

## Office of Franciscan Spirit and Life

St. Francis High School is dedicated to ensuring that the values taught by St. Francis to his brothers, steeped in the virtues taught by Jesus Christ to his disciples, are incorporated in everything that we do. This dedication is upheld through the Office of Franciscan Spirit and Life. Here you will find everything spiritual that we do at St. Francis, including ministry, retreats, service to the community, outreach programs for the needy, in-class prayer resources, team service projects, and Franciscan application for all aspects of the school. It is our hope that these efforts provide a starting point for the Franciscan values that our school is built upon.

The Franciscan Spirit and Life Program was developed in response to the question: “What makes St. Francis High School different from other high schools in the area?” The answer to this question is unique for each child that attends this institution. It is the hope of the school that each students’ answer to this question will provide an avenue to connect him to our Founding Father, St. Francis of Assisi. And that through St. Francis, each student will come to a deeper understanding of the love of Christ Jesus.

The Franciscan Spirit and Life Program provides several ways learn about Francis, Clare, and their followers. These include the Pilgrimage to Assisi, and the exposure to the 16 core Franciscan virtues. These virtues include: 1) Compassion 2) Prayer 3) Peace & Justice 4) Simplicity 5) Integrity 6) Humility 7) Brotherhood 8) Joy 9) Acceptance 10) Service 11) Generosity 12) Peacemaking 13) Faithfulness 14) Hospitality 15) Charity 16) Goodness. Each quarter of attendance at St. Francis High School is highlighted with the integration of one of these virtues into the curriculum of the school.

## Service Hours

St. Francis and St. Clare truly understood what Jesus meant when he washed his Apostles feet at the last supper. They both put those words into action by serving those who were marginalized in Assisi and the surrounding areas. St. Francis reached out to the lepers, he preached the Gospel with inspired words to those who had not heard, and he rebuilt the church by building community and reevaluating our relationship with nature. He did all of this without ever worrying about how his life of humility would take care of his living expenses. St. Clare left her life of privilege to become the founder of a group of dedicated religious women who would take care of the sick and teach those who wanted to learn about St. Francis and Jesus Christ. It was through these efforts that these two influential Saints were able to bring so many thousands of people to Christ. The Gospel of Salvation should elicit from each Christian a response to God’s love. Jesus taught, and St. Francis and St. Clare reiterated, that an appropriate response to the Gospel is rooted in performing the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, as well as works toward social justice. (Matthew 25:31)

In addition to the academic requirements for graduation, each student is required to complete a designated number of community service hours during each of his four years at St. Francis. These are as follows:

- Freshman – 10 hours
- Sophomore – 20 hours

- Juniors – 30 hours
- Seniors – 40 hours

Service hours are to be completed by the dates listed on the calendar. It is intended that KAIROS weeks be utilized by Seniors to complete their service hours. Students who do not complete their service hours may not take their final examinations.

The number of Christian service hours required of each student is considered only a minimum. St. Francis wholeheartedly encourages each student to respond to the gospel message of service by participating in an even greater measure than is asked.

Many opportunities are provided for each student to complete his requirement. As part of the experience of building a Christian Community and developing a sense of brotherhood, St. Francis High School provides a number of school-sponsored events both on and off campus through service clubs. Some of these clubs include the Key Club, Habitat for Humanity, and the Path Achieve Shelter. These are announced throughout the school year on the website (sfhs.net) and on KNIT.

#### ACCEPTABLE CRITERIA FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE HOURS

**At least 50% of the service work must be Franciscan hours.** Franciscan hours are those hours that answer the call for service in the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare. These hours include, but are not limited, to the following:

- St. Francis loved the Eucharist. Any service done in a Liturgical setting will be Franciscan hours.
- St. Francis and St. Clare reached out to the marginalized. Personal, direct service to the poor, the sick, the hurting of our communities are considered Franciscan hours.
- St. Francis is the patron saint of animals. Any hours done benefiting animals are considered Franciscan hours.
- “Francis...go out and rebuild my Church...” The communities that we are a part of are an important component of our lives. Volunteer work done at the churches we attend or done for St. Francis High School’s numerous events will be considered personal hours.
- St. Francis taught his followers and coached them to follow Christ. Coaching and tutoring will all be considered Franciscan hours.
- Francis believed that God can be experienced through nature. Any opportunities benefiting the environment are considered Franciscan hours

All hours must be completed in the public sector through a non-profit agency. Hours submitted will be evaluated on a case by case basis to determine if they meet the Franciscan hour criteria.

While we encourage the entire number of designated hours to be done as a response to Francis and Clare’s mission, up to, but not exceeding, **50% of those hours may be performed as community service.** Examples of these include walk/jog-a thon set up/clean up, answering phones, paperwork, filing, and any work done at a for-profit company (work that would be a paid position if you were not volunteering.)

Any hours done to complete class requirements will not count toward the service hour requirement. However, any hours done above and beyond the required class quota will count as community hours. Examples of these include Kinesiology, Chorus, Drumline, Stage Crew, and Festival of the Arts.

Please understand that there is a difference between service and charity. Any charitable work that raises money for a cause (Relay for Life, Walk/Jog-A-Thons, etc.) will not count as service hours. However, if you choose to help the administration of the event, such as set up, clean up, working at a water station, accounting, etc., these can be counted as community service hours.

Christian Service hours will not be counted if they are performed for one's own family.

All hours must be submitted to the Franciscan Spirit & Life Center on a service hour form. These forms are available in the front office, in the FSL Center, or on the website. They must be returned with a business card or official letterhead from the organizations where the service was performed. The signatures of a site supervisor and a parent or guardian should be included to verify the validity of the hours. Students are expected to accomplish their service hour requirement during the school year, from the first day of school to the deadline published in the school calendar. **In unusual circumstances, students may petition the Principal for permission to accomplish their hours during the summer prior to the next year.**

Transfer students entering after the beginning of the school year will be required to do at least half the number of the required hours for that year.