

Eric Auberger  
St. Ignatius

Becoming a part of a Catholic High School community will be a big step for me, and I look forward to making a positive contribution. I believe that living my faith is essential to making a difference in my world. Like St. John Baptist de La Salle, I enjoy putting much time and effort towards helping the needy and letting others know that God is in my heart. I especially support my friends, school, my family, and most importantly the Church of God.

Service is a major element of my faith life. I enjoy doing service because it shows love and kindness, whether it is supporting unborn babies, the homeless, the hungry, or organizations that help the sick. One of the best parts of service is making people happy, meeting someone lonely that I might not see again, and letting them know that someone genuinely cares. I look forward to becoming involved in many service opportunities as part of the new Signum Fidei Institute at La Salle.

Many of my favorite service projects that I have participated in have benefited the poor and chronically ill. I have contributed to two swim-a-thons, which included collecting pledges and swimming laps in a competition pool. Both times I swam about 200 laps, one to benefit a blood bank for leukemia patients, and the other for the Oncology unit at Children's Hospital. I also participate in Angel Food Ministries, which involves packing frozen food for the people of the community of St. Leo's Church in Fairmount; then taking it to their cars so that they can take it home and have something to live off of for a week or two. The people appreciate our help and like seeing students helping. The Drop Inn Center is located in downtown Cincinnati, where people come in from the streets, and we serve a free hot dinner to the poor and homeless. Finally, the WSO Foundation was established to benefit the Make-a-Wish program. I have helped at their annual golf outing fundraisers, as well as for a home improvement project in our own community, in support of children battling life threatening illnesses.

Yet I have learned that I can make a difference closer to home with simple acts of kindness. I have discovered that a very nice, easy way to make someone smile, especially adults, is by always making eye contact and engaging in casual, friendly conversation. It

shows that I am polite and lets others know that I am interested in them. I feel this has even helped me be successful with my job delivering the Community Press. With my own

Eric Auberger

page 2 of 2

family I recognize that everyone needs hugs; it is a great way to show that I care for them and gives comfort in times of need.

A good way to influence others is to practice leadership among my peers and youngsters, whether at home, school, community, or outreach programs. Football and baseball are two of my favorite sports. I have always been one of the smallest players on my team, but I do not let that get me down. Instead I use it to inspire people that are smaller than me, to show that they can do great things, too. This year I was known as the peacemaker among my peers on the football team. By problem-solving and controlling arguments, I helped to unify our team and become successful on and off the field.

As an eighth grader this year, we take up new responsibilities, one of them a “Big Buddy” to a first grader. The main priority is to be a role model for the Little Buddy. So far my Little Buddy and I are best buds; we talk to each other in the hallway, and we enjoy our time together. I know that I can make his day just by acknowledging him or including his favorite things, like football, in our activities. My Little Buddy is a great kid, but he still has some things to learn, and my goal is to help him succeed and keep him on the right path. I plan to continue our relationship after I graduate, as a positive role model for years to come, by going to his games and checking in on him from time to time. I hope this helps him be a good “Big Buddy” to someone else some day.

I also participate in the music ministry and am a Eucharistic Minister at St. Ignatius. By having active roles in the Mass, I hope to show younger people that it is good to be involved in the Church. At the same time, I am serving the Lord and His people. This year I also have been nominated as a class representative and assigned to a first grade classroom. I like my assignment, because I have a classroom of 20 or more little first graders looking up to me for support. I have the chance to model leadership for them and to listen to their thoughts and answer questions. I hope to be able to really make a difference in their lives at school.

Being an active Catholic has been a factor in my life that continues to teach me how to help others. This is true whether in a service opportunity or just starting a

conversation. I will continue to find ways to make others smile, by simply doing what Jesus would do.