

For me, making a difference in someone else's life starts with showing compassion. Compassion is defined as "the ability to recognize the suffering of others and then take action to help. Compassion embodies a tangible expression of love for those who are suffering."

I believe that compassion is a meaningful part of my own life and one that makes a difference for others that I meet. I have learned that many people judge one another first, and it can be very hurtful. So, I try to do the opposite and put myself in another person's shoes and show compassion for whatever they might be experiencing. It is easy to jump to conclusions and judge others. I try to imagine what other people are going through and how they may be feeling. I use that as my guide to show kindness and to make a difference. When I see others in need, I try to help by offering a hug, an ear to listen, or just a smile to lift their spirits.

There are many ways I show compassion for those around me in my everyday life. Whether I am holding the door for someone at the store, saying thank you to show my gratitude, wearing a mask to keep others safe, or making weekly calls to grandparents, I always strive to make a positive impact in other people's lives. I want the people around me to feel loved and know that they matter.

I participate in many outreach opportunities to show my love to people of all different backgrounds. I belong to Magnified Giving where seventh and eighth graders find a non-profit organization to support such as Cancer Family Care, Four Paws for Ability, Children's Dyslexia Centers of Cincinnati, and even the Aubrey Rose Foundation. We learn about these non-profit organizations and together our team decides which one we think has the greatest need. We then give our time, treasures, and talents to help raise awareness and money for the organization we chose.

Some ways that I make a difference in others' lives is baking cakes and delivering them to Our Daily Bread homeless shelter, raking leaves at the nunnery, making dinners for local families battling health issues, organizing hand-outs at Matthew 25 Ministries, walking to raise funds for ALS patients, acting as a youth leader at vacation bible school, preparing meals for the disadvantaged at the Rose Garden Home Mission, and collecting much-needed goods for homebound elders.

I honestly believe that my participation in the St. George Food Pantry and the Kindness Project at my school provide the most meaningful and impactful difference in others' lives. Each Christmas, I volunteer with my family at the St. George Food Pantry. We purchase, wrap, and donate warm clothes, toys, and kitchen items (among other things) for families that cannot afford to give gifts at Christmas. We then go to the pantry and work with other members of the community to organize the gifts according to category and age. Many families are in need and the line to receive gifts extends around the building. Once the doors open, I receive a visitor's wish list and it is my job to search for gifts that will make their holidays brighter. I really enjoy searching for the children's gifts the most and I take great care to choose items that will bring a smile to their faces. I know what it is like to be a kid and how special Christmas can be, so I want others to feel the same way. I feel so much joy and love when distributing gifts each Christmas to these families and when they take the bag out of my hand, they are profoundly thankful. When I show compassion to these families, the gratefulness they give in return reminds me of God's love.

Another way that I show compassion for others is through the Kindness Project at my grade school. The idea of the Kindness Project is quite simple – to show kindness toward others. It seems like an easy thing to do but kids of all ages forget sometimes to be kind and include everyone around them. Our school counselor created the program because he was bullied as a child and does not want anyone else to have that experience. Only eighth graders are eligible to participate in this club and my job is to encourage students to always be kind to one another and make them feel like they belong. I visit homeroom classes of the lower grades and present the latest project that everyone can participate in to show kindness to others. This year, we created kindness rainbows where each act is rewarded with a positive note that the entire school can see. We encourage our fellow students to have many acts of kindness so that each row of our rainbow will be filled by the end of the year. The rainbows are displayed in every hallway and are making our school much more colorful. The positive impact of the Kindness Project on others is that it shows that there are good people in the world who care for them and want to help them succeed in life. As a leader of this project, I not only encourage this behavior, but show my own kindness by hugging others, saying hi in the hallways, complimenting my peers, and showing respect to my teachers and my classmates.

I am excited to continue this type of involvement at Mount Notre Dame. Mount Notre Dame has many opportunities for me to grow my passion for making a difference and I look forward to it participating in programs like Adopt-a-Sis, Reach for the Stars, or BeYoutiful. I want to build upon the community service that I have been doing for most of my grade school years and home life and expand all the ways I can make a greater positive impact in the lives of others. I am also looking forward to making new friends with girls that feel passionate about helping others and I want to be part of a team that makes a difference in people's lives. I hope to continue in my involvement and one day become a leader at MND. Through outreach, I want the people I am helping to feel loved and cared for, above all else.

Thank you for your consideration for the Aubrey Rose Foundation Scholarship. After spending time researching and learning about this nonprofit, I am even more inspired to continue to help others who are in need. What you do for critically ill children and their families is amazing!