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ARCHDIOCESE of OMAHA

OFFICE OF EVANGELIZATION & CATECHESIS

Supported by the Annual Appeal

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www.archomaha.org

To: Parents of young people taking part in the **YouthServe** program,

We are delighted that your son or daughter is joining us for **YouthServe**, a 3-day program that helps young people and their leaders learn about people in need and enables them to reach out in service to others. We are working hard to guarantee that **YouthServe** will be a tremendous experience for everyone who attends!

Enclosed you will find **YouthServe** program materials and practical suggestions for helping your child and family get the most from the **YouthServe** experience. Among these materials are:

- Program Description Sheet and Schedule Overview
- ★ **YouthServe Consent and Liability Waiver**
- ★ **YouthServe Medical Matters**
- ★ **YouthServe Code of Behavior**
- An Experience of Community Living
- Program Packing List: Bring Alongs and Leave Behinds
- For Families: Getting the Most from the **YouthServe** Experience

Please read through the program materials carefully. **Complete, sign and return the three starred forms (Liability Waiver, Medical Matters and Code of Behavior) into your parish/school contact by the start of the program.**

Also make note of that if cancellation occurs after stated deadline, no refunds will be made.

As noted in the Program Schedule, **YouthServe** participants should arrive at **12:45 pm on Sunday** the first day of Youth Serve. The program closes with a special family session with mass scheduled from **6:45-8:30 PM on Tuesday**, the last day of Youth Serve. *Please make sure that your child eats before coming and has fulfilled his/her Sunday obligation of attending mass.*

Because of the nature of the program (i.e. one thing builds on another) we ask that the young person be present from beginning (1:00-Sunday) to end (8:30 Tuesday). If this is not possible, we invite them to sign up for another Youth Serve that allows them to experience it in its entirety. The parent session and mass provides parents with a recap of their children's experiences and learnings. It also offers the opportunity to talk together about how young people and their families can continue to grow in their commitment to service.

The Emergency Phone number for the week will is: 402-679-0651(Cell Phone).Other numbers will be given to you by your adult group leader.

Rita Ramos
Office of Evangelization and Catechesis-Youth Ministry

YouthServe

A Young Adolescent Adventure in Christian Service Program Description Sheet

YouthServe Program Overview

- YouthServe** is a service-learning program especially designed for teams of adults and young adolescents going into the 8th and 9th grades in Catholic parishes and schools. Teams must include one adult (21 yrs. or older) for every five youth. The adult can be a youth minister, teacher, junior high catechist or involved parent.
- YouthServe** gets young people involved in service, and provides them with the learning and reflection opportunities needed to transform ordinary service into a discipleship event.
- YouthServe** gives young people and their leaders concepts and skills that are easily applicable to service projects in their backhome setting.
- YouthServe** is family-friendly, offering family members the opportunity to share in the experience and to grow in their commitment to serving others together.

YouthServe Program Schedule

- YouthServe** in the Archdiocese of Omaha is a 3 day-2 overnight experience that offers quality time for learning, service and prayer.
- YouthServe** begins at 1:00 PM with a prayer service on the first day and closes at approx. 8:30 PM on the 3rd day. The last day includes a special, evening session/mass for parents.

YouthServe Program Goals

- To provide local faith communities an opportunity to involve young adolescents in a creative and integrated approach to service learning from a Catholic perspective.
- To introduce and model for local leaders a process for engaging young adolescents in effective Catholic service learning experiences.
- To provide local communities an opportunity to impact the way families with young adolescents view, understand and respond to justice issues in their community.

YouthServe Participant Objectives

By participating in this program young adolescents will...

