

Sophie Meinhardt Memorial Scholarship 2015

Suzanne Klosterman

St. Jude

A Heartwarming Action

Something I have done for someone else that was perfectly free of any personal gain was I warmed someone's heart with a simple green, plastic beaded necklace. It was St. Patrick's Day, a day my family has loved for generations, and we were preparing our float for the Saint Patrick's Day parade in downtown Cincinnati. The excitement was surging through the air as our family and friends were lining up preparing to sing, pass out green beaded necklaces, and most importantly, spread joy and laughter to anyone who was watching. All of the fun started when my grandpa, Jim Murphy, helped start this very parade while enjoying himself on St. Patti's day in Cincinnati. Because of this, St. Patti's Day (as my mom often calls it) has always been a very important day to my family and all of our friends who were very close to my grandpa himself. This day always brings the great memories my grandpa brought to our family.

As we were all getting ready to start the parade, the kids were chattering amongst themselves talking about how many necklaces they were wearing. (It had always been a big deal to have as many necklaces around your neck as possible.) The float started moving and the singing began. As part of our float, we like to pass out green beaded necklaces and show our true St. Patti's spirit. I had always liked to pass out necklaces and see everyone's happy faces including the occasional dog that was completely decked out in green. The only downside to this was when you ran out of beads in your hand, the next person waiting for a necklace was always so disappointed. It broke my heart when an eager mom waiting for a necklace was passed over.

On this particular Saint Patrick's Day, it was a perfect day. It was warm and sunny and it just seemed like my grandpa was just watching over us in heaven. I was passing out the beads to everyone and I was disappointed when I saw that I was slowly running out of beads. Just as I had passed out my last necklace, I saw the next woman in the crowd. She had a young little boy in her arms who had red eyes and tears streaming down his face. How was I supposed to just walk away leaving the young child without a necklace? So I grabbed the only necklace I had left, the one that was around my neck. I quickly placed the necklace around the little boy's neck and watched as his (and his mother's) face lit up with joy. My heart was immediately filled with joy and I have never forgotten that feeling.

This act of pure and selfless giving on my part brought happiness to someone else because it made a mother's and a little boy's day. This act of pure and selfless giving also made my day. The rest of that St. Patti's day I don't think that I ever stopped smiling. I think that everyone should always do selfless acts because not only does it make the person you helped feel good, it makes you feel good too. This act of mine may not have ended world hunger, but it did make one person's day just a little bit brighter. The world around us needs little acts like this every day in order to make progress in being the best place it can be.

As I completed this act of kindness I knew that my grandpa was smiling down on me from heaven. I do not remember him much, but I have heard all of the great (and hilarious) stories of him. Hearing these stories makes me want to great things for other people and it inspires me to be the best version of myself. This one simple act made me feel so warm and good that tears of joy flood my eyes every time I think about it. I do not know why this is but I think it has something to do with my grandpa who has made such an impact on me and my family's lives. I see my mom smile when she tells the stories of him and all of the things he has said.

When I gave my necklace to the young boy I knew that I had just made someone's day. As I walked away I was thinking about how one little act of kindness could make me so happy. It makes me wonder if everyone has felt that amazing heartwarming feeling. I wonder if these people even knew what they were doing or if they just thought of it as another little deed in their life. They need to realize that this is not just another little deed but something that can make someone's day ten times better.

This one little act makes me think of all of the good things that are in my life. It makes me think of my grandpa who would give me a pack of jelly beans each and every single time my family would visit his nursing home. This act fills my heart with pure joy and love and it makes me want to be the kindest person I can be. The look of happiness on the little boy's sad face makes my love for God seem one hundred times stronger. This one simple act of selflessness is part of what makes my life filled with everything happy and good.