

Zachary End - Nativity of Our Lord - St. Xavier High School

Hello. My name is Zachary End, and I am 14 years old. Throughout my years as a student and as a Catholic, I have lived a life of dedication to service and kindness in all facets of my life. I believe that every person should live by these ideas and try to work for the common good of all people. In the following essay, I am going to cite some examples of times that I have influenced the people in my life.

The first example of how I have been able to positively influence the lives of those around me is through voluntary service and charitable works. Volunteering has never been something that I have done without the best intentions. My mother is the former development director at St. Vincent de Paul. I have spent many hours working in the food pantry, setting up for events, and helping out during canned food drives. As valuable as the food and other resources are, I think that it is just as important that I treat the patrons of charitable services with kindness and respect. After all, they are all God's children just like you and me and deserve to be treated as such. I have also helped those who are serving the needy. My sister and I often bring baked goods or ice cream on hot days to nonprofits and serve them to the staff and volunteers to show the appreciation that we have for all that they do. We will often do the same, along with bringing a homemade meal and diapers, to our friends and neighbors with new families.

Another opportunity that I have had to serve is when I went on a service trip to Guatemala a few years ago. While there, we brought supplies to schools along with providing funding and training programs for teachers. Not only were we volunteering and donating goods, but we were forming bonds and connections with our new friends. I remember that at one point a little boy asked me to read him a story. Despite not being a prolific Spanish speaker, I read him the story. In the end, he thanked me and gave me a hug, and even though we didn't speak the same language, we were able to understand each other and connect at that moment. The trip really opened my eyes to see how privileged I am and how important that I use those gifts to help others. I now sponsor a Guatemalan student who is my age.

I have also been able to make a difference in my school and parish. My classmates are some of the best people that I know, and I'm sure they will be great leaders in the near future. I have always tried to brighten their days and make them laugh whenever I have the opportunity. Through this, I have been able to form strong relationships and connections with my peers. I also try to let them know that if they ever have a problem, I am open to help. This year I was chosen to be part of a new peer-tutoring group. I was extremely proud of the fact that my friends and classmates were able to trust me enough to admit their challenges and ask me for assistance.

I have also tried to be of service to my parish. I am a server and Eucharistic minister at Nativity Church. I have always tried to volunteer to do any needed tasks or

Zachary End - Nativity of Our Lord - St. Xavier High School, page 2 of 2

jobs. Along with the aforementioned acts, I have run booths at the parish festival, read readings, performed in the choir and led prayer services. This also relates to a great example of how a small action can have a large influence on a person. Our priest, Father Paul DeLuca, has Parkinson's. Whenever I am serving, I try to make sure that he's is feeling okay. At a recent mass, I noticed that he was having some issues and asked him how he was feeling and how I could help. He felt very emotional about the fact that I was looking out for him like and told my teachers and mom about how important it was to him. I am glad that I was able to have such a profound effect on someone.

I have also been able to improve the lives of those in my family and community. Besides God, my family always comes first. I'm am proud to say that I have a great relationship with my parents and my younger sister. My teacher often remarks on how great of a relationship my sister and I share. I am also glad to live close to great neighbors. I have formed relationships with many of my neighbors to the point where they're almost as close to me as my family. My neighbor, Jack, is one of my best friends. I cat-sit for our neighbors across the street. In the winter I get up early and shovel the driveway for my elderly neighbor because she is unable to, even though I really like to sleep in. Ideas like these have helped me to come to my decision to go to St. Xavier. The value of service and Jesuit ideals really set it apart from the other schools that I was considering.

I would like to thank you for your time and consideration of me for this scholarship. I hope that I can live up to Aubrey's amazing legacy and continue to spread kindness and positive influence on everyone I meet.