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The Power of Service

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The Power of Service

I remember going to religion classes during my elementary school years, and there was one lesson I was taught that I never really understood. This lesson was “God helps those who help themselves.” And my immediate response to this statement was “well, what about helping everyone else? Why would God help us to help ourselves when he could help us help other people?” Though, when I had pictured someone helping themselves, I also pictured them helping themselves to another plate of food, which didn’t help with the confusion.

Currently, I understand the meaning as I have seen the independence that comes along with moving eight hours away from my family for my first year of college. How my mom can’t physically be there to hold my hand when I need her, and I just have to suck it up and handle things on my own.

Despite finally understanding this meaning, I have not stopped striving to help other people, to instead help myself. I think for as long as I have lived, helping other people has been a part of my life. My mom tells me this story about this one time when I was about five or six and we went to church, sometime after a recent birthday of mine. After mass I put all my birthday money in the poor box and when my mom asked my “why did you just do that?” in a bit of an angry tone, and I just replied “because they need it more than I do.” I also used to help out at our church’s soup kitchen on Saturdays, and my mom would force my brother to come along, but by the end of it he and I were happy we got to help those poor hungry people who had nothing while we had food at home. I can’t say it is a feeling of pride that overcomes me when I help other people, because it is not pride, it is joy.

To this day, I have constantly volunteered my time to do anything to help my community. At Brockport, there are so many opportunities to give help to the community that I just can’t wait to write my name on, I even joined the coed community service fraternity on campus, Alpha Phi Omega, which is always coming up with new events to volunteer for. From cleaning an old church in Rochester, to sewing pillowcases for children with cancer, to facepainting at an Easter celebration, to shaving my head for a Saint Baldrick’s event, help is needed everywhere I turn, and I will always be ready to give it. In the power of service, this, I believe.