



## **Living the Faith Guidelines**

Revised August 1, 2009 and in accord with the Student Handbook

### **1. What is the purpose of *LIVING THE FAITH*?**

The Church has always understood that what she believes is expressed not only in the way she prays but also in the way her members live. Therefore, every student at The High School of St. Thomas More is expected to demonstrate that they have not only *learned* the truths of the faith, but have also *lived* up to its demands. *LIVING THE FAITH* is one way in which this latter objective is measured.

### **2. What exactly is expected of the student?**

Before one can be eligible to graduate, each student must demonstrate a living faith by documenting 150 hours of service (20 hours as a Freshman, 30 hours as a Sophomore, and 50 hours as both a Junior and a Senior). The ultimate purpose of these hours of service is to help the student realize that one's faith ought not to be confined to the church or chapel but should permeate every aspect of one's life such that faith becomes the guiding principle of every action.

### **3. How are these hours to be documented?**

#### **1. First, a project must be chosen.**

Fundamentally, the project should incorporate one or more of the works of mercy delineated below.

#### **2. Second, the student must formally propose the project to the chaplain for approval. [See "#1"]**

The "*LIVING THE FAITH* Proposal" is to be submitted to the high school chaplain before work is to begin. It *must* be signed by the student, parent or guardian, and the project supervisor before approval can be granted.

#### **3. Third, hours must be documented. [See "#2"]**

As service is fulfilled and hours are accumulated, this information must be documented using the "*LIVING THE FAITH* Timesheet." The project supervisor must sign off on these hours and confirm their fulfillment. Hours should be submitted to the chaplain once a semester so that they can be documented on the student's report card. In addition, the student is advised to keep a photo copy for his or her own records.

#### **4. Fourth, the project supervisor must verify that service has been completed. [See "#4"]**

At the completion of the project, the project supervisor must submit the "*LIVING THE FAITH* Verification Form" directly to the chaplain. The student is not to hand this form in. If the supervisor was not satisfied with the student's service, some or all of the hours may not be accepted. No credit will be given until the "*LIVING THE FAITH* Verification Form" has been received by the chaplain.

#### **5. Fifth, the student must evaluate his or her experience. [See "#3"]**

In order to help the student realize the impact of his or her service, a self-evaluation is to be completed. No credit will be given until the "*LIVING THE FAITH* Student Evaluation" has been submitted to the chaplain



**4. What are some criteria for a good service project?**

1. It incorporates one or more of the corporal or spiritual works of mercy:

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (n. 2447) teaches:

“The *works of mercy* are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. . . Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God.”

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are:

- To counsel the doubtful;
- To instruct the ignorant;
- To admonish sinners;
- To comfort the sorrowful;
- To bear wrongs patiently;
- To forgive injuries;
- To bear wrongs patiently;
- To pray for the living and the dead.

The Corporal Works of Mercy are:

- To feed the hungry;
- To give drink to the thirsty;
- To clothe the naked;
- To shelter the homeless;
- To welcome the stranger;
- To visit the sick and imprisoned;
- To bury the dead.

2. It can be understood as furthering Jesus’ mission (i.e., his message and ministry).
3. It brings the student into direct personal service of another person or persons.
4. It provides an educational experience for the participating student that will challenge the student beyond what is known and comfortable.
5. It can be easily verified by a supervisor and thoroughly evaluated by the student
6. It is well supervised.
7. It leaves the student with the knowledge that another person’s life has been enhanced due to his or her selfless generosity.

**5. What are some other things to note?**

1. The project cannot provide material compensation of any kind to the student (e.g., one cannot be paid for service) nor can projects be done for a family member.
2. All things being equal, a project which has a commitment of at least one year is to be preferred to a project which lasts only a short time. A project with a four year commitment is even more laudable. However, regardless of length, a new contract **[See “#1] must be submitted by the student at the beginning of each academic year.**
3. Projects, as long as they have received the chaplain’s approval, may be worked on at any time, even during the summer.



### Living the Faith Proposal

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Class of 20 \_\_\_\_\_ Project Dates: from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer each question thoroughly!**

Describe your project – what will you be doing on a day to day basis. Be specific.

How will this project connect with a Corporal or Spiritual Work of Mercy?

**Liability Disclaimer**

All signatories to this Proposal understand that the completion of *Living the Faith* is a requirement for graduation from The High School of Saint Thomas More. They understand that participation in acceptable projects is at the discretion of the student and parents, and that The High School of Saint Thomas More assumes no responsibility for accident or injury involving the student or others while participating in a project outside of school hours and not supervised by school personnel. They understand the risks that such participation presents to the student, including but not limited to serious personal injury or death. Any questions the signatories have concerning the program have been answered. In consideration for the student being allowed to participate in this program, they **hereby release and agree to indemnify and hold harmless** the Diocese of Peoria, The High School of Saint Thomas More and their employees and agents, and volunteers assisting the school, from any and all liability for injuries, damages, medical expenses, or any other loss to the student or student's family (including attorney's fees) arising from or related to the student's participation in this program. We understand that the supervisor of this project will keep an accurate record of the student's hours and will, at the completion of the project, evaluate the student's performance.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Date Project Supervisor Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Date Chaplain Date





## Living the Faith Student Evaluation

This evaluation form is to be completed by the student and his/her parents upon completion of each service project. Student and parents should reflect together on the following questions. Other comments about the project or the *Living the Faith* service program should be included on the back.

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Class of 20 \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Explain why you chose this project

What did you learn from this project (about others, yourself, God, Church)?

What was the best aspect of this project? The most challenging? Explain.

Please evaluate the *Living the Faith* program, strengths and weaknesses.

