

Works of Mercy Hours

Guidelines for grades 6th – Confirmation

The Sacrament of Confirmation “strengthens the baptized and obliges one to witness to Christ more fully in word and deed.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church 1285*) The mission of the Catholic Church is to serve others by living a life in Christ, proclaiming the Gospel message, and modeling His life of service to others.

for just as a body without a spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead (James 2:26)

The goal of requiring the youth to obtain a certain number of Works of Mercy Hours for Confirmation is to reinforce our responsibility of taking care of those in need and to create a heart that views service as an opportunity for us to share of our time and talents for the benefit of others.

As Catholics we are called to serve others through Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, and the main focus at STFX for Confirmation will be on the Corporal Works of Mercy (CWM). However, Spiritual Works of Mercy (SWM) will also be considered. For example: The SWM of Praying for the living and the dead would be fulfilled by praying at an Abortion clinic. Helping at VBS or Totus Tuus would fulfill the SWM of Instructing the uninformed.

Corporal works of Mercy

Feed the hungry
Give drink to the thirsty
Shelter the homeless
Clothe the naked
Visit the sick
*Visit the imprisoned
*Bury the dead

*Note: The CWM of Visiting the imprisoned and Burying the dead may be more difficult and possibly inappropriate for the youth considering their age. However, there are people that are “imprisoned” in ways other than in a jail that may fall under this work of mercy.

The criteria for the Works of Mercy Hours are as follows:

Requirements:

A minimum of 30 hours of service before Confirmation, with at least 10 hours completed per year starting in 6th grade and continuing through to Confirmation.

The goal is to have the youth establish a habit of service over the 3 years.

Upon completion of service hours the candidates will need to complete a Works of Mercy Summary Form, which can be found in the Parish Office or online. Completed forms can be sent via e-mail or returned to the parish office for documentation.

FAQ's:

Why are they required to do Works of Mercy instead of any type of service hours?

In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus is clear about how we are to serve each other. In focusing on the Works of Mercy, we raise the bar and challenge the youth to look beyond themselves and see the needs of others first. By requiring a more focused type of service, the hope is to change the mindset of "just get the hours done" to fulfill a requirement for Confirmation. Also to help promote a spirit of gratitude for what they have and what they have been given.

Why should a student document and submit service hours once they fulfill the 30 hours requirement?

STFX will keep track of the total Confirmation service hours for the youth; this is helpful when they are applying for college grants and scholarships, the KOC scholarship, loan applications, future jobs or Ministry organizations, etc.

Can I still turn in the hours of volunteering that don't count for Confirmation?

Yes, STFX will keep track of ALL service and volunteer hours that the youth has done and handed in. However, there will be two totals. One total for all volunteer hours and one total for just the hours that count towards Confirmation.

How do I know if a certain activity will count towards Confirmation Service hours?

To qualify:

Does it fall under the Corporal (or Spiritual) Works of Mercy?

Is it on the list of already approved services listed below?

A good question to ask yourself is, what is the NEED that I am serving? Poverty, Elderly, Disabled, etc...

What are the approved services?

The approved services listed below is not a complete list so if you have questions please contact the Director of Youth Formation and Ministry to verify if the service project will be considered towards Confirmation.

List of approved services (not a complete list)

Mission Trip	Helping with the handicapped
Love INC (non-fundraising activities)	Helping at a clothing drive
Meals on Wheels	Adopt – A – Grandparent
Feed my Starving Children	Christmas Caroling at a hospital or Nursing Home
Praying at an Abortion Clinic	Operation Shoebox or Hospital kits
Helping at the Food Shelf	Faith in Action
Putting together B-day boxes	Life Chain
Thanksgiving Day baskets	Help at VBS or Totus Tuus
Visiting a Nursing Home	

"Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' (Matthew 25:34-36)"