- deepen their understanding of the gospel call to discipleship and justice
- learn about local and domestic poverty and explore its causes, consequences and responses
- explore Catholic social teaching and its application to life today
- live, learn, pray and work in community with other Catholic youth and adults
- engage in hands-on service involvement with people and agencies that assist people in need locally
- share their learning insights and creative ideas with peers and family members
- discover ways to continue their justice and service involvement as individuals, with their families, and with their parish or school groups

Day One:

11:00 Arrival of adult team leaders
12:45 Arrival and Settling In
1:00 Beginning of Program & Community Builders
2:30 Welcome & Opening Prayer
3:30 Service as Discipleship
4:00 Catholic Social Teaching
5:00 Living in Community
5:15 Meal Prayer/Meal
5:30 Dinner
6:15 People in Need
7:45 Break
8:00 Poverty Video & Processing
9:00 Preparing for Service
9:30 Free Time and Games
10:15 Night Prayer
10:45 Get ready for Bed
11:00 Lights Out



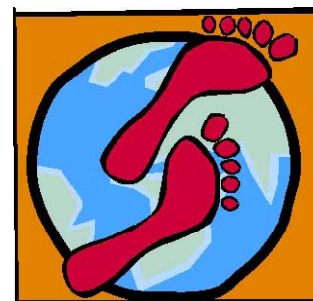
Day Two

7:30 Rise and Shine
8:00 Breakfast and packing lunches
8:30 Prayer Send off
8:45 Depart to Work Sites
2:30 Leave from Work sites
3:00 Clean Up and Free Time
4:00 Journaling
4:15 Warm Up Activity
4:20 Process Day and Site Sharing
5:00 Preparation for Closing Mass
5:25 Meal Prayer and Dinner
6:15 Warm up activity
6:20 Prepare for Parent Presentation
7:00 Simulation Experience & Processing
10:00 Social
10:30 Night Prayer
10:45 Get ready for bed
11:00 Lights Out



Day Three

7:30 Rise and Shine
8:00 Breakfast and packing lunches
8:30 Prayer Send off
8:45 Depart to Work Sites
2:30 Leave from Work sites
4:00 Journaling
4:15 Warm Up Activity
4:20 Process Day & Site Sharing
4:45 Catholic Social Teaching Connection
5:05 Gifts Shared in Service
5:20 Meal Prayer and Dinner
6:00 Closing Details
6:45 Family Mass and Presentations



Consent and Liability Waiver

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM AND LIABILITY WAIVER

Participant's Name _____

Birth date: _____ Sex _____

Parent/Guardian's name: _____

Home address: _____
Street City Zip

Home phone: _____ Business phone: _____

I, _____, grant permission for my youth, _____,
Parent or guardian's name Youth's name

to participate in this Archdiocesan youth ministry event that is located away from the parish/school site. This activity will take place under the guidance and direction of Archdiocesan parish/campus youth ministers and/or volunteers from parishes/schools. A brief description of the event follows:

Name of Event: Youth Serve

Purpose of Event: Service Learning Experience

Location: Columban Retreat Center

Date and Time of event: Check appropriate one

_____ Sun. June 24, 1:00 pm -Tues. June 26 8:30 pm *or*

_____ Sun. July 8, 1:00 pm-Tues. July 10 8:30 pm *or*

_____ Sun. July 22, 1:00 pm-Tues, July 24, 8:30 pm

Transportation: Individual Responsibility-- To and from worksites transportation is the responsibility of the parish/school group leader.

As parent and/or guardian, I remain legally responsible for any personal actions taken by the above named minor ("participant").

I agree on behalf of myself, my child named herein, or heirs, successors, and assigns, to hold harmless and defend _____, its officers, directors and agents, and the Archdiocese of maha,

Name of sponsoring Parish/School

chaperons, or representatives associated with the event arising from or in connection with my child attending the event or in connection with any illness or injury or cost of medical treatment in connection therewith and I agree to compensate the parish/school, its officers, directors and agents, and the Archdiocese of Omaha, chaperons, or representatives associated with the event for reasonable attorney's fees and expenses which may incur in any action brought against them as a result of such injury or damage, unless such claim arises from the negligence of the parish/diocese.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Photo Release: Pictures of my child taken during the event may be used in print or electronic media for the purposes of publicity for future events, unless I indicate to the Archdiocesan Coordinator of Youth Ministry in writing to the contrary.

