

"Write them on the tablets of your heart;  
write them on the doorposts of your house."

Proverbs 7:3 ~ Deuteronomy 6:9



# tablets & doorposts

A JAMBOREE OF WRITING

## ANTHOLOGY 2020

 Christ The Redeemer  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

# tablets & doorposts

A JAMBOREE OF WRITING

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**“Write them on the tablets of your heart;  
write them on the doorposts of your house.”**

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Welcome to the second edition of CTR Catholic’s Tablets & Doorposts Writing Anthology. In these pages you will experience narrative, poetry and non-fiction written by students and teachers from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Regardless of age, experience or skill, these writers have creatively shared their voice through the craft of writing. Individual writing was selected to receive additional recognition indicated by a Top 20 or Honorable Mention ribbon in this Anthology. Enjoy!

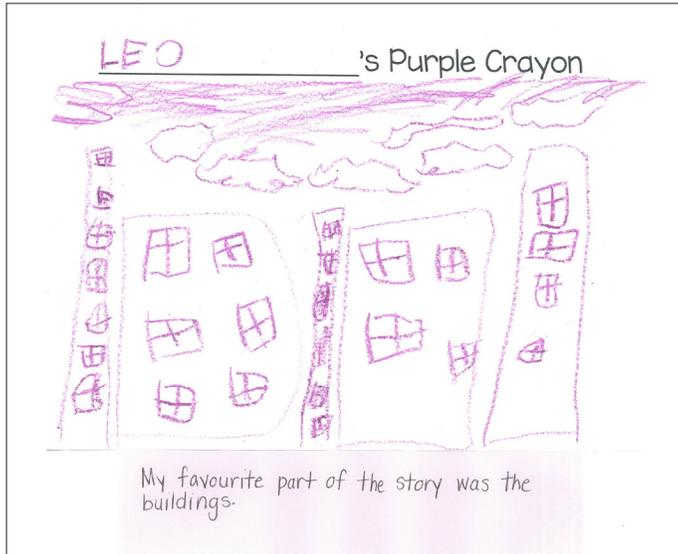
Writing is a process that allows writers to reflect and capture moments in time. Writing is personal and requires the writer to be vulnerable and take risks. When we share writing we gain insights, perspective and empathy into the lives and experiences of others. Writing celebrates humanity and its infinite possibilities. At CTR Catholic we recognize the power of writing and how essential it is to the learning and lives of our students. This anthology is one of the many ways we promote and celebrate our students’ abilities and the stories they choose to share.

The spring of 2020 created many new experiences for the world, which directly impacted students and staff. For some, writing became an outlet to express emotions and attempt to make sense of their new reality. This resulted in writing from the heart, providing the reader a glimpse into the lives’ of the writers. CTR Catholic’s annual Doorpost Café was moved to a virtual setting, and all present were awed by the passionate sharing of the powerful writing from our students.

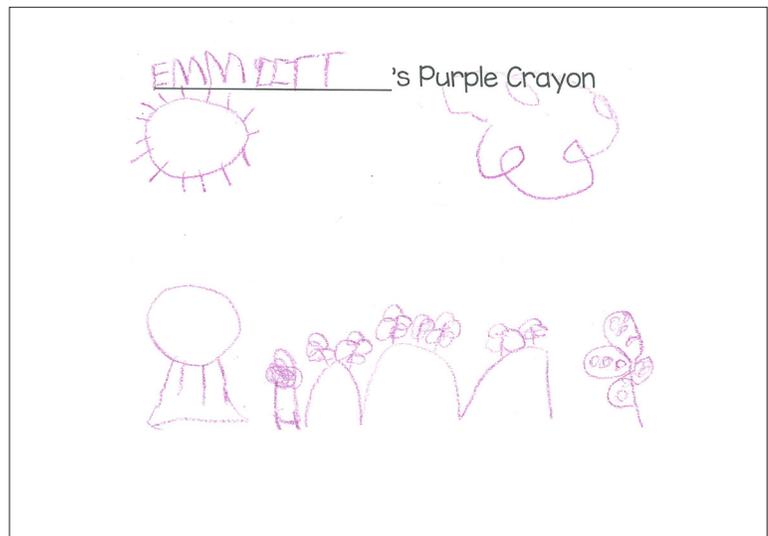
The theme for Tablet and Doorposts is scriptural. Throughout the ages, words have communicated our love of God, our joys and our human struggles. What’s YOUR story? Write it on the tablet of your heart! Write it on the doorpost of your house! Tell it, share it, shout it - just don’t keep it inside. Everyone has a story to tell.

