

September 6, 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The philosophy of Christian service at Notre Dame has always been to give priority to those who are hurting and suffering in our community and throughout the world.

The Sermon on the Mount and our Christian faith both speak clearly about our responsibility to those in need. Mt 25:46: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of who are members of my family, you did it to me."

Christian service obtains its defining qualities and inspiration from both the Old and the New Testament. It is clear from these sources that service is directed towards those who are less fortunate. At Notre Dame this is our focal point and mandate, and has been for almost 70 years.

The Ministry of Education requires each student to complete a minimum of 40 hours of community service in order to graduate. At Notre Dame, this community service requirement is tracked through Religion classes. Students are asked to complete 10 hours of Christian community service as part of each Religion course they take. Therefore, your child has the opportunity to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Education through the Religion program. As part of the Religion curriculum, we emphasize that the hours they complete during their Religion classes focus on helping individuals who are hurting and suffering in our world as indicated in Matthew's gospel passage. Each Religion course has a unique reflective/analytical assignment based on the service students have performed.

We do encourage students to make service work a part of their daily life, so it is understood that your child may have completed / will complete additional community service hours outside of their Religion course. In order to apply these additional hours to your child's transcript, they must complete an **Additional Community Service Hours** form with a supervisor's signature or letter attached. Information regarding acceptable placements, as well as the Niagara Catholic District School Board's Christian Service policy can be found in the student handbook.

Sincerely,

Carol Berkhout  
Religion Program Chair