

Mackenzie Corbin
Immaculate Heart of Mary - OH

My two favorite sayings, “One smile can go a long way” and “One small kid can make a huge difference” usually run in my head whenever I’m out and about. I hold doors open, not only for the elderly, but for everyone, just in case they might be having a rough day and need a little kindness in their day. No matter where I am, I put others before me. Does everyone have enough to eat or drink? I’m willing to give up my portion of something to help another.

Ever since I participated in the Aubrey Rose Foundation American Girl Fashion show when I was 8 and 10, I became fascinated with the word, ‘foundation’. Upon hearing Aubrey’s story, I’ve wanted to make some impact on the world, or at least to a few people. I started asking my friends to bring canned goods to my parties, so I could make a couple families be able to have a nice Thanksgiving or Christmas meal, even if it just came out of a can.

Two years ago, I received an email about an elderly man named Francis. He was sad because he never received any Christmas mail. I talked with the PTO at my school, Immaculate Heart of Mary, and got a PTO grant to buy stamps. Then I organized my friends together to make cards for him so he would know that he indeed had little angels looking over him. I called this the ‘Francis Foundation’.

This school year, I was elected co-president of student council. I learned that our student council leader and school principal’s mother was terminally ill. I knew that our principal must be devastated and thought of an idea to

cheer her up, or at least let her know that she was in our prayers. I organized an effort to send out cards to every single person on student council to bring in \$3 each. As the money started to stream in, I realized how much I enjoyed the feeling of helping others. The next weekend I took the money to Things Remembered, an engraving store, and purchased a beautiful silver frame. I had it engraved with some loving, encouraging words and then asked my teachers if they could give me a picture of our student council body to put in it. When I handed the frame to my leader, there were tears in her eyes, and at that moment it hit me. I really love making people feel happy. Ever since then, I have continued to work at the New England Club (a senior retirement home), and whenever a new volunteer opportunity pops up, I take it.

I plan to continue helping others when I enter St. Ursula Academy next year because I really like making a difference in people's lives and helping to put a smile on their faces. God gives us all unique talents and skills and it is up to us to use them to make others' lives just a bit brighter.

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