SAINT BROTHER ANDRÉ SERVICE PROGRAM

“My only objective is to serve God in the most humble tasks.”

St. Brother André Bessette

GILMOUR ACADEMY
34001 Cedar Road
Gates Mills, Ohio 44040
(440) 473-8000 x4230
Mission Statement of Gilmour Academy

“...to develop the competence to see and the courage to act in creating a more humane and just society.”

“Mission happens whenever we muster the spiritual courage to move out of ourselves in Gospel love and service across borders –toward the stranger, the outcast, the different, and the poor.”

Rev. Thomas W. Smith C.S.C.
Saint Brother André Service Program:
A Brief Biography of St. Brother André Bessette

Sickness and weakness troubled André from birth. He was the eighth of 12 children born to a French Canadian couple near Montreal. André’s parents died when he was 12 years old. He was adopted and became a farmhand. Various trades followed - shoemaker, baker, blacksmith – and all were failures. He was a factory worker in the United States during the boom times of the Civil War.

At 25, he applied for entrance into the Congregation of Holy Cross. After a year's novitiate, he was not admitted to the Congregation because of his weak health, but with an extension and the urging of the Bishop, he was finally received. He was given the humble job of doorkeeper at Notre Dame College in Montreal, with additional duties as sacristan, laundry worker and messenger. When he heard someone was ill, he visited to bring cheer and to pray with the sick person. Word of his healing powers began to spread. Before his death he needed four secretaries to handle the 80,000 letters he received each year.

For many years the Holy Cross authorities had tried to buy land on Mount Royal. Saint André and others climbed the steep hill and planted medals of Saint Joseph. Suddenly, the owners yielded. André collected $200 to build a small chapel and began receiving visitors there, smiling through long hours of listening, and applying Saint Joseph's oil. Some were cured, some not. The pile of crutches, canes and braces grew. The magnificent Oratory on Mount Royal took 50 years to build. The sickly boy who could not hold a job died at 92. He is buried at the Oratory and was beatified in 1982. On October 17, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI formally declared sainthood for St. Andre.

Each of you, just like St. André, has been called by God to serve others. Our service may be simple and yet, in life, it is the little things we do for each other that really count. In his care for others, St. André gave people a St. Joseph medal and asked that people pray to St. Joseph for help when in need.

As the doorkeeper, St. André not only opened the physical doors of the college, he also opened the doors of people’s hearts to the love of God. Each of you has the opportunity to personally make a difference in the life of another person through the service program. You are called to share your gifts and talents with others. In your service, as well as your life, when things get hard, remember to turn to St. Joseph and St. André for help.
As a Catholic school in the Holy Cross tradition, Gilmour Academy is committed to creating an environment conducive to a transformational experience for students supported by faith formation. The service program seeks to develop students who are passionate about and compassionate toward the world that surrounds them. The program seeks to move our students from charity to justice.

Gilmour’s mission statement cannot be fully realized in the classroom; it requires that students go out into the world to help create a more humane and just society.

Gilmour students are called to a life of solidarity with the lowliest and the least. From preschool through grade 12, Gilmour students are encouraged to use their own unique talents and gifts to become informed, aware, and active citizens dedicated to doing justice and living the Gospel as they continue as persons on a journey of faith.
Saint Brother André Service Program:
Program Goals

1. To transform students into a zealous community of men and women who embody Gospel values and live the Holy Cross charisms.

2. To increase students’ awareness of the suffering and marginalized members of our community, and to encourage them to make the option for the poor a personal priority.

3. To offer students the opportunity to extend beyond their comfort zone by serving others, especially those of obvious need.

4. To expand the students’ conscious awareness that they are called to utilize their gifts and talents in service to humanity.

5. To enable students to realize that faith must inform their actions and be woven throughout their lives.
Saint Brother André Service Program: Montessori through Grade 12 Service Plan

Montessori, Kindergarten & Grade 1 – Ministry to Children

Grade 2 - Ministry to the Elderly

Grade 3 - Ministry to the Hungry

Grade 4 - Ministry to the Sick

Grades 5 and 6 - Ministry to the Poor, Marginalized and Suffering

Grade 7 - Ministry to Children
  • Coordinated in Religion class
  • Examples of service include tutoring and activities at local schools

Grade 8 - Ministry to the Elderly
  • Coordinated in Religion class
  • Examples of service include visits to local nursing homes

Grade 9 - Ministry to the Hungry
  • Each student is required to help at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank twice a year
  • Transportation, coordination and supervision is provided by grade level Advisor

Grades 10, 11 & 12 - Ministry to the Poor, Marginalized and Suffering
  • Each student is required to complete 60 hours of service at an approved service agency.
  • It is recommended that students complete 20 hours each year.

Seniors: 60 hours of service must be completed upon returning from Spring Break.
Saint Brother André Service Program:  
Service Hour Requirements

As you begin to plan the service that you will do to complete Gilmour’s requirement, it will be helpful to consider what does and does not count toward your 60 hours.

Christian service is any activity that seeks to meet the needs of the poor, the marginalized, and/or the suffering. The criteria for what counts as Christian service found in Matthew 25:35-40 are the basis for the Corporal Works of Mercy:

1. Feed the hungry.
2. Give drink to the thirsty.
3. Bury the dead.
4. Visit the imprisoned.
5. Clothe the naked.
6. Give shelter to the homeless.
7. Visit the sick.

