

**Holy Family Parish High School Religious Education
Service Opportunity at Oasis Soup Kitchen in Boston**
Each Level 2 Student is expected to go once (between June 2011 and May 2012)

Summer Dates: June 6, July 4 (Independence Day), August 1, September 5 (Labor Day)

School Year Dates: October 3, November 7, December 5, January 2, February 6, March 5, April 2, May 7

Participants: 5 students and 2 adults (please travel in two vehicles) - adults need to have completed the Virtus training and have a current CORI on file with the parish.

When and Where to meet: Our group will gather at the Holy Family **Parish Center in West Concord** on Monday afternoon at 4:00pm. The group should return around 8:00pm.

If weather is bad (winter): Please call Joe Nies (number below) to give him an update of our status - Oasis typically will remain open in bad weather. Taking the Commuter Rail and T is a safe option. Joe will likely be there regardless of the weather, as will those who benefit from Oasis. Please make whatever effort you can to go and serve.

Missing your Group: Your group will be waiting for you, so if an emergency arises, it is important that you call Tony at the office (978-369-7442, or call someone on the trip that is also going) no later than 3:30pm. Otherwise, the group will be waiting for you at the parish center.

What the Service Opportunity is About: The purpose of our high school religious education service activities is to experience what it means to live as a Catholic Christian today. Through the people you encounter and the work you do, you live the Gospel and experience Christian community.

Oasis is an organization providing a variety of services to the homeless of Boston. As a coalition of organizations and churches, one of their services is to provide various meal opportunities to alleviate hunger since 1969. Guests at Oasis typically include the homeless, those living with mental or emotional illnesses, the unemployed, and the working poor.

Finding Oasis: Since the summer of 2009, the Oasis Soup Kitchen has been located at **St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral**, 138 Tremont Street, Boston 02108. This is a big church (though a small building given its surroundings) located across the street from Boston Common, in the heart of the city. You may find guests waiting outside on the steps, depending on the weather. Joe Neis is our contact, a former parishioner in Concord, and has been facilitating groups from the Concord Catholic Community for years. **Joe can be reached on his cell phone at 617-290-6059.**

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Doing the Volunteer Work at Oasis: For this service work, you should dress comfortably, modestly, and bring something to cover your head. Shorts/skirts must be knee-length. Please do not wear jewelry (simple earrings are okay). Open-toe shoes are not allowed, and long hair must be tied back. It is best to wear a hat, a t-shirt, and sneakers. *You will likely be able to grab an apron once you arrive.*

Participants (students and adult leaders) will be asked to prepare the food to be served, to serve the food to guests at Oasis, as well as assist in the clean-up process. There will be several other volunteers there in addition to our group - many are regular volunteers. You may have the opportunity to eat dinner yourself - please check with Joe. If you have any concerns about the service work, or suggestions, please give them to Joe.

Please treat each guest with respect and courtesy. Bring to your volunteer service an attitude of open-mindedness. Try to be non-judgmental. Consider as confidential all information that you may hear directly or indirectly concerning guests. Keep your interactions with guests professional, meaning that you would not give guests money, gifts, rides, invitations to your home, or your address or phone number. Please do not accept gifts from guests. Some guests at Oasis need additional sensitivity, as they struggle with mental health issues, substance abuse issues, family difficulties, and other struggles. Please do not take pictures of guests at Oasis.

What to do when you arrive: Go through a door on the right of the Church (not on the exterior stairs) on street level, and down a long hallway. Just before you reach the doors to the offices of the Episcopal Diocese, you will see a stair case on the left that leads down to the kitchen. If your group needs to use a handicapped accessible entrance, that is available once you enter the building - have someone alert the kitchen to this need and they will help you.

Look for Joe in the lower level of the Church, probably in their hall or kitchen. Joe leads this program the first Monday of each month. He will have bought the food that you will be preparing and cooking. Follow his lead in preparing food, serving guests, and cleaning up. He is great in working with our high schoolers and talking about this ministry.

Notes for Adult Leaders: It is necessary to have two adults present, in case of an emergency of any type requiring someone to leave. Please collect the permission forms and keep them with you until the end of the service. When returning to Concord, both adults need to stay until all the kids have been picked up by their parents. Please put the permission forms in the vestibule between the inner and outer doors of the office, and Tony will get them in the morning.