

Christ



Story
by
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Lent," Sara, an eighth-grader, told the student body.

Sara said she has lived out this theme by performing volunteer projects and increasing her amount of quality time with friends and family members.

"I help out more than I used to — being there for friends when they need me at specific times," Sara said. "(Jesus) made a lot of sacrifices for people. So you try to make as many sacrifices as you can, also."

Bryan Stephany pointed out that Lenten devotion to Christ can best be reflected in actions toward others.

"It makes you a little more conscious of how you treat people. Maybe you'll say a nice word instead of something critical," said Bryan, 17, from St.

Jerome's Church in East Rochester. Bryan is a senior at McQuaid Jesuit High School.

Fred Schmidt, a McQuaid junior, added that "your actions outside are going to reflect your actions inside" as you move through the Lenten season.

Fred, 17, said that while Easter Sunday is a time for joyous celebration, he dedicates the preceding days to serious reflection about Christ.

"It's a solemn approach. You're probably going to be a little more quiet during that time," he acknowledged.

Fred — who serves on McQuaid's campus ministry board along with Bryan — noted that "you might not even realize how you look on the outside. You might not realize that you don't have a big smile on your face that day because you're contemplating."

Such deep thinking during Lent, Fred stated, can produce permanent changes in one's life.

"It might subconsciously do something," Fred remarked. "It might make you think twice before you make certain actions or decisions, if you think about how Jesus died for you."

Meanwhile, Sara has already detected a self-transformation through her devotion to Jesus during Lent.

"I'm coming

closer to people and loving in different ways," Sara remarked. "I've become more open and outgoing. Lots of things in my life are changing, and things are getting better."

One example of her inner growth, Sara said, is through her volunteer efforts with the elderly. She said she now enjoys nursing-home visits whereas before, "I didn't even want to be there."

Now, Sara said, her goal is make sure these changes stay in place beyond Easter.

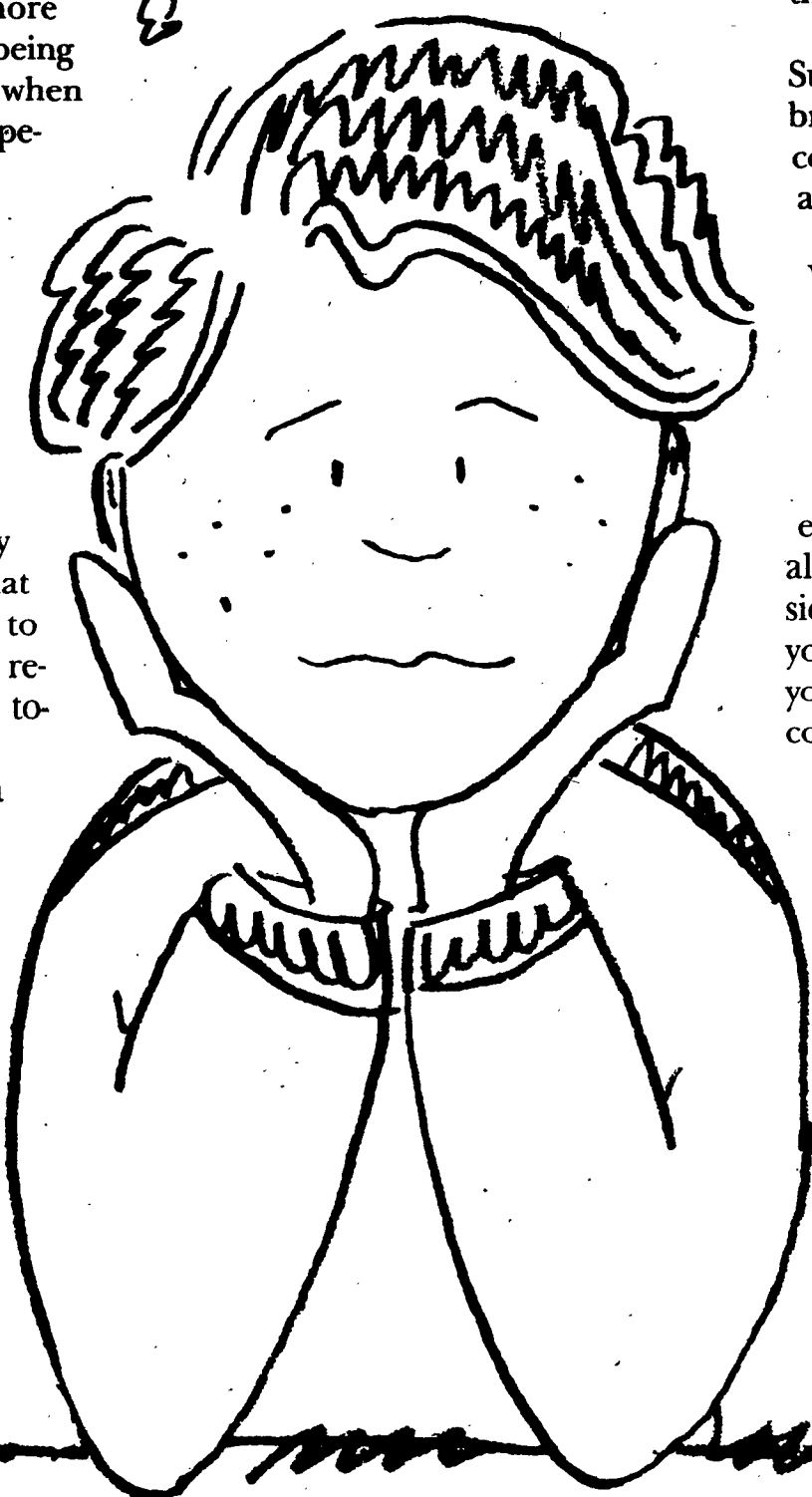
"I go to church as much as I can, and I pray every day so that this will stick with me," Sara said.

Matt noted that as Catholics, our focus on Christ should obviously be practiced year-round.

"But it takes something like Easter or Lent to bring it all out," he remarked.

Bryan agreed that the Lenten season helps us renew our relationships with Christ and our appreciation of the sacrifices he made.

"Being a senior in high school, I might think I don't need structure and I can do it on my own," Bryan said. "But we *do* need the structure to bring us closer to the reality of what happened."



Coming
Next Week:

The generation
gap