Medical Matters

Participant Name _____

I hereby warrant that to the best of my knowledge, my child is in good health, and I assume all responsibility for the health of my child. **(Of the following statements pertaining to medical matters, sign only those that are applicable.)**

Emergency Medical Treatment: In the event of an emergency, I hereby give permission to transport my child to a hospital for emergency medical or surgical treatment. I wish to be advised prior to any further treatment by the hospital or doctor. In the event of an emergency, if you are unable to reach me at the above numbers, contact:

Name & relationship: _____

Phone: _____ Family doctor: _____ Phone: _____

Family Health Plan Carrier: _____ Policy #: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Other Medical Treatment: (In the event it comes to the attention of the parish/school, its officers, directors and agents, and the Archdiocese of Omaha, chaperones, or representatives associated with the activity that my child becomes ill with symptoms such as headache, vomiting, sore throat, fever, diarrhea, I want to be called collect (with phone charges reverse to myself),

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Medications: My child is taking medication at present. MY child will bring all such medications necessary, and such medications will be well-labeled. Names of medications and concise directions for seeing that the child takes such medications, including dosage and frequency of dosage, are as follows:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Sign 'a' or 'b', not both

a) No medication of any type, whether prescription or non-prescription, may be administered to my child unless the situation is life-threatening and emergency treatment is required.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

b) I hereby grant permission for non-prescription medication (such as aspirin, throat lozenges, cough syrup) to be given to my child, if deemed appropriate.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Specific Medical Information: The parish/school/Archdiocese will take reasonable care to see that the following information will be held in confidence.

Allergic reactions (medications, foods, plants, insects, etc.): _____

Immunizations: Date of last tetanus/diphtheria immunization: _____

Does the child have a medically prescribed diet? _____

Any physical limitations? _____ Is the child subject to chronic homesickness, emotional reactions to new situations, sleepwalking, fainting? _____

Has the child recently been exposed to contagious disease or conditions, such as mumps, measles, chickenpox, etc? If so, date and disease or condition: _____ You should be aware of these special medical conditions of my child: _____

Youth Code of Behavior

We are happy and excited that you are joining us as part of **Youth Serve**. The Code of Behavior has been developed as a way of helping participants understand what is expected of them during the event, and of making the learning experience healthy and full of growth for all involved. Please read through the Code carefully, as you will be expected to honor and uphold it throughout your time with us.

- As necessary as rules are to maintain order, they can't and won't guarantee a successful event experience. Success depends on people's willingness to work together for the common good.
- Participants take part in **Youth Serve** as part of a parish or school team. The recommending adult leader of each team maintains primary responsibility for the actions of his/her team members. The families of participants assume responsibility for any damage done to the housing facilities.
- While participating in **Youth Serve** we ask that you do not invite friends who are not part of the program to come and visit you.
- Participants are expected to attend all sessions and community activities. Name badges should be worn during all program activities.
- Dress throughout the **Youth Serve** experience is casual but appropriate for a Christian environment, however shirts and shoes are required in all areas except the dormitories. T-shirts/sweatshirts with alcohol, tobacco or sexual overtones are not acceptable, nor are clothes exposing any part of under garments. Sleepwear is only permitted in the sleep areas.
- Socializing should take place only in the designated public area of the housing facility. No visiting is allowed in sleeping areas occupied by the opposite sex without the permission and presence of an adult leader.
- Christian behavior is expected at all times. Respect for individuals, the community and the facilities is required. Teasing, harassment (this includes bullying), sexual jokes, inappropriate displays of affection, etc. are considered inappropriate for this Christian environment.
- Each day will be a busy one-making adequate sleep a necessity. Participants must be in their respective rooms by curfew time. The noise level in the sleeping areas should be kept to a minimum. Scheduled quiet and silent times must be honored.
- Archdiocese of Omaha** adheres to the State Statutes in regards to tobacco products, therefore tobacco products are not allowed by anyone under the age of 18.
- The purchase, possession or consumption of alcohol or drugs by participants will result in immediate dismissal from the program. Major infractions of the Code of Behavior and other inappropriate behavior will meet with the same consequences.

Parent or Guardian: I agree that my child shall abide by the rules and regulations outlined in the **Youth Serve** Code of Behavior, I have reviewed it and discussed the Code with my child prior to signing this form. I agree that if my child fails to consistently abide by the Code or engages in a serious infraction of the Code, he or she may be immediately dismissed from **Youth Serve** and sent home at my expense.

