

Keira Schneider – St. Joseph School, Crescent Springs – Notre Dame Academy

We choose who we want to be. We choose each day, each hour, each minute, each *moment*, if we are going to be kind or callous, helpful or lazy, joyful or angry, respectful or rude. We choose what we do, knowing that there is going to be consequences. God may have placed us on this Earth, he may have ever so lovingly and carefully created us, but he gave us free will. We decide if we are going to spend the rest of eternity with Him in Heaven or not.

I choose to be kind because my lifelong goal as a Christian is to achieve Heaven. God placed me, just like he placed all of us, on this Earth for a reason. The world has become a callous and unforgiving place, but we are meant to change that. One kind action at a time, one nice comment, one smile can make somebody's day. My parents raised me as a loving Christian, and, though I was taught from a young age the Christian ways, it is my choice to follow them. I choose to be kind because I know that it is the right thing to do and what God wants me to do. Sometimes it is difficult, especially when I am having a bad day. I have siblings who annoy me, teachers that frustrate me, tasks that I don't want to do, and responsibilities that I have to take care of. Each day I try to stay calm and kind, but, as everyone does, I have my days when I just can't do it anymore. When those days come around, I take some time alone to pray and talk to God. I remind myself how lucky I am, and how thankful I should be.

So many people have it so much worse than I do. I have a loving family, a cozy house, a warm bed, food on the table, clothes on my back, and good health. I know that not everybody has what I am lucky enough to. That is why I like to volunteer. Following God's will is not just being kind, sharing a smile, or doing small acts, though that is a big part of it. It is also about leaving your comfort zone and trying something new. Meeting new people is always a bit uncomfortable for me, so I like to do service where I interact with other people so I can push myself. I have done service each year in my community's park. When I am there I get to interact with younger kids and their parents to help them enjoy the events the park hosts. I also volunteer at the Welcome House with my family around Christmas time. We get to wrap presents for the families and individuals whom the Welcome House is assisting. I have never met any of the people who I wrapped presents for, however, I love to see the look on the children's faces when I volunteer at the park. I like helping people do what they love, and I hope to do more of that in the future.

I love to sew, so much so that I am in the process of starting my own business. So far it hasn't gotten past selling headbands and pencil cases that I have made to classmates at school; however, I am working on getting into a craft show. I first learned to sew at a camp I went to that was provided by a young fashion designer who had just graduated from the University of Cincinnati's DAAP (Design, Art, Architecture, and Planning) program. She taught me so much, and I went to her camp for four years until

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she stopped providing it because she wanted to spend more time with her family. In a few years, I hope to get into the DAAP program and then become a fashion designer for women and girl's clothing. If I achieve that, I hope to host camps for young aspiring designers like the ones I went to. I hope to provide encouragement and instruction to young women hoping to become designers. Perhaps, if my business gets big enough, I could provide a grant for young women entrepreneurs. I would love to pay forward the help that the young designer gave me.

I was very excited when I learned about this scholarship. I think that Aubrey, in her three years of life, was a wonderful example of God's plan for our lives. She made people's days better with her smile, and she has inspired countless others. The Aubrey Rose Foundation has created a wonderful scholarship for people who maybe aren't as athletic, or as smart as other kids. I am honored to have been given the chance to participate in it.