

**Jack Bell – St. Joseph School, Crescent Springs –  
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Often times, service is not done because it is the right thing to do; it is done only because it is assigned work from one's school. Many students only meet the minimum requirements of service hours, and they don't look beyond checking a box and getting their service hours completed. When you give to your community and those in need, whether it is in service or just giving someone a smile, not only does the person you are helping receive joy, but you do also.

True happiness and thankfulness can rarely be experienced through those who are focused on achieving great wealth. True happiness is experienced by looking into the eyes of those truly thankful for a service that you have provided to make their life a little bit easier. I experience this kind of joy every time I volunteer at the Mary Rose Mission. The Mary Rose Mission is a soup kitchen in Florence which serves a hot meal to those in need. I am usually at the drink station, providing coffee, milk, or water for the guests. Every time I volunteer there, I am approached multiple times and thanked for my service. Often this thankfulness comes with a smile that is unforgettable. Serving at Mary Rose Mission takes my mind off of all of the chaos in my life, and refocuses it on making a difference in someone else's life.

Sure, the great food at Mary Rose Mission makes their guests feel better. However, it is the feeling of being respected that really makes their day. The people who visit the Mary Rose Mission are often made invisible by people who are unable to look beyond their own needs. After living yet another long day without a home or without anyone to have a conversation with, the guests of Mary Rose Mission are appreciative that someone has treated with dignity and love. The goal of Mary Rose Mission is "To Love as God Loves." People come to the mission because they are hungry and they leave with a full stomach, but

they also leave knowing that someone cares for them and will be praying for them.

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I also experience this type of happiness through the eyes of the truly thankful whenever I volunteer at People Working Cooperatively(PWC). While volunteering at PWC, my job is to rake leaves at houses of people who are not able to rake the leaves themselves. They are happy that the leaves have been raked, however it is the company and conversations that I have with them that really make a difference. Many of these people have had family members who have passed away or moved out of town, so the only people who show them care and concern are the ones volunteering at PWC. The workers and volunteers at PWC have a goal to “save homes and restore pride”. While I rake leaves to help people with their home, I always try to remember that a smile can help restore their pride.

I don't volunteer at Mary Rose Mission and People Working Cooperatively because I am required to; I serve because of the feeling that I get when I know that I have made a difference in someone's day, and because it's just the right thing to do. Being able to make an impact on someone's life just by giving them a smile means a lot to me, because I know that my smile could help them through a tough time. If I can live my life “Loving as God Loves” and “Restoring Pride”, then I can be certain that I am living a life of service.