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Mother Theresa once said, "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." I try to live by this quote every day. I have made a goal for myself that every day I try to make a difference in someone else's life. I know these gestures may seem small, but I hope that they are truly making an impact in other people's lives. I love seeing all the smiles that just one person's small acts of kindness can bring to the world.

I have been given many opportunities to serve others; through my school, through my parish, and in my community. Within my school, All Saints, I am a volunteer in a tutoring program. I give up some of my time during the school day to tutor first grade students. I find this rewarding, and I love to see their excitement when they learn something new. It brings me so much joy to share my talents with others and to see the impact I can make in their lives. I also am a member of a club at my school called "Shamrocks for You." This club is similar to what high schools call "Student Ambassadors." We participate in a variety of activities to help promote our school and its Catholic mission. We are also a character team that helps encourage students to do good works. Two of my favorite activities include helping with Kindergarten screening and giving tours of our school. I also enjoy the Christmas tradition of receiving the name of a child in foster care. I carefully shop for gifts for that child, wrap them and bring them to school in the hopes that I will make Christmas a little more joyful for that child.

My parish also provides opportunities to serve others. I am a Eucharistic minister at mass every week. I really enjoy this experience. It has strengthened my faith and my connection to God. I love seeing my fellow parishioners as they come to me for communion, and I love serving them in this way. I am also involved in a program with Tender Mercies Living Community in Over the Rhine. I bake cookies and donate other food items that are used to feed the residents of the community on the third Tuesday every month.

One of the most memorable parish service projects in which I participate in is the annual Thanksgiving co-op with St. Joseph Church in Over the Rhine. My family and I go to St. Joseph Church and help package all of the donated food into boxes. Then we drive throughout downtown delivering the meals to the families in need. It is hard to see all of the families that are in need in our city, but it is gratifying to see how appreciative the families are when they receive Thanksgiving meals. I want these families to know that they are special in the eyes of God, and that they are cared for by those of us from All Saints Parish.

Within my community of Montgomery, I have found a service organization that means a lot to me. It is called Lion's Threads. It provides clothing for students in Pre-k through sixth grade in East Price Hill. There is a "store" in Rees E. Price Academy where students can "shop" to get things that they do not have. I donate everything that I can to this organization. I know that my family's clothing and shoes go directly to the young children in need rather than to a resale shop. I feel that everyone should have a

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coat, socks, shoes, books and personal hygiene products, and that young children should not go without these things.

My very favorite service activity is with a program called Stablemates. I feel so lucky to be a part of Stablemates. It is an organization that connects underprivileged children with horses and nature. I learned to ride horses when I was eight years old at Green Acres Equine Center, which is a non-profit stable that takes in rescued and donated horses. Riding has definitely become my passion and is something that has brought so much joy to my life. I understand that most underprivileged children do not have access to horses and farms. That is why I love being part of Stablemates. Green Acres invites Stablemates to bring inner-city children from downtown Cincinnati to the farm. As a volunteer, I help to give the children their first experience with horses. It is fantastic. Most of the children arrive feeling nervous or afraid of horses. By the end of the day, they don't want to get off of their horses because they are having so much fun. I help teach them how to groom their horse and put on the horse's tack. I also help them learn the basics of riding. I lead them through fun riding games and obstacle courses. It brings me so much pleasure to share my passion and love of horses with children who otherwise would not be exposed to the experience. I love to see the confidence that they develop and the sheer joy that it brings them.

Serving others is a big part of my life today and I expect that it always will be. When I give of myself I feel as though I receive so much more in return. When I read Aubrey Rose's story I am inspired to keep doing acts of kindness each day and to keep serving others. I know that no matter how small my actions may seem, they will make an impact in the lives of others. I hope to always serve and improve the lives of others in any way that I am able.