

## **Anna Marshall - St. Mary School - Mount Notre Dame High School**

I believe that everyone has gifts. These gifts come from God to do good in the world. Some have big gifts that are highly recognized. Some have small gifts that don't have an obvious impact on others. I believe that I have a small gift, but the way I chose to use my gift is helping me to make a big impact on many people.

My gift is baking. It is something that I have always loved. I make everything from scratch; no boxed mixes or canned ingredients. To some, this may seem like a strange gift and wonder how this could be something that could positively impact others in a real way. In fact, I had a difficult time coming up with a way that I could use my gift to do good as a fourteen year old. There are simple ways to do good like baking cookies for others, but I wanted to do something greater.

Sometimes, you have an opportunity to use your gift in ways you never dreamed. I was at an event at my dad's work when I met the woman who runs the annual La Salle High School auction. This fundraising event raises a significant amount of money for kids who need help paying for tuition and activities at La Salle. She knew that I liked to bake because I have sent things in with my dad to share with his staff.

This particular woman asked me if I would be willing to make 100 cupcakes for a game at the auction. I was very excited! This was a way for me to use my talents to help others in a big way. She wanted to use the cupcakes to

play a game similar to heads or tails where you get eliminated from the game based on what cake type, icing or decorations you have on your selected cupcake. I had to plan out the ingredients, decorations, and flavors for the cupcakes. I made a little over one hundred jumbo-sized cupcakes for the auction. The night before the auction I stayed up until 1:00 a.m. to get all of the decorations and frosting just right.

When I went to the auction, I was overwhelmed to see how much fun everyone was having choosing their cupcake and playing the game. I helped to display the cupcakes and also sell them; my cupcakes sold-out quickly.

In the end, I was able to raise approximately \$1,500 for students at La Salle. It made me so happy to not only be able to use my gift for good, but also to see how much everyone enjoyed my cupcakes. Everyone liked the cupcakes and game so much that I have been asked to make 125 cupcakes for this year's auction. Hopefully, this will raise over \$2,000 for the school and students.

I learned so much from this experience. I learned that helping others not only affects those I help, but it also affects me. I was able to make a difference to people; this brought me true joy. It brought me so much happiness to see how everyone enjoyed my gift and that I really did make a difference to many people.

Aubrey Rose was small and young, but her life is having a huge impact on so many people. It is truly amazing the impact that Aubrey had on people in her three short years of life. My gift may be small, but like Aubrey Rose, I am using my gift to make a difference for others, just like her.