



**SAINT THOMAS REGIONAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

# **Christian Service Program Manual 2017-2018**

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## The Purpose of Christian Service Hours

Indeed, the Lord Jesus, when He prayed to the Father, “*that all may be one, as we are one*” (John 17:21-22) opened up vistas closed to human reason, for He implied a certain likeness between the union of the divine Persons, and the unity of God’s sons in truth and charity. **This likeness reveals that man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself.** (Gaudium et Spes, 24.)

The purpose of the service program at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School is to introduce our students to a deeper appreciation for the dignity of the human person and to develop the skills necessary to authentically care for others in their community. The Church teaches us that we cannot come to understand our own true dignity and worth, except through a sincere gift of ourselves. Through the concrete experience of generous service to others, our students grow in their own sense of self-worth and responsibility for the world around them.

This sincere gift of self that the Church calls us to is a gift of love that demands honesty, integrity, and committed effort. Through service our students learn to be attentive to the real needs of others and to develop the skills necessary to respond adequately. These skills include the ability to plan and manage time effectively, to work diligently and cheerfully with others toward a common end, and to remain accountable for the commitments they make. It is to this end that we require every student to participate in the service program. It is our student’s responsibility to:

- to make time in their often busy and complex schedules for service,
- to seek out suitable service opportunities that make good use of their own unique set of gifts and talents,
- to secure any necessary pre-approvals for service projects and to follow through with their commitments until completion, including turning in all necessary documentation of service on time.

### 2017-18 DATES TO REMEMBER

Parent/Student Responsibility Form due <i>(students will receive form 1st week of class)</i>	Friday, August 18th
Senior Day of Reflection	Friday, August 25th
Freshman Retreat	Friday, September 15th
Senior Class Service Project Day	Thursday, October 5th
Sophomore Retreat	Friday, November 10th
Junior Retreat	Friday, March 2nd
Senior Retreat	Monday, April 23rd & Tuesday, April 24th

### GRADE LEVEL BEAUTIFICATION DAYS

Seniors	Sunday, August 20th
Juniors	Sunday, November 5th
Sophomores	Sunday, January 28th
Freshmen	Sunday, March 25th

**All the above Campus Ministry events are MANDATORY. The consequence for missing an event will be completing a Saturday service day (6 hrs) with the Campus Ministry Department. A student will receive an “I” as a Theology grade until the student has attended the service day. Please be mindful of the above dates when planning any appointments, trips, etc. as this will not be accepted as an excused absence.**

## Steps for Completion of Required Service Hours

1. Student and parent/guardian read through the *Service Hour Manual* (posted on school website) together, and both sign the *Responsibility Form* (students will receive form 1<sup>st</sup> week of school) and turn it in to their Theology teacher by **August 18th**.

2. All students are required to complete a total of FIFTEEN (15) service hours by the end of the third quarter. Students will also be required to attend a “grade-level Beautification Day.” These dates can be found on page 3. If for some reason a student is unable to attend their class’s Beautification Day, they will be required to complete an additional 5 hours of service which will also be due at the end of the quarter in which the appropriate Beautification Day is held. **Any student who cannot attend their grade-level Beautification Day due to a conflict with another STA event will be allowed to attend another grade-level’s Beautification Day.** The point value for completion of both the service hours and the Beautification day will be 200 points: 150 points for the completed hours and 50 points for attending and participating in the class Beautification Day. During the 4th quarter of school, the students will be required to complete both a 500-word essay and a keynote presentation about their service experience. The essay and presentation will be worth another 100 points. Students who fail to complete the required hours will receive a “0” for the third quarter. Students who fail to complete the total hours for the year cannot pass the course until the hours are completed. The incomplete hours are to be completed with the Campus Ministry Department. If hours are not completed, the student will not pass the course.

**If a senior has not completed their hours at the end of the academic year, they will receive an "I" in Theology and must attend school between the end of exams and Graduation until the hours are complete.**

3. Choose one or more agencies from the approved list (page 7) and contact them personally to set up volunteer times and places.

a. It is highly recommended that all service hours are completed with only one or two agencies.

b. Transportation is the responsibility of the legal parent/guardian. Students should ensure they have appropriate transportation when they are setting up service hours.

c. All service hours must be completed with a **non-profit** organization. Babysitting for free, picking up trash, or doing yard work for a neighbor, etc is not accepted. If the student wishes to volunteer through an organization other than the ones listed in this packet, he/she must submit a request to the Campus Ministry office for approval. This must be done before the service work begins.

