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Gilmour Academy- Grade 11
Project Hope - Prompt 2

I'm a very quiet person. It's difficult for me to join into group discussions, especially with people that I don't know very well. Sometimes, other students don't even remember that I'm in their class or that I was at a meeting.

I don't think that I need to become an extrovert to make a mark on my community. As a person of faith, I believe that I have a strong moral compass that others notice. Even though I get good grades, people never ask me to cheat or to share my work with them. They know that I would never do that, and that I would never ask someone else for that kind of help. I try to make good choices in life, and I choose friends that will help me to become a better person.

I plan to use the gifts that God gave to me to give back to the world. Each one of us has strengths that others don't have. We become complete when we unify our gifts and talents together, for the good of others and for the glory of God. Only together can we work with God to make the Kingdom of God realized here on earth.

One of the gifts God has given me is the gift of music. Over the years, I've become a good French horn player. I think that music has a purpose. Composers tell stories about life in their works. When an audience listens to a piece of music, it becomes unified in a common experience of feelings and emotions. Music is a universal language that can bring people together.

A few days ago, I played my horn during the Easter Vigil. I've been to the Easter Vigil before, but I never paid that much attention to the details, or how the music helps to tell the story of Jesus' Resurrection. I found myself focused on the Mass, and I really experienced it for the first time. Afterwards, people came up to me and thanked me for playing. They told me that my playing the horn helped them to enter into the joy of Easter. I felt the same thing, that the brass instruments proclaimed "Alleluia" in a way that reflects heaven. I feel very fortunate that God gave me this talent to use to lead others to honor Him.

This spring break, I also went on a medical mission trip to West Virginia. I went with a group of other students from my school. We spent many hours learning how to take blood pressures, to check people's vital signs, and to talk to people about their health. We had to run health fairs in poor neighborhoods because families don't have health insurance coverage. We went to the local elementary

school and taught the students about oral health and hand washing. We drove for hours to the homes of strangers to check their vitals. As an introvert, I was very uncertain how I would be able to do this work. I was very shy at first. However, as I met the local residents and discovered how friendly they are, I began to feel at home. I listened to their stories, and I learned how important coal mining is to the financial stability of the people in that region. Many people have lost their jobs because coal is not used as much any more, and because much of the work of miners is now done with machines. We talked to the town mayor, who said that the area needs a solution to provide work for the townspeople, to give them hope.

I think that God had me go on this trip because I'm meant to help in some way. I plan to major in engineering in college. I hope that some day I can help to find a solution to the job crisis in West Virginia. While the people there may not remember me because I was the quiet one in the room, I will remember them.