

Sophie Meinhardt Memorial Scholarship 2013

Grace Hoeting

St. Jude

We all have to overcome hardships in our lives, even if we feel like it will be impossible. Christ strengthens us to do this, and we have our family and friends to help us too. Christ strengthens me through suffering, discipline, and the Gospel. It's important to look at a difficult situation as an opportunity to show Christ's strength in our weakness. God's discipline is an act of love and allows us to grow in holiness. God uses His Gospel to strengthen us in our faith, hope, love, and passion for Jesus. This is why God is my role model. He encourages me to do good by strengthening me, and He helps me to know that I can do all things through Him.

My brother is autistic, and my family and I have to try hard to protect him. Many things that he doesn't understand, a kid without autism would understand easily. Just because he has autism, it doesn't mean he should be treated differently. Many times I've been asked questions about him, and it just breaks my heart. Kids have asked, "What's wrong with him?" My answer to that question every time has been, "Nothing. He's just a normal kid like you and me." We were all created in the likeness of God, so no one should make fun of my brother. Everyone in our family has learned how to help him, even during tough times. This situation allowed me to become better because I realized that everyone should be treated alike no matter the color of skin, the gender, the beliefs, the disabilities, or many other things that people have. Nobody is perfect, and everyone is different in his/her own unique way. That's what makes you special. That's what makes you beautiful. That's what makes you, YOU!

Another time in which I used the strength of Christ was when a girl in my grade was bullied by other girls. She was bullied because of the choices her mom made, because of what she wore, and because of the way she acted. This really hurt because she didn't deserve this. She did nothing to these girls to make them not like her. At that time, I realized I had to do something about it because if just was not fair. I told the two girls who were bullying they should stop, and then I started to do little things that could make a big difference in this girl's life. A few times I would sit with this girl at lunch and try and help her with her problems with these two girls. We would sometimes talk at recess. We were also late bus, so we'd hang out then. All this time, the girls noticed us talking, and they started to stop.

Through these two experiences, I learned many things. Everyone just wants to fit in and be accepted. They want to have friends and be loved. Christ is our guide, our light. He leads us on the right path. In these two situations, he guided me to do what was right, even though it might have been hard. I was taught that I can do all things through Christ because He strengthens me.