Signature _____ Date _____

Youth Participant: I understand and agree to the **Youth Serve** Code of Behavior, I also understand that my parent(s) or guardian will be notified at the time of any infractions requiring my dismissal from the program and that I will be sent home at my own or their expense. (Your signature must appear below in order to participate in **Youth Serve**.)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

YouthServe

An Experience of Community Living

YouthServe is an experience of community living. Participants will work, pray, eat, recreate, learn, and relax together during the three day service-learning program.

Preparation for community living begins long before the service event. It is an attitude that involves everything from how you treat one another as a team, to how you pack your suitcase or bag. What does "community" have to do with getting packed for the trip?

Consider the following when you pack:

Less is best. Your bag needs to fit comfortably in the car or van you're using to travel to your **YouthServe** site and in the sleeping room or dormitory facility. Think, as you pack, in terms of minimums—how little can I get away with packing—instead of maximums—how large a bag can I get away with and what's the most I can squeeze in before it splits at the seams!

Keep it simple. Expensive, brand-name clothes, and gold or silver jewelry have their place in life. But when you're working with folks struggling to survive on minimum wage (or less) those things can get in the way. Pack clothing that's simple, neat, clean and appropriate. Leave expensive rings, chains, and earrings behind at home. (The housing facility, work sites, and program sponsor cannot be held responsible for lost or stolen articles.) Sure, we want to look presentable at all times, but let's keep focused on the work we're doing instead of how we look doing it!

Casual but Appropriate. Remember we are partly judge by how we look and what we wear so pack only appropriate clothing. Please leave at home clothing that exposes underwear, advertisements of alcohol, tobacco or sexual overtones, clothing exposing the mid-section or extremely low cut blouses or revealing low riding pants or short shorts.

Think of packing as a team task. Everything you'll need for the program doesn't need to be stuffed into your own bag. Many items can be shared by several people (or by the team as a whole)—like hair dryers and curling irons, tubes of toothpaste and bottles of shampoo. Instead of bringing multiples of everything, decide as a group on the minimum you need, then pack accordingly.

For the common good. For 3 days you are invited to live as a community. You are asked to bring snacks to share with that larger community. In other words, the snacks that you bring will remain in the dining area to be shared for the common good of the community. Other than water, no food and drink may be taken into the dormitory area.

Ready, set, pack! And while you're doing it, pay close attention to the clothes and supplies recommended in the **Bring Along/Leave Behind** lists.

YouthServe

Bring Alongs and Leave Behinds

Appropriate Dress

Dress at both the program and work sites should be casual but modest, i.e., jeans or long shorts, shirts/t-shirts and tennis shoes. No cutoffs or short-shorts, low riding pants, tank tops, belly-shirts or sport bras, or t-shirts with suggestive or violent language, advertising tobacco or alcohol. This “conservative” approach to dress is taken with an awareness of the nature of the program and respect for other people’s sensitivity to proper attire.

Bring Alongs: Individual (Take the Minimum; Pack Lightly)

Sleeping Bag (or bed linens) & Pillow	Flashlight
Towel/Washcloth	Soap
Jeans or Work Pants	Toothbrush
T-Shirts or Work Shirts	Comb/Hair
Lightweight Jacket or Sweater	Brush
Sleepwear	Bible
Socks	Journal
Underwear	Writing Materials
Work Cap or Sun Visor	Medication
Work Gloves	Personal Needs (deodorant, etc.)
Hair Bands, Bandannas	Sunscreen
Sneakers or Work Boots (flip-flops should not be worn to work-sites)	Sunglasses

Don't Forget...

- **A Bible**
- **A Snack to Share (no snacks in dorms for critter prevention)**
- **Re-usable Water Bottle**

(Caring for God’s Creation’ is part of the learning experience so where possible we will be doing our part. We ask each person not to bring disposable water bottles)

Bring Alongs: Parish Team (Take the minimum; distribute it evenly)

Basic First Aid Kit
Insect Repellent
Favorite Board Game (optional)
Basketball, Soccer Ball, Frisbee, etc. (optional)
Cooler (large enough to hold lunch & drinks for your team)
Cooler Ice Packs

Leave Behinds: Individual & Community

Ipod/MP3/Electronic Games
Expensive Clothing or Jewelry
Cell Phones-If you bring a cell phone, you will be asked to keep it packed away during all sessions and used only for emergencies

Remember:

Everything you are taking should fit into one bag. Your pillow and a sleeping bag may be carried or packed separately.

