

Sophie Meinhardt Memorial Scholarship 2019

"How has the gift you received from God been put to use for the benefit of other persons?"

While reading through the scholarship packet, I read a sentence about the Meinhardt motto which is "To become BETTER, not bitter." That instantly struck me like lightning. I feel like we live in a world that people are complaining about everything rather than finding the positive way out of the situation. In order to live this motto to become better, but not bitter, I have the following three gifts from God to benefit others.

First, I hear the words "Be Nice" thrown around by teachers and a lot of adults. What does "Be Nice" really mean? The definition of nice means to be pleasing and agreeable. To me, being nice really means being kind and respectful to everyone. I have a close friend that is constantly being left out, picked on, and teased. While it is easy for me to ignore everything that is going on, I think of the possibilities if I were were in his shoes. So without any thought stopping me, I talk to him, and ask if he is doing alright. While I already know the answer, I still stay there after he tells me that he is fine. Through our friendship, he has started to hang out with a couple of my other friends when he has no one to play with. I want him to know that even if he still gets picked on, that I will still be friends with him and help him at all costs. You never know what a simple smile, hello or asking how someone is feeling can brighten their day.

Second is the gift to think positive. While other students are complaining about a teacher being too strict or that a parent is yelling at them, I think to myself, "Why are they being so negative?" Is a teacher strict because you forgot to do the homework or because you weren't listening? There is one teacher in particular, which I heard so much negativity about. I really wanted to see the teacher the next year to see if the rumors were true. What could be so bad about one person? After having this teacher for a year, I realized that she just wanted her students to pass and do well in school. This teacher had shown so much compassion towards her students more than any other teacher I've had. Using my gift to think positive gave me a different look at this teacher and made my year much better. Instead of telling younger students about how strict the teacher is, I told them of how great she is at teaching. Positive thinking hopefully can spread throughout others around me.

The third gift that I have is helping others. If we look at the life of Jesus Christ, he spent most of it helping others around him. It can be as simple as holding a door for someone or helping my brother with his homework. On a greater scale, we can also provide a dinner or lunch for someone in need. One example is helping others in my classroom when they need help on an assignment during the school day. I take my time to help them with the assignment and make sure they know the material as well.

Another example that resides within me is that recently my mom started to go directly to those most in need each week to feed and clothe them. My friend and I had the opportunity to go help my mom a few months ago. We made one-hundred peanut butter and jelly sandwiches as our contribution that night. What happened next was a surprise to me. My friend and I jumped in the car with my mom, went to the kitchen to finalize the preparation of the food and off we went to visit the homeless downtown. At our first stop there were four people laying on a sidewalk with a bunch of blankets under them and on top of them. I never knew that people in my own city slept outside each and every night. It really did touch my heart as soon as I saw them. While I was nervous to give the sandwiches to them at first, I still handed them out. So my friend and I handed out sandwiches and cookies my mom made to each person we saw that night. We prayed with every person we saw as well. I never knew a sandwich and cookie could make someone's day. It was their first and only meal for the day. After that night, I realized how much just one person's love for another can lift someone up in many ways.

In conclusion, God gave me the gifts of being kind, thinking positive and helping others in order to spread compassion and care while not being bitter towards others.