



Catholic Schools Week

January 26 -February 1, 2014

November 18, 2013

This coming year marks the 40th anniversary of NCSW (January 26 – February 1, 2014). The theme is "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service" and will remain in place for at least three years. The joint sponsors of the week, the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), believe that this will give schools longer-term opportunities to brand National Catholic Schools Week and their ongoing marketing activities with repeated mentions and use of a consistent logo.

Marking the 40th With Service

Faith, knowledge and service are integral components of a Catholic education and the measures by which any Catholic school can be judged. The 40th anniversary of NCSW may be marked in a particularly powerful way by encouraging students and faculty to participate in 40 hours of community service or 40 hours of prayer and service hours. With the theme the New Evangelization, hours could include a combination of 20 hours of prayer (Eucharistic adoration, the rosary or Scripture reading) with 20 hours of service to the parish and community.

Finding a Cause

Once schools have committed to the 40-hour challenge, the next step is to research local organizations to determine where the needs are greatest and where student efforts can make a real difference. The diocesan schools office, a Catholic charity or local volunteer clearinghouse can provide suggestions on age-appropriate service activities for students. Another approach is to poll school board members, parents and teachers for suggestions on worthwhile community groups that need help.

Celebrating National Catholic Schools Week With Service

Here are a dozen suggestions to spark ideas for your school's 40 hours of service.



1. **Thank those who serve the community.** Express your appreciation to the many people who support your school and make your community a better place to live. Write notes, make posters or decorate baskets of cookies and deliver them to representatives of local government, police and other emergency services, community organizations and businesses community leaders and workers on the job. Or invite them to your school—both to talk about the importance of community involvement in activities such as volunteering and voting and to see in person how their support helps your school.
2. **Safety first.** Make snowstorm or hurricane safety kits to distribute at a local fair or other community event. Include first aid supplies, flashlights, batteries, candles and a list of safety tips from local emergency responders.
3. **For the artistic.** Paint a mural at a community daycare center for children and gather art and craft supplies

to stock the center.

4. **Student dream teams.** Send student teams to after-school programs or daycare centers to read aloud, play games or work on craft projects or work with younger students who need tutoring in reading or math.
5. **Fun-a-thons.** Organize a fun run, bike race, walk-a-thon, bowl-a-thon or dance-a-thon for a needy organization or family.
6. **Playground renovation.** Clean up a run-down playground or conduct a fundraising campaign to buy new playground equipment.
7. **Get out the vote.** Contact the local League of Women Voters or voter registration office and ask what you can do to help people register to vote.
8. **Police collaboration.** Work with local police to conduct a bike, skateboard or roller blade safety clinic for the community.
9. **Literacy fair.** Hold a used book, DVD and CD sale and donate the proceeds to a local literacy program or library.
10. **An entertaining idea.** Hold a school concert, talent show or sporting event to which attendees bring canned goods to donate to a food pantry or toiletries to give to a homeless shelter.
11. **From school to homebound.** Decorate place mats or write friendly notes to include with Meals on Wheels deliveries to homebound residents unable to prepare meals for themselves.
12. **School collaboration.** Work with a local organization or expert to put together an entertaining and educational program on an issue such as racial tolerance, resisting peer pressure, a clean environment or traffic safety and take it to other schools in the area.

And Remember to Order Your NCSW Materials!

Now is a great time to order NCSW buttons, banners and gifts for students, faculty and volunteers . [Order online](#) 24 hours a day or call toll-free (800) 746-6232 or (301) 266-4037.