

The talents I have received from God have been a treasure but it takes reflections like this essay to fully realize them because they are a part of my daily life. I have been gifted with the talents of athletics, maturity, responsibility, eagerness to help, kind-heartedness, and, what I feel is my calling, working with young kids. I thank God for those treasures everyday. All of those things have developed as I have grown and made me the way I am today. My maturity allows me to realize these talents and appreciate everything that has been given to me. One specific talent that is very important in my life is my helpfulness. I have always had a helpful nature for as long as I could remember and have a desire to help others whenever possible. I always try to go out of my way to help others. If a friend is sad or lonely, I will try to lift their spirits or comfort them. Even if they just need someone to talk to, I make myself available to be there for them because it is important they feel there is always someone there for them. I enjoy being with others and I try to put a smile on the face of anyone I meet. My desire to be a helper and do good has given me so many opportunities to volunteer whenever possible. I have spent off-days from school at Matthew 25, assisted at PSR & Vacation Bible School at St. Jude and helped prepare meals for Tender Mercies. There is something inside me that wants to help people whenever possible, using my friendly, happy personality to brighten someone's day or simply lend a helping hand where needed.

I enjoy being helpful and creative while I am working with young kids. I was born 3 months premature and weighed only 1lb 13oz. Although I do not remember my early struggles for life, my mom always tells me my early fight for life means I was put on this earth for a purpose. The more I mature I am starting to realize that my purpose is to help people, especially young kids. One example of my talent of working with and helping young children is my work at PSR. PSR stands for Parish School of Religion. It is hosted by St Jude during the school year for kids that want to learn about their Catholic religion but do not go to a Catholic school. PSR is every Sunday morning and I give up my Sunday mornings to work with the 2nd graders in my class. I love having the kids' company and participation in all the activities we have. At PSR we have some classes that we do crafty activities about the Holy Trinity where I get to use my creative side to help the kids. Other activities are simply reading in the textbook and bible about

God's life. Even though I am my Grandma's assistant there, I still get a lot of interaction with the kids and I love learning about Jesus and his stories that I heard when I was that age. I love having the opportunity at PSR to show my talent of patience and helpfulness of working with young kids, it makes PSR so much more of a gift. Having all of them there, just shows me how much they want to extend their knowledge about religion and the holy family. It makes me so proud of them! My interaction with them, hearing their side of the lessons and working with them on assignments has shown me I have patience and have shaped me into becoming a better person, especially being a member of our Saint Jude community. I really value the opportunity of being able to volunteer for PSR!

So many people tell me I am a role model, and I appreciate that they gave me that compliment. I have always tried to become a better role model for kids that are younger than me. I think it shows that I can be a leader for others and that I have kids that look up to me in a positive way. PSR, for example is a place I can reflect, but also be a leader for others. All the kids that are in the class, look up to me. I think that if I show a good example for young kids I can show them that you can be the best you can be. I enjoy being around the kids, at PSR and learning how to become a better role model, I love that I can experience that at PSR! I have also been a junior leader at Vacation Bible School in the summer at St Jude. It is similar to PSR but longer hours in one week. There, I get to have fun with younger kids, they look up to me to lead them to their next activity and look at my level of excitement about the activity. If I am excited, they will be excited. So I know I have to show them that being an active learner and listener are important to not only other people but also in how they talk to God.

One Sunday morning at PSR, we read a book called, "The Quilt Maker's Gift." The story is about this wonderful, generous quilt-maker and a greedy king. The quilt-maker refuses to sell her quilts and instead gives them to the needy. As we were reading, I realized I needed to do more of that. Once we were done reading, a student came up to me and asked, "How can I give my old toys to someone who needs them?" I answered, "You could ask your parents if they would drive you to a St. Vincent De Paul or Good Will donation store and put your old toys there." Our family always gives our old toys and clothes and other household things to St. Vincent De Paul because they do

good there for people in need and it's better than just throwing them away or selling them. Just that one toy can make a little kid so happy. The little boy answered, "I will ask and hopefully I can make that one kid happy." The very next week I asked Dexter if he got a chance to drop off his old toys and he said excitedly, "Yes!" I was very happy and proud for him to do that because it's hard to get rid of toys you enjoy playing with, but now they are in a better place, with a very happy kid that is enjoying it too! This was a good example of my talent of working with kids and being helpful turned into good for a kid that looks up to me. I was able to give a good example as a role model for Dexter. I look forward to experiencing more of these stories with the students as they continue on their Catholic faith journey. I feel like my talent of helpfulness and enjoyment of working with kids is my purpose and calling and I will continue to use those gifts to help kids in the future.