

Sophie Meinhardt Memorial Scholarship 2016

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During my time at Visitation, I have learned an extensive amount of things that involve religion. But some of the most important things are the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. These guidelines have helped make me a better person by telling me in the most simplistic way how to live a good Christian life.

To truly understand how that came to be, I must first explain how and when I apply these guidelines. To feed the hungry, you must not simply donate a can of beans and call it a day, but after you donate them, you should go help deliver the food. I did that once for the St. Leo's food drive with all my friends. I really felt like I was making a difference but at the same time having fun. I had also demonstrated this when I helped in first grade to collect the school's canned food for Thanksgiving.

The next Work of Mercy I have lived with is visiting the sick. When I was around 10 or so, my Grandma was diagnosed with kidney failure. Throughout the next six months, my entire family would always be visiting the hospital non-stop to see how my Grandma was holding up. Sadly, after a long one year battle she passed away. This loss wasn't just hard for me but everyone in my family.

That Work of Mercy brings me to my next topic of burying the dead. For my Grandma's funeral, I signed up to be a pallbearer and to help in any way possible. Since then, I have become a server and helped not only at family funerals but at other people's funerals too. But it is not just about burying the dead and forgetting about it; you have to carry on their legacy, their courage, and even their hardship. By doing that, you can be a light that carries on their life even though they are no longer with us.

The next Work of Mercy that I use in my life is to instruct the ignorant. Now I don't like the term "ignorant" in this because it has a very bad connotation. To me, it means the people who haven't had a chance to learn and hear about all this world has to offer. But with that being said, I have shown this in my life by helping my special needs sister through her life by teaching her all the bells and whistles of most people's everyday life. This would include things like how to put the cap back on the toothpaste, helping with reading books, and teaching her how to use the microwave without setting fire to the kitchen.

For my next example, I have a mix of many different Works that were all demonstrated in this one activity. Last summer, I was asked if I wanted to help remove furniture from the old Mercy Hospital and, of course, I said yes. What we did was remove all chairs, tables, file cabinets, etc. on each floor. After that, we loaded it up on semi-trucks to be shipped down to Appalachia to be distributed among everyone there who needed it. What ties this back to the Works of Mercy is the fact that a table could have been used to eat dinner on or distribute drinks, and the cabinets could be used to store clothes.

But what would all this be without having some effect on me, well let me tell you. By doing things like working at the food drive and the hospital, I have been able to meet new people and get to know further those that I already knew. Also, by doing this, I have helped others live a happier and more comfortable life, which is the thing that hits me the most. Finally, by helping my Grandma and my sister I have not just helped them, but in a way also helped myself by having the satisfaction of knowing that by following these Works of Mercy I have helped make this world a better place.