Sophie Meinhardt Memorial Scholarship 2016

Grace Kelly
St. Jude

Actions Are Everything

Pope Francis has proclaimed a year of Mercy to the people of the world. The motto of this holy year is "Merciful like the Father". God has been merciful to me and to everyone in the world in so many ways. He has forgiven all of my sins, regardless of the offense, he has loved me unconditionally, and he has been there when I have needed him most. Throughout my life, I haved tried to live with both the spiritual and corporal works of mercy by being compassionate to others who need help and friendship, by being more open, and by counselling the doubtful.

When I first lived in Europe, I didn't fit in at all. You could say that I was an outcast. For weeks I sat alone at lunch and played by myself at recess. I watched other kids do fun activities and plan parties, but I was never included. I cried nearly every night because I missed having friends. Being alone was hard! One day, a girl named Michelle came up to me and asked me if I wanted to play with her. She was showing me something that I needed the most at that time of my life, mercy. After her act of kindness, people started talking to me, and asking me to hang out after school. I never understood until that moment how one person's act of mercy can affect another's life so much.

When I moved back to America, I was more compassionate towards other by being more open. Unlike when I left, I saw that people now had different reputations and labels, some good and some bad. Even people that I thought were my friends had changed. They didn't include me and others in activities or conversations. I didn't understand why that was happening, so I tried not to judge anyone. I made sure I got to know everyone. I realized that people sometimes are given unfair labels that can affect how people see them. Making friends with everyone was a mission that I was on. I did not let the number of likes a photo got on social media influence who I wanted to be friends with, I let God influence me.

So, as the years went by, I walked in the way of the Lord by trying to be a compassionate and merciful friend. It was amazing to me the number of times I noticed when others needed mercy and compassion. One example was when football season came around at Elder High School. All I wanted to do was walk around and talk to my friends, but I didn't. I saw a girl who was being bullied by some ninth grade boys, and because of those boys, she ran off crying. I asked her "What's wrong?", and she said that boys were throwing trash at her. Instead of continuing on with my friends, I decided to be merciful and comfort her. Later, when she stopped crying, I walked her up to the boys, and confronted them about their actions. The rest of the night we hung out and she said that it was one of the nicest times she has had in awhile, because of me. Once again I saw one act of mercy could affect another so deeply.

Today, I continue to show mercy, not just by being a friend but also by trying to counsel the doubtful. Let's face it, everyone has doubts about things, their intelligence, their appearance, their future, and even their religion. My younger sister once asked me about heaven. She asked

"What does heaven look like?", and I couldn't answer the question. She soon started doubting God and all that he promised his children, so I decided to help her. I told her, "Even though you can't see heaven now, it doesn't mean that it isn't waiting for you. Just like the seasons in a year. We can't see them, but they exist." I try to help people spiritually accept God's plans for us. I help my siblings at home, and people around me when they start to doubt themselves or God.

I try to remember "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.", because one day when I am in need of help, I want people to show me mercy, just as I have shown them. I will continue to show mercy to all people. I will never be as merciful as God, but I can still try.

Thank you for considering my application for the Sophie Meinhardt Scholarship!