

I think that every person was put on Earth for a mission. We were given gifts that we uncover throughout our life. We figure out talents and special abilities we maybe never knew we had. I find out new things about myself every day. But the question after uncovering those gifts are: how are you going to use those gifts and talents? Are you going to use it to help others, or keep them for your own benefit? Everyone receives a gift, a present from God. Are you going to keep the present for yourself, or give it to others? --

Ever since I was little, I've always been a worrier and scared easily. I didn't really know sometimes how to make it go away, but I know for sure that no one should feel like that. But some people do, and sometimes, they feel even more afraid then I do. So when my mom took me to Bethany House for the first time in the third grade, I couldn't wait to help. Besides not having a home, most of the kids there had trouble trusting others and they got upset easily. Seeing them made me upset that they had to go through this hard time. But it also made me realize how fortunate I am. Two talents and gifts I was able to share with those kids are understanding and compassion. I think that because I worry, I have massive amounts of compassion and concern for others. I understand what it's like to feel alone at times and think that you may have problems that will never go away because I have felt like that. I still go there to this day and I thoroughly enjoy being there because I know that helping them is giving them happiness and puts a smile on their face.

When I was in the fourth grade, St. Jude decided to put on the production of Annie. It was nerve-racking to even think about going up on stage. But my mom

encouraged me to try it because it was a movie I knew well. So of course, I agreed. Little did I know that mentally, it would change me. Like I said before, I was always a worry-wort and sometimes I was too scared to even have fun or try new things. But doing theater helped me venture outside of my comfort zone and I look forward to doing it every year. But I still get super nervous. My fellow castmates feel the same way at times. I try my best to encourage them, especially the little kids, with something as simple as a smile, hug, or "good job". Sometimes they don't get the part they want and get discouraged. I know how they feel because I have wanted something and worked hard for stuff that I don't end up getting. I use my gift of kindness to help comfort them when they are down. Someday, I would like to become a teacher. My ability to make little kids happier and being able to get along with children is one of my many talents. I use my actions and words to show that I understand that they are scared and that I want them to be happy.

During religion class, we started talking about the season of Advent. It's the season of giving and cherishing each other. That led to our next project. It was called a Million Little Things. At first, I didn't really understand the need for doing it. I thought it was just another reflection project. But I ended up really enjoyed this project because it made me look at myself and think, am I being the best person I can be? Am I using the talents and gifts I was blessed with to help benefit others, or am I locking them up in a box to keep contained for myself? God has blessed me with many gifts, but I also have anxiety and fear. Because of that fear, I have grown to be more caring towards others and I want to help others be happy. Even though I have problems that knock me down, I grow stronger from them and I choose to be better instead of letting my weaknesses keep me down. There is a saying that goes,

"Preach often, and if necessary use words". Through my actions, I am preaching the will of God. My gifts from God such as caring and compassion have helped me to help others be happier and enjoy the little things in life more. I think bringing joy to others is my mission and I hope others will feel my love through my actions and words.