

2022-2023 Mercy In Action Program at Mount de Sales Academy Program Description:

Mount de Sales is once again requiring students in grades 9-12 to participate in our service learning program, Mercy in Action.

For the 2022-23 school year, Upper School students will be required to complete **15 service hours** outside of the classroom and provide documentation of those activities. These earned hours will provide the student with an opportunity to develop a servant's heart and share those unique experiences in a classroom setting. Our Theology curriculum will continue to provide lessons and activities that help us learn why we serve, ways in which we can serve, and discover examples from those who have laid the foundation of sharing God's love with others through service. ***In addition to individual service hours, students will also earn up to 5 hours for completion of school led retreats and service projects (These activities will be conducted at school through grade level retreats and Theology curriculum assignments)***

Mercy in Action is a program that strives to instill values of servant leadership and the Christian values of the Sisters of Mercy into the lives of our students, faculty, and staff.

Upper School students in grades 9-12 are required to complete at least 15 hours of Mercy in Action during the academic year, from June 2022 through April 2023.

1. At least 10 of these hours should be completed by the end of the Advent Semester (December 5, 2022), and the remaining 5 must be completed by April 14, 2023 of the Easter Semester. **Completion of the hour requirement will serve as 10% of each semester exam.**

2. **Students must complete at least 15 hours of service.** These hours must be filled with tasks that are considered Servant Leadership and completed on the student's own time. The criteria listed below will help determine which activities will qualify as MIA hours. *Students are responsible for arranging their own service opportunities. MDS will notify students through LMS as opportunities arise; however, the school is not responsible for meeting the needs of all students.*

3. Activities not considered to be Servant Leadership are internships, unpaid labor, office work, babysitting or other activities that serve as extra curricular or summer jobs.

Before a student serves somewhere, he or she should read the criteria below and get the service approved by Mrs. Andrews or Dr. Germann if there is a question regarding its criteria.

4. **All hours must be verified by someone who is not a parent and approved by a Theology teacher during the school year: Check point dates are December 5, 2022 and April 14, 2023**

5. In order for hours to be counted toward the student's total 15 hours for the academic year, they must be verified and approved in x2vol.com. For service documentation, a contact person from the venue served will have 2 options for approving that the student completed the Servant leadership. 1.) Complete a Volunteer Coordinator form documenting hours, location, and the quality of service. The student will upload it to their x2vol account. 2.) Direct submission through the site and the use of x2vol for verification which is the preferred method of submission. *Theology teachers will address the specifics of x2vol at the beginning of the Advent semester.*

We understand that this year may still present a time of transition as we adjust to life outside of the Covid restrictions, should serving these hours present difficulty for your student or your family, please contact Mrs. Andrews and we will address your concerns and discuss alternate activities for your student.

Servant Leadership Criteria:

1. Students in grades 9-12 will earn at least 15 hours of activities that qualify as Servant Leadership.

Examples of Servant Leadership that count for these 15 hours are events with Cavalier Ambassadors, serving as a camp counselor, scouting projects, altar serving, coaching a young athletic team (without pay), and helping at church events such as Fall Festivals and Vacation Bible School. Community opportunities such as: working with a local food bank, homeless shelter, animal shelter, tutoring younger students (without pay).

2.If you are still unsure, here are some questions that will help you decide if what you are doing counts as Servant Leadership. Note that you should be able to answer “Yes” to 3 of the questions below so that your serving counts as Servant Leadership. (If you still have questions about whether your service qualifies as Servant Leadership, please email Mrs. Kim Andrews at kim.andrews@mountdesales.net)

- a. Does this activity/organization fall under one or more of the Mercy Critical Concerns: Women, Immigration, Non-Violence, Anti-Racism, Earth?
- b. Will you experience the benefit of authenticity in connecting with others?
- c. Will you experience the value of listening to someone else’s needs, desires, worries, fears, or other important aspects of their life?
- d. Will you practice empathy, feeling with and for another person?
- e. Will you contribute to the healing of another person or group of people?
- f. Will you practice being a good steward (did you use non-renewable resources wisely and look to employ the strengths of a group of people wisely in a group project or activity)?
- g. Will you commit to the growth of a person or group of people? Will you do something that attempts to help a person or group of people grow or will you do something over a long period of time?
- h. Will you practice hospitality, welcoming a person or a group of people into a place that you already feel at home?
- i. Will you do something or practice skills that attempt to build community among a group of people?

Reflecting on Mercy in Action:

Students will process their service by completing assignments in their Theology classes. During the Advent Semester, students will complete assignments where they recall what happened while they were serving and begin to take notes on what they learned about themselves and the community. These recollections will be combined with course specific activities and topics. Students will use these reflections from course curriculum and service experiences as their Midterm and final exam. These assignments (a presentation, paper, or summative assessment) will count as a percentage of the student’s exam grades in their theology class.

Service hour requirements for each semester must be met at exam time and will count as 10% of their Theology exam grade. Students cannot exempt the final exam project.