These works are the basis for determining what will satisfy the Gilmour Academy service requirement. In addition to this list, please consider the following guidelines while planning your service:

- service work must be for non-profit agencies
- service work must directly or indirectly help those who are in need
- no fundraising of any kind will fulfill the service hour requirement
- students can receive a maximum of 10 hours for projects that serve the Gilmour community

If you are uncertain about a particular activity, please direct your questions to the Service Program Coordinator.

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?

When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

The King will reply, 'Tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Matthew 25:35-40

“As disciples of Jesus we stand side by side with all people. Like them we are burdened by the same struggles and beset by the same weaknesses; like them we are made new by the same Lord's love; like them we hope for a world where justice and love prevail.  
("Educators in the Faith and Solidarity,” Holy Cross Constitutions, Article 12)
Saint Brother André Service Program:
Service Guidelines

All service projects, for grades 9-12, are subject to the following guidelines. Grade 9 students have the option to begin working on the 60-hour graduation requirement. However, they must also participate in the two trips to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank required in their freshman year.

1. As they plan their service experience students should refer to the Saint Br. André Service Program listing on the Gilmour Academy website for a list of approved agencies.

2. At the conclusion of each service project, students should log their project (with supervisor signature and verification of service) on their Student Portal. This is located under the “Upper School Parent/Student Resources” tab under “Student Service Hour Management.” They also have the option of uploading a photo with their project.

3. Juniors and seniors are invited to participate in a Gilmour sponsored domestic or international service trip over Spring Break. Students who participate in a service trip will be awarded 40 hours of service. However, students must have earned at least 10 other hours at a local agency prior to the trip.

4. Upon completion of the required service hours for graduation, students are required to write a reflection essay. The 3-4 page paper is to be a reflection on the student’s personal service experience. Include the following in the reflection essay:

The Gilmour Academy Service Program is named after St. Br André Bessette, a man who embodied the Corporal Works of Mercy (Matthew 25:35-40). St. André lived the corporal works of mercy by welcoming the stranger through his role as doorkeeper and by visiting the sick. How did you embody the corporal works of mercy throughout your service experience? Is there an individual or a story from your service that sticks with you the most? What did you learn about yourself through your service experience?

5. Students are expected to complete a minimum of 60 hours of service. It is suggested that a minimum of 20 hours of service be completed each year.

- When transferring into Gilmour Academy the following service requirements must be fulfilled by the student while attending the Academy:
  
  Entering as a sophomore  60 hours of service  
  Entering as a junior  40 hours of service  
  Entering as a senior  20 hours of service  
  Entering as a post-grad  20 hours of service  

- Students who are required to log service hours for National Honor Society (or another student organization) are not permitted to use the same hours to fulfill the St. Brother André Service Program service hour requirement.
Saint Brother André Service Program:
Service Awards

These awards honor students demonstrating leadership, character and service to others throughout both their class and the Gilmour community as a whole. In order to be eligible for a Service Award, all hours and the reflection essay must be submitted by March 1st.

1. Saint Brother André Award
   Saint Brother André was a doorkeeper at Notre Dame College in Montreal. His service was very simple but his impact was great, opening the hearts of thousands to the love of God. This award is given to a senior because of the transformational impact of his/her service.

2. Charles Murray Student Humanitarian Award
   This award honors Charles Murray who graduated from Gilmour Academy in 1960 and dedicated his life to the less fortunate and to the socially disadvantaged. Charles Murray embodied the Holy Cross charisms. His zeal for living a life that brought hope to others was shown in his preferential option for the poor through feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, and finding jobs for the unemployed. His life is an example for us. He taught us the true meaning of forgiveness in his work to eliminate the death penalty in Ohio. He included everyone and was hospitable to all. Charles Murray lived the Gilmour mission by having the “courage to act in creating a more humane and just society.” He died of complications from leukemia in 2003, sharing the Cross of Christ in his suffering.

   This award honors Brother Robert A. Kelly in recognition of his Jubilee Celebration in 2004. Brother Robert gave 27 years of service and dedication to Gilmour Academy. In 1982, he was instrumental in formalizing a service program at Gilmour.

   The award is presented to a senior who has demonstrated an exemplary commitment to serving the less fortunate through diverse and meaningful volunteer experiences and going above and beyond the number of required service hours. The student essay is also considered in this award.

4. Brother Richard Keller Award for Underclassmen
   This award recognizes the witness that Brother Richard made by living out the Holy Cross core values and reaching out to the members of the Gilmour Community and numerous individuals in north eastern Ohio for the past 35 years. This award is presented to student leaders who have reached out to their community with zeal and hospitality in order to serve the poor.

“If I come out of myself to do a little good, at that very moment I experience that I can do nothing alone.”
Blessed Fr. Basil Moreau, C.S.C.
Saint Brother André Service Program:
Contact Information

GILMOUR ACADEMY
34001 Cedar Road
Gates Mills, Ohio 44040
(440) 473-8000 x4230

Any questions can be directed to the Pastoral Life Team:

Whitney Daly
Director of Mission Integration
dalyw@gilmour.org

Martha Ligas
Coordinator of St. Brother André Service Program
ligasm@gilmour.org

Fr. John Blazek C.S.C.
Chaplain
blazekj@gilmour.org

Led by the Spirit, we move forward
transcending all boundaries
to be messengers of Hope.