we have focused on the Corporal Works of Mercy, but that limited our efforts to direct service, donations, and physical work. There are so many ways to be a Disciple of Jesus! Using the Corporal **and Spiritual** Works of Mercy to guide your service will give you some creative ideas about how to do a discipleship or service project. Time in prayer, or study, or advocating for others is as valuable as directly serving physical needs. Consider that you can serve others and God in these many ways:

THE WORKS OF MERCY	
CORPORAL	& SPIRITUAL
FEED THE HUNGRY 	 INSTRUCT THE IGNORANT
GIVE DRINK TO THE THIRSTY 	 COUNSEL THE DOUBTFUL
SHELTER THE HOMELESS 	 ADMONISH SINNERS
CLOTHE THE NAKED 	 FORGIVE OFFENSES
VISIT THE SICK 	 COMFORT THE AFFLICTED
VISIT THE IMPRISONED 	 BEAR WRONGS PATIENTLY
BURY THE DEAD 	 PRAY FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD
"A BIT OF MERCY MAKES THE WORLD LESS COLD AND MORE JUST" (POPE FRANCIS)  CatholicLink	

There are several requirements for service in the various formation programs at St. Agnes:

- School families are required to complete 20 hours of service annually
- Each school student has an individual service requirement:
 - Grade 1-2: 5 hours
 - Grade 3-4: 10 hours
 - Grade 5-6: 15 hours
 - Grade 7-8: 20 hours
- Each class at St. Agnes School is required to complete a class project
- Confirmation and First Eucharist candidates are required to do a Discipleship Project (no hour count) after celebrating the sacraments
- Family Formation participants are asked to do service as a family
- Youth small groups in the formation program may do service together
- And...we are called by our Baptism to spread the Gospel with words and actions!

Many of these requirements can overlap. For instance, a 3rd grader's family hours can also be counted for Confirmation Discipleship. Or, the classroom project can count for the individual student hours. There are separate reporting forms for each of these (see attached) but they can be the same hours/project.

With the expanded list of works, you can now be very creative and intentional about your service. Here are some suggestions but think outside the box and come up with your own projects too!

Spiritual Works of Mercy Ideas

- **Eucharistic Adoration**
 - Tuesdays 2:30-3:30pm **Covers all the Spiritual Works of Mercy** as you pray for others, for forgiveness, for understanding or just spend time with Jesus.
- **Family Formation Sessions**
 - 3rd Sunday of each month, for all families to learn and pray together Oct. 15, Nov. 20, Dec 18, Jan 22, Feb. 19, Mar. 19, Apr. 16 Sign ups will go out before the event dates.
 - 1 hour per participant
 - **Instruction, Counsel, Pray-Spiritual Works of Mercy**
- **Spend the day with your family!** No tech or media. Go hiking, go to a museum, go on a picnic. Talk, laugh, play. Take some Sabbath time. Spend some dedicated time with no other distractions, sports, work, school or stress. **Bear Wrongs and Forgive**

- **Bring Eucharist to the Homebound or Assisted Living**
 - Families can do this together as long as an adult is a Eucharistic Minister
 - You can be a regular minister for one person or go to a facility periodically
 - **Visit the Sick or Imprisoned, Pray for the Living, Counsel the Doubtful**
 - Contact the Faith Formation Office for information.
- **Go to Reconciliation**
 - **Forgive Offences, Bear Wrongs Patiently**
 - Confession is available every Saturday from 3-4pm or by appointment and during Advent and Lent Prayer Services
- **Pray the Scriptures as a Family**
 - Use the Sunday readings to talk about what Jesus is speaking to you
 - **Instruction, Counsel, Bearing Wrongs**
 - When you report your time, give a quick summary of the scripture/date/time
- **Visit a cemetery and pray for those who have died, clean up a little**
 - **Pray for the Dead**
 - Take pictures or gravestone rubbings and learn a little about those lives when you report your time

Corporal Works of Mercy Ideas

Finding locations and times to do direct service can be challenging. What can the youngest disciples do? Where can we go to serve people and not just donate? What will have meaning for us and for those whom we serve?

It is always good to find a way to actually see the people you are serving and to get to know them a little. And, it is always best to ask what the real needs are in order to way to make an impact. For instance:

- buying 10 cans of corn on sale for \$1.00 and dropping them off at the pantry is great. But donating \$1.00 can allow the food pantry to purchase several pounds of food and get the types of food they really need at that time
- Donating old clothes helps, but a bigger need is linens and towels and baby items like diapers, crib linens etc.
- Praying at Adoration may seem dull but you are being changed while you are there and so are the people you are praying for; maybe people you will never get to meet.

