

St. Aloysius Parish Confirmation Preparation Service Information

Confirmation candidates are still learning about their faith and learning how to live it. Our service requirement is constructed with a variety of types of service so that the candidates can be exposed to the various ways Catholic Christians are called to serve God and others. In particular, through the specified types of service, it is hoped that our Confirmation Candidates learn firsthand that a Church is built out of the “living stones” of its people. A student does NOT do service in order to “earn” Confirmation

Confirmation candidates are asked to log their service in order to demonstrate their understanding of the role of Christ-like service as an aspect of Christian life.

A minimum of ten (10) hours per year of service toward others, including service to our Parish/Diocese and exposure to places and things that make us uniquely Catholic is a requirement of the Confirmation Preparation Program. You should include the following components:

Parish or Diocesan Activity:	Minimum of 4 hours
Corporal Works of Mercy:	Minimum of 2 hours
Spiritual Works of Mercy:	Minimum of 2 hours

(Does not add to ten – Last 2 hours may be any service outside of the above categories)

Corporal Works of Mercy – An act of loving service that is concerned with the material and physical needs of others: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, help the imprisoned, shelter the homeless, care for the sick, bury the dead. In the past we have served through the Love Your Neighbor Food Drive, Feed my Starving Children food packing, serving meals at the New Covenant House Soup Kitchen, making Christmas and Easter gifts for shut ins, work at the New Canaan Food Bank, making pack lunches/breakfasts or sorting clothes for the midnight run and helping with the Star Ship Boxes.

Spiritual Works of Mercy – An act of loving service that is concerned with the needs of the heart, mind and soul of others: instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, comfort the sorrowful, admonish the sinner, bear wrongs patiently, forgive all injuries, and pray for the living and the dead. Past examples are attending special prayer services such as Taize, All Souls Service, Stations of the Cross, sitting with Jesus in prayer at Eucharistic Adoration, praying at gravesites, Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday, and attending non-obligatory Masses such as the Chrism Mass, Ash Wednesday Mass, Holy Thursday Mass, Funeral Masses, praying the rosary for a special intention.

Parish or Diocesan activities - Altar service, singing in the parish choir, assisting at Religious Ed. Classes and helping with parish events are all examples of Parish/Diocesan service. In the past we have also helped set up for functions, participate in the Living Nativity, Project 1000, prepared items for feast day celebrations, and helped collect or distribute things at the doors of the church for various ministries.

FAQ - The Service Component of Confirmation Preparation

What is the role of the parent/guardian in the Service Obligation?

Parents and guardians are our students’ first formers of faith. Their role is absolutely vital in communicating the importance of living as witnesses to our faith. Ideally, parents and guardians are inviting their children to work side-by-side with them when serving God through service to neighbor.

Parents/guardians need to keep adequate free time in the adolescent’s schedule so that he/she is able to willingly perform service. Most middle schoolers may need help keeping the service log record. Also, since the service opportunities will be made available through the parents, the administrative role of scheduling and logging service is an important way that parents and guardians support their child’s good efforts.

Finally, at no time should the parent or guardian perform the service for the child. Example: If your child is signed up to provide brownies to a parish function, they must bake them or you can bake them together. If they are purchased or baked solely by someone else that is not service.

FAQ - The Service Component of Confirmation Preparation cont.

How will I know of Parish or Diocesan service opportunities?

Our Diocese has a website, <http://bridgeportdiocese.com/thebridge> which lists many opportunities. In our parish we use, <http://www.signupgenius.com>. Go to SUG and click on “find a sign up”, enter this email: confirmation@starcc.com and you will find the most current volunteer opportunities for your children. Additionally, Chris Otis, Director of Youth & Family Services for St. Aloysius sometimes requests help from the 8th graders on certain projects.

Do you keep records of our service?

The Confirmation Coordinator keeps detailed records of the Level 1 and Level 2 service logs. We total up all of the hours and present the total of the hours to the Bishop at the Confirmation Mass.

Can our family volunteer together?

Here are some organizations, some Catholic, some not, that you can contact to see if you and your child(ren) can serve together:

- Catholic Charities: <http://www.ccfairfield.org/volunteer/>
- St. Joseph Parenting Center in Stamford: <http://www.sjpcenter.org/getinvolvedsjpc.html>
- Person to Person: <http://p2phelps.org/welcome-to-the-p2p-volunteer-portal/>
- Al's Angels (big events a couple of times a year): http://www.alsangels.org/how_to_help/
- Waveny Care Center: <http://www.waveny.org/support-or-join-us/volunteer-at-waveny.html>
- St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank: (203) 866-1644

How much time should I record on my service log?

Generally your child should record the actual time the service takes. Here are a couple of exceptions:

- Service is never paid – in money or in gifts!
- Attendance of Sunday Mass (or Holy Day of Obligation), on its own is never service. Greeting at the doorway or similar activities are 30 minutes of service.
- When making baked goods, students should take no more than one hour of service.
- Service time is never given for “donation” of items. If students spend time going through their clothing to donate to an agency (such Mother Theresa’s Closet – in our parking lot) that time spent is service.
- Service time will not be given for watching videos or movies. Service should be active!
- Service does not need to be for an “organization”. Shoveling an elderly neighbor’s driveway or babysitting for a neighbor’s children is service (as long as it is not paid).

Do Works of Mercy requirements need to be fulfilled at our Parish?

No, Corporal or Spiritual works of Mercy do not need to be performed here at St. Aloysius. Works of Mercy can be performed anywhere! In addition you may “double count” them if they are part of Parish service. Example, volunteering at the Love My Neighbor Food Drive is Parish service as well as a Corporal Work of Mercy. Overall you still need 10 hours but that service activity can count towards fulfilling both of those categories of service. Please review the document “[Practical Suggestions for Practicing the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy](#)” by Joe Paprocki, DMin for suggestions. You may need to help your child adapt some of these ideas as this document was written for Catechist not middle school students.

How does my child record their service?

Your child should have a log. They should complete the log themselves. Additional logs they may be downloaded from our parish website’s Religious Education page. They should answer the questions about that particular service that they have just completed as best they can.

For further information, about Confirmation Service, contact your child’s catechist or Mary Karen Keneally, Confirmation Coordinator at confirmation@starcc.com or 203-652-1173