

# Bethlehem Catholic High School

## Service Handbook

### 2025

## Why We Serve

*"...the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve,  
And to give His life as a ransom for many." - Matthew 20: 28*

By reflecting on the above passage from Sacred Scripture, we see that our Lord offers us the perfect model of how we are to live our lives. Put simply, we are called to love as our Lord loves, living as men and women for others and selflessly serving those in need. In 1 Peter 4:10, we read:

*"As each has received a gift, employ it for one another,  
As good stewards of God's varied Grace..."*

We at Bethlehem Catholic High School recognize and take seriously the call to serve our neighbors in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We encourage our students to go beyond the classroom and to take what they learn out into their communities and to the world at large. By sharing their time and talents, Bethlehem Catholic students work, in the name of the Lord, to bring hope and healing to those in need. As a community of faith, we affirm that service is not simply something we do but the way in which we are called to live each moment of our lives.

## What is Community Service

Community Service comes in many forms. A student may count any volunteer work (or service hours) he or she completes for a community-focused non-profit and/or charitable organization, nursing home, or hospital, provided that the organization does not promote or support values or goals contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church. When seeking out service opportunities, students are encouraged to consider how they may live the Corporal Works of Mercy: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead.

## Service Requirements

The following chart highlights the **minimum** number of community service hours required for each academic class year:

Academic Class Standing	Total Hours
Freshman	10
Sophomore	15
Junior	20
Senior	25

- Students must complete the minimum number of hours required for their class year (See chart above).
- Students may not be compensated in any manner for the service performed. Fundraising events that provide individual benefits to students will not be counted toward a student's required service hours. Students who serve as team managers may receive service hours provided that they do not receive the benefits of team membership (medals, letters, etc.).
- Hours will not be counted if they are completed for a for-profit business, unless the business is a hospital, nursing home, or school.

- Students may not complete community service during school hours unless they are taking part in a service activity that is sponsored by Bethlehem Catholic High School.
- Students who serve on a Retreat Team, either through their parish or through Bethlehem Catholic, may not count this time toward their required service hours.
- Students who attend service trips may count only the hours of actual service completed. Social and spiritual activities, as well as transportation or other daily tasks, may not be counted toward service hours.
- Students who serve at Bethlehem Catholic High School service events are required to check in and check out to verify attendance. Failure to check in or check out may result in no hours being credited.
- Students are encouraged to seek out service opportunities within their parishes and parish schools. Students who altar serve, cantor, lector, or sing in the choir for Mass at their parishes may submit their time assisting with these ministries for service hours.
- Service hours are not counted for volunteer work related to elections, political organizations, or political candidates' campaigns.
- Students will not receive service hours for donating items to school-sponsored or community collections.
- Students who are members of the National Honor Society may not count their NHS tutoring time toward their required service hours.
- In rare instances, a student may offer community service to a particular person in need. Often this may be tutoring, shoveling snow, babysitting, cutting grass, assisting in moving, cleaning a home, or any other act of personal care or service. These hours should be approved in advance and may not be accepted if they cannot be properly verified.
- A student may not submit service hours that have been completed for his or her own family member(s).
- Students are encouraged to seek out a variety of different service experiences over the course of their high school careers.

## Service Hour Deadlines

Service hours are considered complete when the service activity has been accomplished and all documentation has been submitted by the student to Bethlehem Catholic. The deadlines for submission are as follows:

- Service hours completed during the summer must be submitted by **September 30<sup>th</sup>** of the subsequent school year.
- Service hours completed during the school year must be submitted **by the end of the following month**. For example, service hours completed during September must be submitted by no later than October 31<sup>st</sup>. Service hours completed during March and early April are due by no later than April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- All students are required to have completed their minimum number of required service hours by no later than **April 15<sup>th</sup>** of each year.

Students who fail to complete their minimum number of service hours by April 15<sup>th</sup> will receive an "Incomplete" for both their service requirement AND for their Theology class on their report card. Seniors who receive this "Incomplete" may not receive their diplomas and underclassmen may not receive their schedules for the following year until all hours are completed and all documentation submitted.

