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“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10. God has blessed me with many gifts. The Bible verse from 1 Peter is a reminder to me to use my gifts and talents to serve God and make a difference in the lives of other people. My main gifts are love, patience, judiciousness and song.

I love by being kind. I show this by reading books with my siblings. I’m making a difference because I am sharing my love of reading with them and I am teaching them how to become a better reader. I also love others by reaching out to those in need through service projects. Recently, my family and I went to Hands Against Hunger where we made food bags for the children in Swaziland. The group produced over 150,000 meals that day! Praying is another way to share love and make a difference in an indirect way. Every month, my extended family and I pray the Rosary for the unborn and those in need.

I rely on my gift of patience when I am volunteering with children. This year I volunteered to help my gym teacher with kindergartener and second grade classes during my recess time. This affects both the gym teacher and the children. With my help, the gym teacher can focus attention on the kids who need the most help. The last few summers, I also volunteered to be a camp counselor at Vacation Bible School at Faith United Methodist Church. I know I am making an impact on the kids’ lives because I am teaching them about God in a fun and creative way. I have also assisted my dad as coach of my sister’s soccer team. Here I am making a positive impression on the girls. I am coaching the girls about sportsmanship as they learn the game of soccer. I especially enjoy that I can demonstrate my faith because St. Michael athletics focuses on God.

I am a very judicious person because I had to grow up a little faster than everyone else. When I was six, I was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes. Since then I have learned to manage my diabetes on my own and not rely on my parents to do it for me. My good judgement allows me to balance school, sports and other activities while controlling my diabetes. I feel like I am very responsible with my diabetes. I am also an advocate for diabetes. I rally support for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation One Walk every year and I have taught many people about diabetes. Last year, I taught my seventh grade class about Type 1 Diabetes. I am even comfortable enough now to openly discuss my diabetes treatment and the technology that helps me manage my diabetes. I’m hopeful that I can help others understand diabetes. Recently, I accepted a babysitting job for a three year old who has diabetes. It can be a challenge to manage my own diabetes while caring for a young child that also needs to manage their diabetes. I believe my knowledge of diabetes really helps the parents of the child feel more at ease and allows them to enjoy a night out.

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I use my gift of song in many ways. At Saint Michael's Mass, I cantor at the Children's Liturgy of the Word. Here I am leading the children in songs of praise to God. Another way that I use my gift is to perform in plays where I share my voice with others. I have been in our school children's choir since the third grade and I cantor at Mass. These experiences show the community a glimpse of how the power of praising God through song affects me.

I know God has given me many other gifts. I will use these talents toward distributing God's grace for the good of others. I am blessed to be able to serve others with my love, patience, the responsibility and the strength to manage my Type 1 Diabetes, and the ability to sing. I will continue to serve others because it makes me happy and it makes me feel connected to God.