

## Middle School Apostolic Works Commissioning Mass Reflection

*by Gia Frank '23*

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There are about 700 students at Chaminade Middle School, and each grade has to do a certain amount of hours. If every student just did the minimum amount of hours, 6<sup>th</sup> graders 10, 7<sup>th</sup> graders 15, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders 20 hours. Do you know how many apostolic work hours our school would complete? Well, if you do the math, it is close to 10,000 hours! That is enough to make a difference in so many peoples' lives. What a change we can create! And right in the center of it all is all of us, the amazing Chaminade students.

I'm Gia Frank. A Chaminade student. A child of God. A member of this wonderful community. And this is what I think apostolic service is.

You can serve in and outside our community. You can serve on campus or off. No matter what type of service you choose, no matter what organization you help, you are making a difference to someone. I can recall a time in my life when someone shared their generosity and passion for service with me, and I can honestly say it has made a huge difference in my life.

One spring day at Chaminade Middle School in 2016, I was a fifth-grader going on my first school tour. And I mean my very first one. I had been at the same school for seven years with the same kids, and I really couldn't remember what life was like before that. And I was scared. Looking back now, I don't really understand why I was so nervous. I guess I was just afraid of something new.

I was taken into the conference room, and I sat down in one of the chairs. Then, through the door walked Mrs. Willick, with two eighth-graders. And to every fifth-grader out there, an eighth-grader is a mysterious unknown creature. You want to be one, but you know absolutely nothing about them. We followed these 8<sup>th</sup> graders around as they told us about Chaminade and showed us all the awesome facilities.

We went to the flex space, the Gym, then Campus Ministry. The tour guide could see that I was nervous, so she walked up and asked, what's your favorite subject? I told her I liked English and she told me all about Chaminade's English department. Then, she asked me for my name. She continued to ask what I enjoyed doing outside of school, what was my favorite color. As she asked me these insignificant,

tiny questions, I realized something huge: I can do this. I just saw the most beautiful campus, and I just talked to someone who wanted to know what I enjoy and who I am. Someone who cared and who was being of service. That was when I knew this was where I was going to go to middle school.

I have learned the importance of serving at Chaminade. I'm in Eagle Council, and I'm in Shine. These are just two simple ways I give back to my school community. Two simple ministries in which I can bring a smile to my peers or bring some happiness to another student who is having a tough time.

I just came here in search of a school, but I found a home and family I didn't know what was missing from my life. I have witnessed the power of God's love through this community, and it is a powerful thing.

Now, I don't even remember that girl's name. She graduated before I started sixth grade. But I'll always remember her. She helped start my life here. That girl had a gift. She was good at making people feel welcome. She understood what people were feeling, and wanted to ask, she wanted to listen. God has given us the most amazing talents, that are different and unique in each of us, and it is up to us to use those gifts to better God's world. For he is the light and way that guides everyone out of the darkness. Today we have been commissioned to go out and serve others. To serve in and outside our community, to make a difference, to create change.

I invite all the students to really think about how you are going to use your gifts to better this community and yourself. If there is one thing God gave you that is powerful and cannot be overlooked, it's your voices. What you do well, and what you are passionate about, is what makes you special. It is what makes you...you, and it is what makes you a servant leader.

This year I plan on participating in many different service projects. From Service Saturday to Light to the Night, to visiting my old school to help out in the classroom. I plan on giving back to the communities that have shown me so much love that have helped me become the best version of myself.

Lastly, I would like you all to imagine what would happen if we all used our gifts to make someone, just one person smile, to make them feel loved. You are a light of God. And God gave you your talents because he knew you were the person who could inspire change. So let's use those 10,000 hours for good...to represent our school, ourselves and our God. Let's go out serve the Lord, and together we will create change! Thank you.