

Hi Mr. Aitchison,

Sorry for responding so late, I had to go on a hunt for my phone it went missing after our soccer game. Anyways, here are Julia Zappa's 6 quick tips (okay not so quick I'm giving a little explanation for each) for how to be holy in high school (sounds like a book.) By the way these are in no specific order:

1. Go to mass: It's absolutely amazing if you make it to mass every Sunday, but take it one step further and go to mass or go to the adoration chapel and pray during Monday-Friday. Ex: I had soccer tryouts in August for AHA, and I was so nervous! I thought I could defiantly use God on my side so I decided to go to 9am mass at OLG on the days of my tryouts. During the out loud intentions I prayed that everyone would do really well in tryouts. After that everyone gave a huge "Lord hear our prayer!" And either during Mass (walking up to communion) or right after I had eight people wish me good luck and they said they would pray for me! During tryouts I could totally feel them helping me with their prayers and God leading me as I ran and ran around the soccer field. How to apply it to your life: When you get to OLG early in the morning instead of just hanging out with your friends and joking around go to the adoration chapel and pray. You can hear when the warning bell rings (I know from personal experience or just have a friend come get you before class) but it's a great way to start off your day especially if you have a test or a project to present that day.

2. Smile and say hi: So this sounds pretty basic but you have no clue how much a difference it can make in some one's day. I've seen it multiple times where someone will be frowning and having a no good very bad day and the second their friend comes over or someone says hi, it instantly make them smile and it reminds them that things aren't so bad and that someone really loves and cares for them. Example: In seventh grade 2 months into being at my new school (the amazing OLG) I was really missing all my old friends at St. Joe's and kind of wishing that I could go back there. I was sitting in my homeroom at a table in the morning when all of a sudden 5 extraordinary girls came into the room with huge smiles on their faces and said hi and started talking to me about my weekend. This entire time I was thinking did my mom call them and tell them to be extra nice to me or something? But since that day I never wanted to switch to my old school and I knew that OLG was going to be a special place. How to apply it: Okay this is pretty simple but just wear a smile on your face and say hi to EVERYONE (not just your closest friends.) Seriously go as far as to say hi to someone at the grocery store

it's really funny to watch their reaction and you know that it just made their day.

random acts of kindness goes along with this

3. Be a witness: "You are a billboard for Christ!" -(Fr. Bob I think?)

Anyways you are a living and breathing person that represents what it means to be Catholic so show it off! Example: My first example is that on the inside of my soccer cleats I have written on one St. Sebastian and on the other Phil. 4:13, this helps me in a game because I can always look down if I'm having trouble and know that God is my strength, but the even more rewarding part is when people ask me about it and I get to tell them. My second example is at lunch I always (okay once in a while I'll forget but I try to remember almost everyday) to pray before I eat, and I make the sign of the cross. Some people look at me like who's the freak? but I also see other people kind of jump a little and their eyes light up as if saying "whoops I forgot about that!" This is important because it reminds others to pray, but it also shows people that they can live out their faith openly. How to apply this: I guess I can't really tell you on this one, just find out where you need to be a witness and fill that gap with amazing holiness.

4. You have 3 fingers pointing back at you: When your pointing at something/ someone it's usually not because you're saying something positive, but if you look at that hand pointing you have 3 fingers pointing right back at you. This shows you that you should stop putting the blame on others and judging others and really look at yourself and see how you can be better. This is really important for high school and gossip and all of that fun stuff! Example: I'm co -captain with another girl on my soccer team (I'll call her Hannah.) On Friday we had a practice that Hannah decided to skip so she could go over to a friends house and she decided not to tell our coach. Our coach wasn't to happy about it but didn't show it, however the girls were all talking about Hannah and because they were so wrapped up in things our practice didn't go too well and our team as a whole wasn't focused. If all of the girls on the team had followed this and said "how can I do really well at practice today?" the practice would of gone much better and Hannah wouldn't of been hurt. How to apply this: Next time you're think/saying something negative think how you can improve yourself.

5. Always make time for God: Yes I know we all have crazy busy lives, but you should always make time for God because he/she/it can always help you through the stress and the troubles that you're facing. Example: At night when I'm going to bed I swear that I can't go to sleep unless I pray, it's crazy weird but I absolutely love it! That way it always reminds me to pray and the last thing that I'm thinking about before I go to sleep is God!

(also I can't exactly remember the saying you used but something about not praying before breakfast in the morning and before bed at night, I'm remembering something about a guy who said something about it.) How to apply it: If you're really stressed or things are going great, basically whenever take a step back and talk to God. Thank him or tell him what's going on, I know after this everything seems so much more manageable and I can feel God's love running through me which is a great help in any and every situation.

6. Finally, LOVE GOD!

Hope this helps. I know this helped me a ton to look back at everything!
-Julia