

## **Nellie Tarbell – St. Teresa of Avila – Seton High School – Page 1 of 2**

Like Aubrey Rose, I also have a strong will and love of life. When I'm my best self, helping others and bringing hope feels like second nature. As part of my Catholic upbringing, I have learned to treat all people with compassion, kindness, and respect. Whether working with individual friends, larger emergency needs organizations, or community action teams, I try to affect others in positive ways.

I often volunteer to participate in masses, through reading and offering gifts, as well as participate as a Eucharistic Minister in my parish. However, not too long ago in 2019, my spiritual upbringing and faith was needed the most when I found out one of my best friends, and classmate, was in the hospital in a coma from a very bad seizure. It was unexpected and shocking to everyone including her mom. She came to my mom and I, asking for our help in communicating with the other school mates. That evening we organized a prayer vigil in the courtyard of my church. We invited other classmates and their families to join us. We lit a circle of candles and arranged flowers as we led prayers and asked others for their healing words.

Her entire family attended and felt our community's love and concern for their beloved daughter. We continued to help her family with personal needs during her time in the hospital. After three months in a coma, she lost her battle and we had to say goodbye. I was one of the only friends allowed to visit her in the hospital to tell her everything would be ok, and she would now be my angel friend. It was very sad and after grieving her loss and celebrating her life, I remain close to her mother and grandmother to this day, remembering the good times we had.

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My service for others and those in my community has and always will be very important to me. Once, I had personally held a coat drive with my mom and gathered a huge stock of winter items. We did this by driving around and picking up gently used items from friends and family. We were just trying to help others as it was getting cold in January. It just so happened, that there was an apartment fire not too far from where I lived. We drove our donation to the American Red Cross, who was set up at our local recreation center. We were there fast when we saw more of the immediate needs of the families. We went to buy diapers and food for the mothers with young children. It was really rewarding knowing we were ready to help when it was needed the most.

I have also volunteered to help keep our community clean. I have helped the Safety Community Action Team of Price Hill with their litter pick up times. This also gave me the chance to meet other kids my age from different schools that want to serve others. They say that people who have a clean environment feel better about themselves. There is also evidence that safety in a neighborhood is created when it has less litter. It is an experience and idea that I will carry with me into adulthood.

I want to attend Seton High School to further my service learning in a Catholic education. I hope to continue growing these skills that will carry with me in life. Through acts of service to others, especially to the community in which I live, I enjoy knowing I am living as my best self and affecting other people's lives in good ways.