## Tracking Service Hours

Students are responsible for tracking their own service hours and submitting the appropriate documentation when service activities have been completed. Here are the required steps for submitting the service hour documentation:

- 1) First, each student must bring a paper copy of the Bethlehem Catholic Service Hours form (available online and in Theology classes) to his/her service event and have the form signed by the onsite service supervisor. **Parents are NOT permitted to sign Service Hour forms.**
- 2) Next, the student submits the information from the paper Service Hours form through Bethlehem Catholic's online SMART System (link available on [becahi.org](http://becahi.org)).
- 3) Finally, the student hands in the paper Service Hours form to his/her Theology teacher.

- 4) For service completed over the summer, a student may submit the SMART system record at any time, but the Service Hours form should be submitted to his/her Theology teacher upon returning to school in the fall.

## **Questions, Concerns, Issues etc.**

It is important to keep in mind that the purpose of this program is to complete service hours that impact the community and help the students grow in charity. Any opportunities or ideas for service that are not covered in this document should not be presumed to be approved. It is recommended that students discuss all ideas and opportunities for service hours with their Theology teachers prior to completing them unless the activity has already been approved by the Campus Ministry Office. Issues and questions should be directed to the student's Theology teacher first. If the Theology teacher is not able to assist the student, he or she will partner with Fr. Ezaki for further information.

As stated above, all service hours must be completed no later than April 15th. If a student has a serious issue and completion of the service hours by the April 15th deadline presents an undue burden or hardship, the student must speak to his or her Theology teacher as soon as possible to discuss his or her individual situation.

## **Magis Service Award of Bethlehem Catholic High School**

### **Background/Inspiration**

Magis is a Latin term for "more" that was adopted by St. Ignatius of Loyola and suggests the spirit of generous excellence in which ministry should be carried out. Living the Magis calls us to examine how our choices affect others and guides us to make decisions that benefit the greater good.

### **Recognition**

This award distinguishes those graduating Bethlehem Catholic High School Seniors who have demonstrated, by their witness of service, they are living the Magis. Seniors are honored and visibly recognized at Graduation and Baccalaureate Mass by wearing a gold cord over their graduation gown.

### **Eligibility/Requirements**

The following serve as a minimum required to be considered for this honor:

- Be a graduating Bethlehem Catholic High School Senior of good reputation (Note, this honor can be revoked at any time prior to graduation for conduct unbecoming of a Bethlehem Catholic student).
- Display a spirit of generous excellence in the ministries served (Do not just show up but be inspirational and transformative in the way you serve.)
- Exceed the total number of required service hours with a minimum of at least 40 additional hours.
- Display a desire to experience and serve in diverse ministries that challenge you to "live the more." (This means you will have various and diverse service opportunities, not simply doing the same service or same type of service each year.)
- Complete the Reflection Questions in a Word document and email them to both Fr. Ezaki and Miss DeSanto, Campus Minister, by the deadline.
- Be approved by the Magis Faculty Committee for confirmation of reflection essay and quality and diversity of service hours.

## Reflection Questions

The student will be required to write a brief 1–2-page reflection that answers the following three questions (12-pt Times New Roman Font; Double Spaced; Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation, and Proofreading count!):

1. Who has been the most influential person for you during your service experiences? Why is this person the most memorable?
2. What service experience had the biggest impact on you? In other words, what experience touched your heart or moved you the most? Why?
3. How have you learned to “live the more” through this experience? What changes in yourself or in your attitudes, values or priorities have you noticed?

**Bethlehem Catholic High School**  
**Service Handbook – Signature Page**  
**2023-2024**

**Student Name (Please Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Theology Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class Period:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that I have read the *Bethlehem Catholic High School Service Handbook 2023-2024* in its entirety and understand the service requirements described therein. I am committed to adhering to all requirements and deadlines as outlined in the Service Handbook. I understand that failure to adhere to these service requirements and deadlines for the 2023-2024 school year may result in the denial of submitted hours and/or an incomplete for my service hour requirement. I understand that all questions regarding service hours should be directed to my Theology teacher.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Name (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Printed)

**Please return this signed form to your Theology Teacher.**