The Two Feet of Love in Action

Keep in mind that direct service to meet a present need is only half of the equation of Christian Service. Advocacy, education, and work to improve the root causes of injustice are important too! Time spent advocating for or learning about an issue counts as discipleship!

The Two Feet of Love *in Action*

"The conscience is called by this social teaching to recognize and fulfill the obligations of **justice** and **charity** in society."

—Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 83

"Social justice. . . concerns the social, political, and economic aspects and, above all, the structural dimension of problems and their respective solutions."

—Compendium, no. 201

"To [those who lack what they need to live a dignified life] are proclaimed glad tidings that God loves them...and comes to visit them through the **charitable works** that the disciples of Christ do in his name... As we can read in Matthew 25, we shall all be judged on this."

—Pope Francis, Address to Pastoral Convention, 6/17/13



Local Agencies, Resources and Contacts

Animal Protective League: food, pet supplies, donations, older kids may be able to walk dogs or play with kittens with proper training. They will also do educational programs 217-544-7387 www.apl-shelter.org

Martin DePorres Center: food or clothing donations, needs linens and towels, anyone can volunteer to sort food and clothing for distribution. 217-299-7921 Donations received T, W, TH, Sat 8-11. Work to sort on Wed. Thur. or Sat 9-11 call to schedule times

St. Johns' Breadline: Help with prepping and serving food and working in dining area. Age requirement limits to Jr High through Adult 217-528-6098

Ronald Mc Donald House: guest chef program-sign up to cook a meal for families staying at RMD House any day. <https://www.rmhc-centralillinois.org/> 217-528-3314

Any nursing facility or residence would be happy to have a family lead games or crafts or just visit.

Hickory Glen and the Dominican Sisters of Springfield and Lewis Memorial Village have special relationships with St. Agnes. Covid restrictions may apply. Call for information: Hickory Glen: 217-793-0431 Dominican Sisters 217-787-0481 Lewis Memorial 217-610-8281 Regency Care: 217-793-4880

Helping Hands of Springfield: provide a meal for overnight residents or donate new items for news housing and men's clothing and toiletries 217-522-0048 <https://www.helpinghandsofspringfield.org/>

Habitat for Humanity/Restore: Work on a house, work in the restore or donate 217-523-2710 (age and ability requirements)

Jubilee Farm-Dominican Sisters Eco-Spirituality and Retreat Center. West of Springfield near New Berlin. Help plant, weed or tend the gardens or spend some time in prayer or on a hike as a family. Covers lots of Spiritual Works or Care for Creation <https://jubileefarm.info/> 217-787-6927

Food Pantries for donating or working at: Holy Family Food Pantry (11th Street) 217-523-2450 , Kumler Outreach Ministries Food Pantry (N. Grand Ave) 217-523-2269

Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach: sort donated supplies and prepare shipments to mission locations. Reserve a time and sign waivers at: <https://mission-outreach.org/>

Tutoring, Serving Youth and Children, Mentoring:

- Girl Scouts of Central Illinois www.getyourgirlpower.org
- Abraham Lincoln Boy Scout Council <https://www.alincolnbsa.org/>
- Boys and Girls Club of Springfield <https://bgccil.org/>
- Compass for Kids afterschool and summer programs <https://www.compass4kids.org/>

Around St Agnes: (not exhaustive list)

- Super Service Saturday
- Sell Scrip after Masses on weekends
- Help care for the Butterfly Garden
- Fill the Micro-Pantry
- Liturgical Ministries: Choir, Eucharistic Ministry, Lectors, Greeters, Altar Servers, Videographers
- RCIA or Family Formation Team
- Sport coaching
- Parent's Club
- Classroom volunteering
- Playground or Cafeteria Aides
- Parish Office assistance
- Heavenly Dusters church cleaning crews
- Sacrament Retreat team

Global Organizations

CRS (Catholic Relief Services) the global agency run by the United States Catholic Church to meet needs across the world. Lots of educational information and ways to become advocates and fund projects. www.crs.org

Heifer International global agriculture, microloans, and education. Sponsor projects and animals for subsistence farming www.heifer.org

FORMS CAN BE FOUND AT: <https://stagnescatholicparish.org/family-and-student-service-programs>



St. Agnes School

Student Service Commitment Form



Last Name of Student: _____ First Name of Student: _____

Grade _____ Quarter (Circle): 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Year: _____

Place: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____ Hours Worked: ____

Description of Service: _____

Category (Check One)

Family: _____ Parish: _____

School: _____ Community: _____

Student Reflection: _____

Verified by: _____

Contact Phone #: _____

Accepted: ____ Recorded: ____

Place: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____ Hours Worked: ____

Description of Service: _____

Category (Check One)

Family: _____ Parish: _____

School: _____ Community: _____

Student Reflection: _____

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