4. Often organizations, including St. Thomas Aquinas organizations, contact us requesting students to assist with service opportunities. You can learn about and sign up for current service opportunities in one of three ways: via RenWeb email, a sign-up board located by the Campus Ministry office, or through daily announcements.

5. Students are to remember that they are representatives of Saint Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School when providing service to the community. Students should always behave in a professional and courteous manner.

a. Call agencies and set up an appointed time for service BEFORE showing up. This allows them time to prepare for your arrival.

b. Show up on time and appropriately dressed for the work you will be doing.

c. Work cooperatively and cheerfully with those who are supervising you and with those with whom you are working.

d. When you have completed your service, thank your supervisors for the opportunity to serve and be sure to get them to sign a Service Hour form to be turned in to your religion teacher.

6. Students are responsible for turning in the necessary documentation to their Theology teacher and keeping track of their accumulated hours.

a. Document your hours. A representative from the agency you are working with must complete a Service Hour Form (*posted on school website*) that documents the dates, times, and description of the service you performed, along with the name and contact information of that representative. **A parent MAY NOT sign as the representative. Your instructors must be able to verify your service in order to receive credit.**

b. Submit the Service Hour Form to your Theology teacher as soon as you have completed your hours. No electronic submission of forms will be accepted until further notice. **Service hour forms will not be accepted if all information is not completed.**

7. The total point value for completed service hours is 150 points: 10 points per hour. For every hour a student is short, 10 points will be deducted. If no hours are submitted, a student will receive a "0" and is still required to complete their hours. If a student completes and submits hours to their Theology teacher **PRIOR TO** the time their essay and keynote presentation are due, they will earn a 60% F instead of the "0" for the service hour grade. The essay and keynote presentation will be worth an additional 100 points. Parents of students who have incomplete hours will be notified at the beginning of the fourth quarter.

8. The Saint Thomas Aquinas Campus Ministry Department will recognize students who have shown exemplary commitment to service. We ask that once a student has completed the required service hours that they continue to record all hours volunteered on a Service Hour Form.

## Summer Hours

Students may complete hours over the summer and apply them to the required service hours during the year. Students who complete hours over the summer may apply FIVE of those hours to the 15 total. TEN hours must be completed between August and the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. All forms should still be turned into your Theology teacher. We recommend you keep a copy of all turned in forms.

### List of Approved Agencies Non-profit Organizations

If you want to volunteer through an organization other than the ones listed below, you must submit a written request to the Campus Ministry office. A written approval will be sent to the student which must be secured prior to beginning service. You may not receive any monetary payment for any service performed. Note: Do not just “drop in” at the approved sites. You should always make contact and arrange a schedule prior to showing up. NO work may be done for an individual.

Category	Organization/Contact Information
Church/Parish	Contact the pastor or secretary of your church or parish.
School	School Beautification Day See Campus Ministry Office for dates
Community	Habitat for Humanity 542-6866
	St. Vincent DePaul 542-8900
	Tangi Food Pantry 429-8551
	Options, Inc 345-6269
	TARC 345-8811
	Louisiana Special Olympics 345-6644

	Area Nursing Homes (service must be direct contact with residents) – <b>No hours are allowed for baking cookies,etc</b>
	American Red Cross 542-3469
	CASA Services, Inc 902-9583
	Area Schools (not STA) – assisting teachers setting up classrooms, janitorial work, etc. – <b>Only principals or vice principals are allowed to sign service hour form</b>
	The Habitat for Humanity Shop 543-0216
	The Habitat for Humanity Restore 419-0256

Help us build up our service program at STA! To suggest a local organization to be included on our list of approved agencies, please contact the Campus Ministry office or send an e-mail [cole.catalano@stafalcons.org](mailto:cole.catalano@stafalcons.org) or to [jessica.lee@stafalcons.org](mailto:jessica.lee@stafalcons.org).

## Parent/Student Responsibility Sheet

**Parents and Students,**

**Please read this responsibility sheet, check each of the following boxes, sign and return to your Theology teacher.**

We (parent/guardian and student) agree to all guidelines and requirements of the Christian Service Manual.

We understand that the purpose of the Saint Thomas Aquinas Christian Service Program is to provide for the kinds of powerful interpersonal experiences that can change the hearts of our students and teach them to readily see the dignity of every human person.

We understand that it is primarily the student's responsibility to make sure that the required "documentation" for each service activity is submitted to the student's Theology teacher by the assigned due date.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student (Signature)

**THIS RESPONSIBILITY SHEET IS TO BE TURNED IN TO THE STUDENT'S THEOLOGY TEACHER BY Friday August 18th.**