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Grade: 9 /Period: D

School: Our Lady of Lourdes

"How Catholic School has influenced my life for the better. Why I am grateful for attending
Catholic School."

Pope Benedict XVI said "A good school provides a rounded education for the whole person. And a good Catholic school, over and above this, should help all its students to become saints." This will be my tenth year attending Catholic School, and so I can say from experience that this quote is one hundred percent true. Not only did I receive an amazing education in Catholic Schools, but I was also encouraged to approach every situation with the virtues of kindness and patience. I can think of one hundred reasons why Catholic School has influenced my life for the better, but I won't bore you with all of them; I am only going to talk about the two most important to me: community and faith.

Catholic schools inspire a sense of community that you won't see anywhere else. The friends you make become your second family, and everyone is always there to support and encourage you. Not only have the people become a second family but this school has become my second home. I am almost certain I have spent more hours in School: learning, engaging in sports, and participating in clubs than hours spent in my own house. What I find to be truly awe inspiring is that when I walk the halls of my school I know that every person there wants to help others and become closer to God in their faith. This was my first year at Our Lady of Lourdes and I was originally nervous, but my nerves soon disappeared because everyone is so welcoming not just the students, but also the teachers. No one is mean or degrading, and everyone just wants

to see you do your best, especially the teachers who pave the way for your success. The teachers in Our Lady of Lourdes inspire me everyday during and after class to be the best version of myself I can be; putting forth the utmost of effort and striving for the highest of goals. This is not only present in the classroom but also in after school activities. I played tennis this past fall and everyone on the team was so welcoming and helped me to succeed.

The school is truly a community built on a foundation of faith that is evident in the faculty, staff, and students. The teachers show us that God is not only present with us during mass or prayer, but that God is with you, inspiring you, and motivating you to be the best version of yourself all the time. I have never been to public school, but I know they have no religion class, which is a shame because the lessons I've learned in religion are vital to my success in life. I use these lessons in every aspect of my life from how I treat others to how I treat my relationship with God. My relationship with God, built in Catholic School, gives me confidence in myself that I would otherwise not have, and inspires me to reach new goals I could have never fathomed alone. At my school we have the pleasure of joining together as a community to pray twice a day, which helps me to not only feel closer to God but also to my fellow peers.

I am truly grateful for the opportunities presented to me by Catholic School education. I am immensely thankful to all of my teachers who encourage me to learn not only facts, but my faith as well. I am grateful for how attending Catholic School has allowed me to grow closer to God through prayer and mass. I now can't imagine my life without God in it. Most of all I am grateful for the future I will be able to have because of the lessons I have learned in St. Augustine School and Our Lady of Lourdes. Looking back to my first day of kindergarten I can truly say that putting me in Catholic School was one of the best decisions my parents ever made for me.

