INTERNATIONAL MISSION TRIP TO DOMINICA REPUBLIC FAQ

## Hogar Immanuel • Dominican Republic

## March 20–27, 2027

Charlotte Catholic High School is excited to bring back our international mission experience after a pause since COVID. In March 2027, a group of CCHS student missionaries will travel to **Hogar Immanuel in the Dominican Republic** to serve alongside Mustard Seed Communities.

This trip is an opportunity to step outside of our familiar surroundings, encounter Christ in a different culture, build relationships with others, and grow together as a community of faith and service.

1. **Where are we going?**
    1. We will travel to **Hogar Immanuel**, a Mustard Seed Communities home near Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic.
    2. Hogar Immanuel provides a loving home and individualized care for children and young adults with disabilities. Our mission will focus on building relationships with the residents while also participating in meaningful service projects.
2. **When is the trip?**
    1. **March 20–27, 2027**
3. **Who will lead the trip?**
    1. Our CCHS mission team will be accompanied by three adult chaperones:
        - **Father Chinonso**, CCHS Chaplain
        - **Sarah Jerome**, CCHS Campus Minister
        - **One additional CCHS adult chaperone**
    2. Students will also work closely with Mustard Seed Communities staff and mission personnel throughout the week.
4. **Who is eligible?**
    1. All CCHS students are **encouraged to apply**.
    2. Applications will be reviewed and approved through Campus Ministry. Because space on the trip is limited, **priority will be given to upperclassmen**, while all students are welcome to submit an application.
5. **Do I need previous mission-trip experience?**
    1. **No.** You do not need previous mission experience or special skills to apply.
    2. What matters most is your willingness to serve, learn, participate fully and approach the experience with an open heart.
6. **When are applications due?**
    1. Applications will open soon and must be submitted by: **October 9, 2026**
    2. Students selected for the mission team will be notified following the application review process.
7. **How will students be selected?**
    1. Applications will be evaluated and approved by Campus Ministry.
    2. Because space is limited, selection will take into consideration the student's readiness for the experience, commitment to the mission, and ability to contribute positively to the group. **Priority will be given to upperclassmen, but students in all grades are encouraged to apply.**
8. **Will we meet before the trip?**
    1. **Yes.** Once the mission team is selected, students will meet **monthly from selection through departure**.
    2. These meetings will be an important part of the mission experience. We will use this time to:

- Build our mission team community
- Learn about the Dominican Republic and its culture
- Learn about Mustard Seed Communities and Hogar Immanuel
- Prepare for the experience of serving children and young adults with disabilities
- Discuss what it means to serve as a Catholic missionary
- Prepare spiritually through prayer and reflection
- Review travel, packing and safety information
- Make sure everyone is prepared for the experience
- The mission begins before we get on the airplane.

## 9. What will a typical day look like?

1. Our days will include a combination of:

    - Spending time with the residents of Hogar Immanuel including assisting with meals
    - Playing, talking, singing and participating in activities
    - Assisting with activities and daily life at the home
    - Participating in service/work projects
    - Prayer and reflection
    - Team time and community building
    - Experiencing aspects of Dominican culture
    - The specific schedule and service projects will be determined by the needs of Hogar Immanuel and Mustard Seed at the time of our visit.

## 10. Will we be doing construction or physical work?

1. **Possibly.**
2. Mission teams participate in meaningful service projects based on the current needs of the community. Projects may include painting, landscaping, light construction, farming or other work.
3. No special construction skills are required.

## 11. Will we spend time with the children, young adults and adults with disabilities?

1. **Absolutely.**
2. Relationship is at the heart of this mission.
3. Students will have opportunities to spend meaningful time with the residents of Hogar Immanuel—to play, talk, laugh, assist, listen and simply be present.
4. Our goal is not simply to "do a project." We are going to encounter people, build relationships and recognize the dignity of every person we meet.

## 12. Is this a Catholic mission trip?

1. **Yes.**This is a Charlotte Catholic mission experience, and prayer, reflection, service and community will be central to our time together.
2. Students will have opportunities for prayer and spiritual reflection throughout the week and will participate in Mass while in the Dominican Republic.

