

## Theological Reflection

### **Paragraphs 1-2: Describe what your service experience was like.**

- What did you choose to do for your service hours?
- Why were you interested in this form of service?
- How did God use your unique gifts and talents?
- What is your attitude about Christian Service? Was it an obligation or something you are looked forward to? Did your feelings change over time?
- Did you learn anything about yourself or the people you worked with?

### **Paragraphs 2-3:**

- **Step 1: Choose a source from our tradition that relates to the service work that you have done. This can be from Scripture, doctrine, the catechism, or Catholic Social Teaching.**
  - <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm>
  - <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/catechism-of-the-catholic-church/epub/index.cfm>
  - <http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/>
- **Step 2: Draw correlations between the work that you were doing and our tradition.**
  - What does my faith say about this situation?
    - Example: Through our Catholic faith we learn that men and women have inherent dignity because they are created in God's image and likeness. Serving those who are most in need is a way of honoring their dignity.
  - How do I judge this situation in the context of my faith?
  - What do the principles of Catholic Social Teaching have to say about these structures? The gospel and other parts of scripture?

- Example 1: Catholic Social Teaching teaches that “We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are our brothers and sisters keepers, wherever they may be.” By volunteering at PADS, I encountered many people that came from different backgrounds than me. But through my service I realized the powerful effects of loving others—especially those who are different than me.
- Example 2: Throughout the Gospels, we see Jesus spending time with the vulnerable, the sick, the poor, and the dying. Not only does he spend time with them, but he genuinely loves them, and he challenges each of us to do the same. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus tells his disciples “whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did to me” (Matthew 25:40). This particular verse always encourages me to tend to the needs of others and to see Jesus in every person I encounter.
- How do I think God views this situation? What do I imagine God feels about the people who are suffering?
  - Example: Working at the Soup Kitchen was very challenging because it was difficult to see so many people in need, when I have been blessed with so much. It seemed unfair that children and adults should have to go without food or adequate clothing and shelter. I began to wonder where God was in the midst of all this, how he felt about their suffering. But then I reflected on Jesus dying on the cross—enduring some of the most excruciating forms of suffering out of love for us—and I know he is with them and understand their pain. Though seeing someone in poverty is uncomfortable and challenging, I know that is important to be generous and loving to them for we read “Whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?” (1 John 3:17)

**Paragraphs 4-5: How are you going to use what you have learned to continue living out your Baptismal call to live as a disciple?**

- How did this help me to grow in my faith?
- We’re there any people you met through your service that helped you to grow in your faith? How?

- How did my relationship with Jesus change through this experience?
- What did I come to know about God?
- How did God use my gifts? Did I discover any new gifts/talents?
- How did this help me continue my journey toward becoming a disciple?
- In light of my analysis and reflection on faith, what are my options for addressing this situation(I.e continuing the work I started through service hours)? Which options energize me?
- What are some concrete possibilities for action for me to continue serving -- short term and long term; individual and system-wide?