

The toddlers in the back row cheer when they see the big cake on top of the shopping cart. Every other week their mother pulls up to the food pantry with them in the car seats in the back row. When the mother sees the cart full of food, she immediately says thank you as I load the contents of the cart into her trunk. It makes me happy to give this joy and I have learned that this is called giving direct assistance to families. I think it gives them hope. Taking an active role in building a culture of life in my community and encouraging others to do the same can aid moms and dads to choose life.

I work each Thursday at my parish's food pantry helping people receive the nourishment they cannot afford to buy themselves. Many of the people are mothers with kids. The provisions I load into the carts consist of meat, vegetables, canned goods, bread and, last but not least, dessert. I realize that I am helping mothers since they would otherwise have to pay for food on their own.

Another active role I take in providing direct assistance is by donating diapers to the Deacon Diaper Drive which supports struggling mothers. This year I have gone to the store with my mom and have bought a package of diapers with my own money. Taking the diapers to church, I drop them in the donations box. The diapers will go to the Pregnancy Assistance Center in my town to be given to mothers.

In high school next year, we will have to complete community service hours. When my friends and I talk about what we will do, I will tell them about volunteering for the food pantry and the pregnancy assistance center. I believe by helping I can do my part to build the culture of life and bring people hope and faith into their families' lives.

George Volmert