## 13. What does it mean to be a missionary?

1. Being a missionary is about more than traveling somewhere to help people.
2. We go to serve, but we also go to **receive**.
3. We will encounter people whose lives and circumstances may be very different from our own. We will have the opportunity to see Christ in others, recognize our shared human dignity and allow the experience to challenge and deepen our own faith.
4. A mission trip is not simply about what we can do for someone else. It is about **how God can change all of us through the encounter.**

## 14. How much does the trip cost?

**[INSERT FINAL CCHS TRIP COST]**

1. The trip cost will include the Mustard Seed mission program, accommodations, meals, transportation in the Dominican Republic and other trip expenses. Airfare and any additional CCHS-specific expenses will be communicated to families once finalized.
2. Unlike some mission-trip programs, CCHS will **not require students to fundraise** to participate in this mission.
3. **Please do not let the cost of the trip prevent you from applying.**
4. CCHS believes that finances should not be a barrier to a student who feels called to participate in this mission experience.
5. **Financial assistance will be available for families who need it.**
6. If you are interested in financial assistance, please indicate that during the application process. Financial assistance requests will be handled confidentially.

## 15. When is the deposit due?

1. Deposits for selected missionaries will be due by: **October 30, 2026**
2. **A**dditional payment information and deadlines will be provided to students who are selected.

## 16. Where will we stay?

1. We will stay at **Hogar Immanuel in Mustard Seed's mission accommodations**.

## 17. Will students be supervised?

1. Yes.Students will travel and participate in all mission activities as a group under the supervision of our three CCHS adult chaperones and Mustard Seed personnel. The site has 24 hour security.

## 18. What will we eat?

1. Mustard Seed provides meals for mission teams. Students will have the opportunity to experience Dominican food as part of the mission experience.
2. Students should communicate any food allergies or dietary restrictions during the application/preparation process.

## 19. Will we have any free time?

1. There will be some opportunities to experience the local community and culture as part of the mission itinerary.
2. However, this is a **mission trip, not a vacation**. Our primary purpose is to serve, build relationships and grow in faith.
3. We will attend mass and have a beach day with dinner out one night of the trip.

## 20. Is it safe to travel to the Dominican Republic?

1. Student safety is a priority for CCHS and Mustard Seed Communities.
2. Students will travel as a supervised group and will work closely with Mustard Seed staff, who are experienced in hosting mission teams and know the local community.
3. Specific safety protocols and emergency procedures will be reviewed with students and parents before departure.

## 21. Do I need a passport?

1. **Yes.** Students must have a valid passport for international travel.
2. **S**pecific passport and travel requirements will be provided before departure.

## 22. What about vaccinations or other health requirements?

1. Students and families should consult their physician and current CDC travel guidance regarding health recommendations for travel to the Dominican Republic.
2. CCHS will communicate any additional requirements before departure.

### 23. Will this be like a vacation?

1. **No—and that's part of what makes it special.**
2. There will be fun, laughter, new experiences and opportunities to experience Dominican culture. But the purpose of our week is service and mission.
3. You should expect to be outside of your normal routine.
4. You may be tired. You may be challenged. You may encounter things that are unfamiliar or uncomfortable.
5. You will also have the opportunity to form relationships, experience incredible joy and see the world—and perhaps yourself and your faith—in a new way.

### 24. What if I am nervous?

1. That's normal!
2. For many students, an international mission trip will be outside their comfort zone. That's why we will spend months preparing together before we leave.
3. You will not be expected to know exactly what to do when you arrive. We will learn together, serve together, pray together and support one another throughout the experience.

### 25. What should I bring?

1. Students will receive a detailed packing list and additional instructions during our preparation meetings.
2. In general, students should plan for comfortable and modest clothing, appropriate shoes for service, toiletries, personal medications, sunscreen, insect repellent, a refillable water bottle and clothing appropriate for Mass.

### 26. Are there other mission opportunities?

1. **Yes!** We recognize that an international mission trip may not be the right opportunity for every student.
2. **C**CHS will also offer a **domestic mission trip to Kentucky in Summer 2027**.
3. Additional information about the Kentucky mission experience will be shared as plans are finalized.
4. Whether you serve internationally or closer to home, the goal is the same: **to encounter Christ through service and to recognize Christ in the people we meet.**

### 27. WHY SHOULD I APPLY?

1. You don't need to have all the answers before you go.
2. You don't need to consider yourself "good at service."
3. You don't need to have traveled internationally.
4. You simply need to be willing to say **yes** to an experience that may challenge you, change you and bring you closer to God and to others.
5. **All students are encouraged to apply.**

## IMPORTANT DATES

**October 9, 2026**
Mission Trip Application Deadline

**October 30, 2026**
Deposit Due for Selected Missionaries

**October 2026–March 2027**
Monthly Mission Formation Meetings

**March 20–27, 2027**
**CCHS Mission Trip to Hogar Immanuel, Dominican Republic**