

# SOPHIE MEINHARDT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY

BY STEVEN MAURER

Considering that the topic for this year's scholarship is, "What will you leave to the next generation? Are you building your life on firm foundations?" I want to go to the Bible and the parable of the Two Foundations, which can be found in Matthew 8:24-29, in which a wise man builds his house on rock. A huge storm hit, and the house withstood the storm since it was built on rock. Then, a fool builds his house on sand. A huge storm hit, and the house collapsed and was completely ruined. I want to leave a firm foundation for the next generation, something that the next generation will build a beautiful house on. I want to lead others so that they will do the right thing always, and I want to give back to people that have made a difference in my life. I want to help my friends when they need it. I want to stand up for what is right, even if I'm standing alone. Most importantly, I want to serve God.

Two ways I serve God and Father Eric are by being an altar attendant and singing in the choir. Doing these things makes me feel like I am being loyal to God because I am living up to my Baptismal promise by participating in the liturgy and I am being useful to Father Eric because I am making his job easier. This makes me feel like I am doing God's will, and this makes me spiritually happy. Though it is good to serve God, it is also good to serve man. I do this by volunteering at the Green Township Library. As the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1, "So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. Avoid giving offense, whether to Jews or Greeks or the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in every way, not seeking my own benefit but that of the many, that they may be saved be imitators of me, as I am of Christ."

A way to build a firm foundation is to give to others who really need something more than we do. We are luckier than most people, with all the iPods, TVs, phones, laptops, games, food, clothing, and shelter we have. I see many people around today who take all of the above for granted. In third-world countries like Ghana and Nigeria, they are lucky if they even get two meals a day of something like beans and rice. Many people in these countries wear rags for clothes and live in poorly built huts where they sleep on the ground. In our country, you see many people on the streets outside sports stadiums and arenas holding a sign that says "Please give me money. I have no home. Thank you and God bless," while holding a cup in the other hand. Others are lucky to sleep in a cardboard box. I can raise money for these people. Also, since I want to be an architect when I grow up, I can design and help build homes for these people. I can also help the poor through the City Gospel Mission, a project that the 7<sup>th</sup> grade boys are working on. We wake up at 5 am one Saturday a month to help the soup kitchen feed the poor.

A way to lead others to do the right thing is helping young people. When I see a younger person getting picked on, like my brother, for example, I would stand up for them. That would send a message to the younger person to help others when they see others getting picked on. I can also help a younger person with their studies and with everyday life. Last summer, my family and I helped the elderly of the parish by doing chores they could not do. In return for our volunteer efforts, they donated money to help others get to World Youth Day in Australia.

I want to give back to people who have made a difference in my life, which includes my parents and St. Jude, the parish and the school. I want to give back by giving my time, talent, and treasures to make St. Jude a better place. I want to help future students at St. Jude receive the best Catholic education possible. The values that have been instilled into me will last a lifetime, and I want the future students of St. Jude to receive those same values.

Inspired by Sophie and Jack Schuermann, I went to work on helping Matthew Meyer, a 7<sup>th</sup> grade friend at Our Lady of Lourdes. We've been friends since 4th grade. When I found out that he had a rare blood disorder, we (my classmates and I) wanted to help the family. We have been praying for Matthew every day in class and at home since we found out. The Junior High held an auction which raised \$1,000 in Kroger gift cards, which helped him and our parish at the same time. Currently, my dad and I have been organizing a blood drive for him. We want it to make it an annual event in case anyone in our parish needs help. I have seen my family donate before, and I know how much it means to people who need the blood.

Recently 300,000 people traveled to Washington D.C. to participate in the March for Life against abortion. I want to be like them. I already do support pro-life causes because I believe that right from fertilization that little baby is a person, too. I believe that abortion is the death of an innocent life. Last summer, I did the Walk the Bridge for Life. Our family and many others walked across the Purple People Bridge to raise money for a group of pro-life organizations.

The values of giving to the poor, loving your neighbor, doing the right thing, and volunteering spiritually and publicly have been instilled into me by the St. Jude faculty and staff and my parents and other immediate family. I want to thank them for teaching me all of these values, because if they didn't teach me them, I might not be writing this essay. They loved me so much to teach me right from wrong. I want to thank them for showing me love even when they didn't have to. I love them, and they love me.