What not to bring
Sample inappropriate clothing



Low riding pants that expose underwear



Tops that expose undergarments



Tops or shorts that expose mid-drift area either while standing or while seated



Low cut tops



Clothing advertising: alcohol, tobacco or messages that can be construed as a sexual innuendo or other non-Christian message

Getting the Most from the YouthServe Experience

YouthServe should be a great experience for your child and for your entire family. It provides an opportunity for you and your child to learn and dialogue together about important things in life, like what we believe as Catholics and how we live out our values in the world. To make the most of the **YouthServe** experience, consider the following:

Prior to the Service-Learning Overnight

- Let your child know how proud you are of his or her willingness to take part in **YouthServe**
- Read through the **YouthServe** Overview sheet to familiarize yourself with what will be happening during the program.
- Talk with your child about the issues under discussion and to find out what she or he is learning through the sessions.
- Offer to assist your child in packing for the program.
- Pray for your child and for the entire team as they prepare for the **YouthServe** experience.
- Share a special meal together (at home or out) the night before your son or daughter departs for his/her **YouthServe** session.

During the YouthServe Program

- Post the program schedule in a visible place at home and/or work so you'll know where your child is and what she/he is up to.
- Pray for your child, for the members of your local team, for the program presenters and participants, and for the people they will be reaching out to during the week.
- Do something special for yourself (and for other family members) while your son or daughter is gone: read a good book, go to the movies, invite friends for dinner, call or write someone you've been meaning to connect with, volunteer time with a group you respect and support.

Following the YouthServe Experience

On Returning Home: Young people return from an experience like **YouthServe** with different levels of readiness to share. Some come home tired from the work, and need some sleep before they're ready to talk. Others are excited and want to share every detail —with you and with anyone else willing to listen. Still others need time to process the experience, and won't be ready to go into detail until they've put it all together in a way that makes sense to them. Some may find the experience hard to talk about, feeling that, since you weren't there, you just won't understand. Having lived with your child as long as you have, you probably know in advance which of the above categories he or she will fall into! Let your child know that you're ready to listen. Ask an initial question or two and go where it takes you.

The sharing may come out in bits and pieces rather than as a whole. You may, for example, start off hearing more about the new friends they made than about the work they accomplished. Or learn indirectly about the thoughts they're carrying from a chance comment about the unfairness of life. In either case, let them tell the story at their own pace.

