

## **Jack Bruggeman-Holy Family-Elder**

Three years old. What an impact Aubrey Rose made in those three years of life. Through her smile, you could tell that she was a fighter who loved life. Aubrey Rose did not get to experience a long and healthy life, but she did make a difference. I also try to make a difference in the lives of others. I believe that it enhances my life by looking beyond myself through giving and serving. It is my job as a human being to try to brighten someone else's life.

God gives all of us gifts. How we use those gifts to help others is our gift back to God. A lot of the things that I do to positively impact people are "behind the scenes." Some people would describe me as "unassuming" because I am not a showy person who needs to be publicly recognized for my deeds. My reward is the joy that I can bring to someone else. I am compassionate and really have a heart for people who need special care or that do not get a lot of attention. For example, every Sunday I help a frail, elderly lady get to her pew in church. I wait outside for her, take her hand, and slowly guide her. Then after church, I do the same thing and wait with her until her ride comes. This seems like such a small action, but it has a really big impact on this lady. Most people quickly pass by this woman, but when we are together, she feels loved and appreciated every slow step of the way. I make a difference in her life.

Volunteering my time and talents is not just something that I occasionally do; I purposefully try to let it be a way of life for me. I have been blessed and receive a great deal of satisfaction from volunteering. Being a server in mass is one of the ways that I donate my time. My faith is important to me and I appreciate the Catholic education that I am receiving. Serving in mass is a way for me to demonstrate my faith in God and appreciation to my parents and teachers. Music is something else that I love. Every Friday, you will find me singing in the choir during the children's mass. Since I have taken piano lessons for many years, I have also shared my talent by playing the piano in the mass. It is my goal to try to minister to the souls of all of the people who are there that hear me sing or play.

Perhaps the greatest impact that I have on others is that I lead by example. I am a black belt candidate who was chosen by my karate master to be part of a "Special Winning Attitude Team (SWAT)." In that role, I help other students in my class improve their skills. My impact is to help them to be the best that they can be. I take that job very seriously and want to be a positive influence. I also know that my attitude can affect others, so I try to be upbeat, find the good in things, and be grateful for what I have. You never know what struggles someone is facing, so I am encouraging and optimistic. We are all in this journey together, so I do my best to lift up the spirits of others. Sometimes all it takes is a kind word, or a gentle smile to brighten someone's day. Aubrey Rose knew that. I can continue to have an impact by showing compassion and following the path that she took for her three short years.