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Oxford Scholars Spring 2025

Importance of Service

Service is the best way to create positive change in our communities. Not only does it help those in need, but it also can allow one to grow closer to God. However, this is often overlooked as it can be seen as merely a requirement. Yet, when we empathize with those in more difficult circumstances than us, we can be inspired to serve. Service is a central part of Cardinal Newman's identity. Helping the community with selflessness and empathy encourages students to recognize the true impact of their actions and fully embody Cardinal Newman's mission while meeting their service requirement. Service is not just an obligation; it is a calling to be a part of the greater good and nurture the well-being of our communities. It fosters a positive environment, allows one to grow closer to God, and reflects our school's purpose.

Completing acts of service can foster change in the community. In every community, there are people who are struggling in a variety of ways, such as homelessness, hunger, and addiction. To help these populations, it is necessary for capable individuals to fully commit themselves to helping others and understanding those who are different from themselves. Acts of service can break down the barriers between those with different circumstances by creating an environment of compassion and trust. Whether it means volunteering or simply an act of kindness, service can unify the community and show the importance of putting others first. Hebrews 10:24 states, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." This highlights how service is not only the action of one individual but of many, and it requires us to motivate those around us to do good. Encouraging others to serve those in need selflessly can allow them to grow more empathetic and compassionate and further bring the

community together. This shows how service can foster a thriving and positive community by assisting those in need and strengthening the character of those who give.

Service can also strengthen the relationship between an individual and God. Jesus serves as a model for all of humanity, especially in his acts of service. During his life, Jesus welcomed all people, even those who were rejected by society. By embracing those who were considered outcasts by the rest of society, he demonstrated the importance of treating others who are different from us with equal kindness and respect. Jesus loved all and treated them with dignity, regardless of their backgrounds. He also dedicated much of his time to healing the sick and feeding the hungry. We can be instruments of God's love by following in Jesus's footsteps and loving our neighbors. Additionally, one of the best ways to act on one's faith is through service. Service highlights Catholic values such as selflessness, love, and humility, and doing acts of service puts these values into action, further strengthening one's faith and relationship with God. James 2:17 states, "Faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." This emphasizes that actions are necessary to express one's faith. While also teaching us to love our neighbors, service can also encourage us to be grateful for what we have. Service allows us to fulfill our calling and love our neighbors just as Jesus did, connecting to Cardinal Newman's purpose.

Cardinal Newman High School strives to educate students in ways that align with the Catholic Church and to create an environment driven by faith, love, and leadership. This foundation has carried the Cardinal Newman community through many difficult times, like the wildfires and COVID-19. Therefore, the principles of faith, love, and leadership have become central to what it means to be a part of this community. This is most often reflected through service. Students are required to meet a minimum of 25 hours of service per year, along with a senior service project. This pushes students to help the community in ways they are passionate

about. Volunteering and service projects play a large role in teaching students valuable life skills, such as leadership, responsibility, and compassion. When helping the community, students can use the skills they have learned in their daily lives. Proverbs 22:6 states, “Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” This highlights the importance of instilling the core values of faith and service in students, as it will allow them to continue to devote themselves to the greater good throughout life. Further, service at Cardinal Newman unites everyone, gives students a sense of purpose, and shows them the true impact of selflessness. Service creates a lasting impact that carries Cardinal Newman’s mission outside of school and into the real world.

In all, service is central to Catholic identity. It not only helps those in need, but it also transforms the character of the person who gives. It unites the community by creating mutual understanding between people of different backgrounds and circumstances. When we serve, we are contributing to the greater good and creating an environment where love and compassion thrive. Service puts central Catholic values into action and motivates others to help their community. Acts 20:35 states, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” This quote represents Jesus’ teachings and actions and shows how serving others is more fulfilling than receiving. Serving others also follows in Jesus’ footsteps and spreads God’s love to all, bringing the giver closer to God. Through service, we create a more positive environment, create a closer relationship with God, and put Cardinal Newman's mission into action. For these reasons, we are called to help those in need.