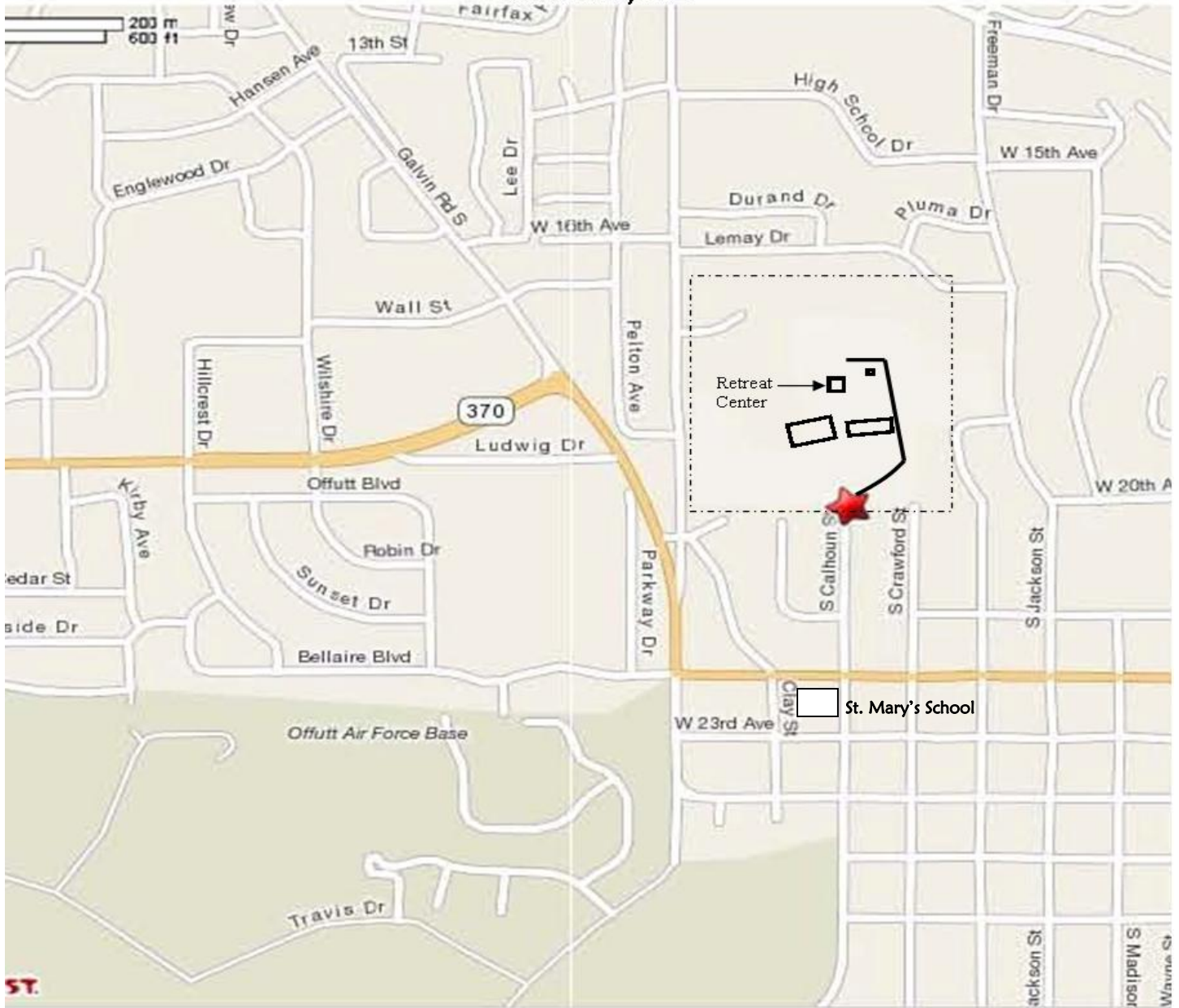
The **YouthServe** experience may well affect how your son or daughter views issues like poverty, hunger and human rights. When we can put names and faces on the poor and needy through service,

we too are changed. The experience may raise questions about why people have to live like they do, leaving your child feeling puzzled or somehow "guilty" because of all that he or she has. Then again, he or she may be basking in pride at what's been accomplished and ready to make a commitment to regular service programming for the coming year. Please, make time to listen and to hear the feelings that stand behind the spoken words.

Continuing the Service Experience: An important part of the **YouthServe** program is learning how to integrate service into one's life in an ongoing way. Consider the following approaches:

- Discuss how you spend your money as a family, and how you make decisions about which groups and causes to support. Decide together what your "tithing" priorities should be for the coming month or year.
- Consider monthly sponsorship of a child or family in need through a group like Christian Foundation for Children and Aging.
- Encourage your child to take an active part in the justice and service strategies put together by his/her **YouthServe** team in response to their service experience.
- Discuss together what you're presently doing, as individuals and as a family, to reach out to people in need. If there's more you'd like to do, decide on a service project you can get involved with as a family.
- Encourage your son or daughter to continue praying for those he or she met during the service week. Join with him or her in prayer for all the children and families in need in our own country and around the world.

**St. Columban Retreat Center
1904 Calhoun Street
Bellevue, NE**



As you enter the Columban's property, just stay to your right. Check-in is at the Retreat Center.

From Kennedy Freeway

Exit on 370, head east, right on Galvin Rd, left on Mission, left on Calhoun. St. Mary's School is on your right.