# The Purple Crayon

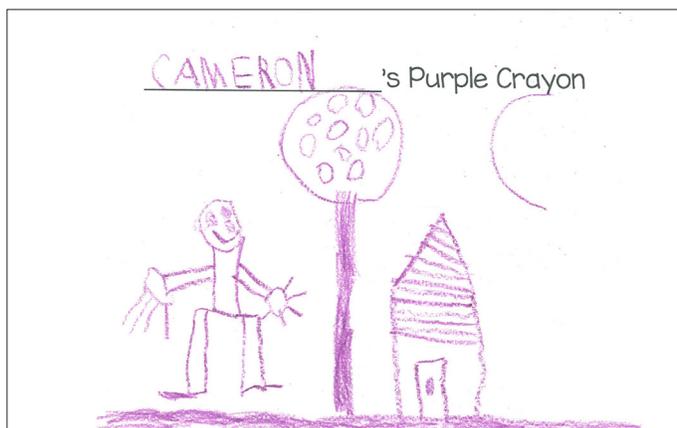
by Leo James, Kindergarten  
St. Mary's School



by Emmett James, Kindergarten  
St. Mary's School



by Cameron Sherry, Kindergarten  
St. Mary's School



# Girl of Love

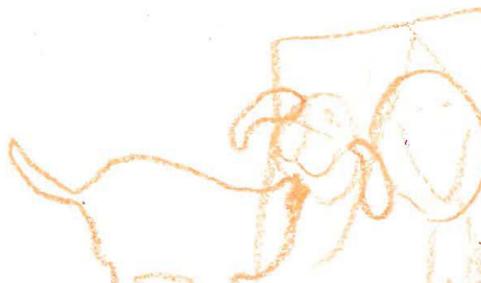
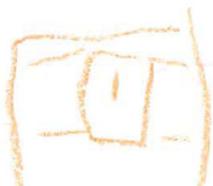
by Charlotte Froese, Kindergarten  
Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy

The GIRL  
OF LOVE.



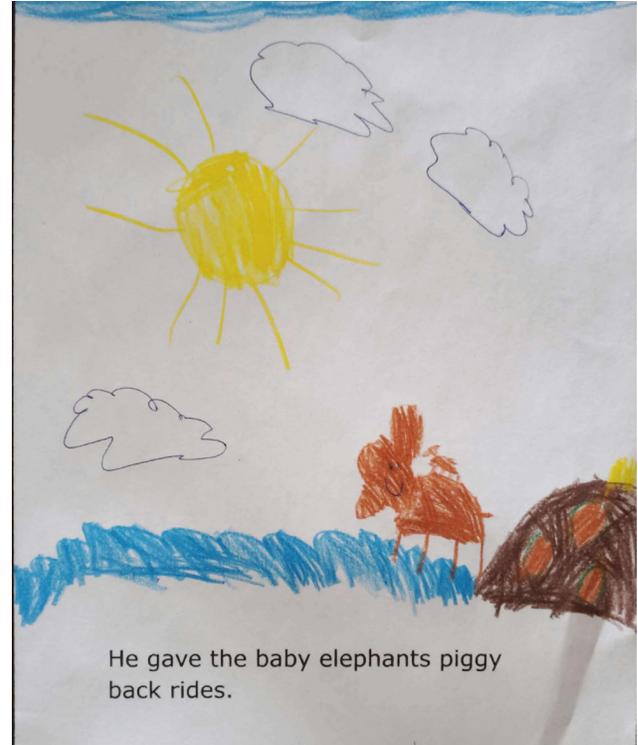
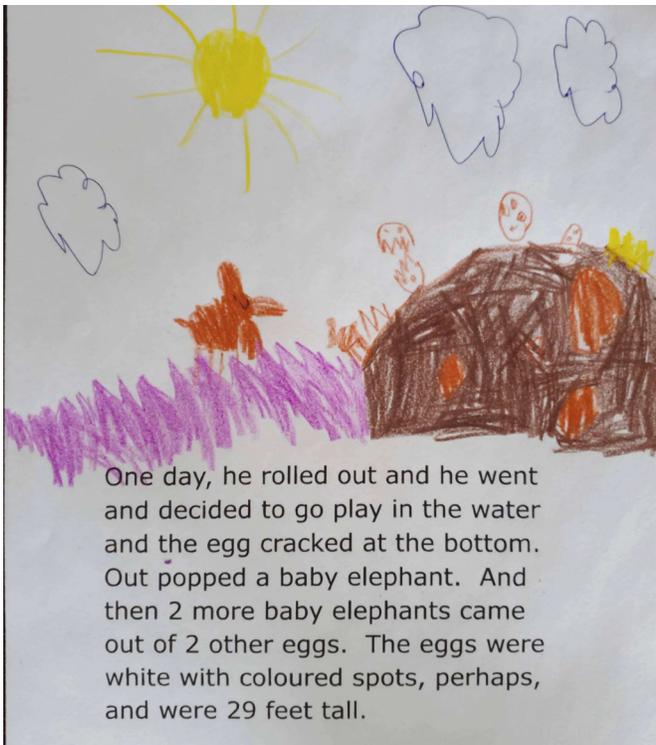
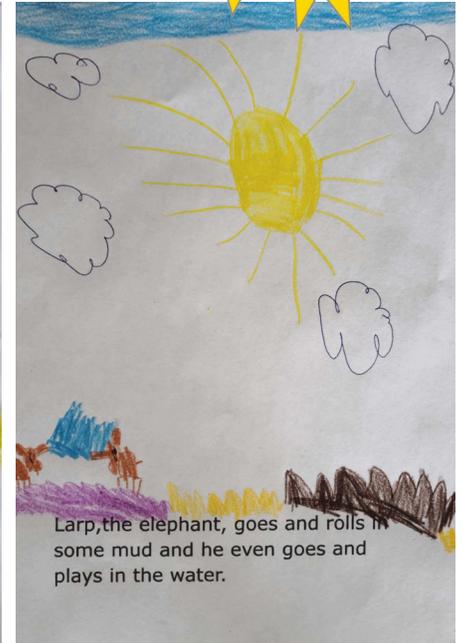
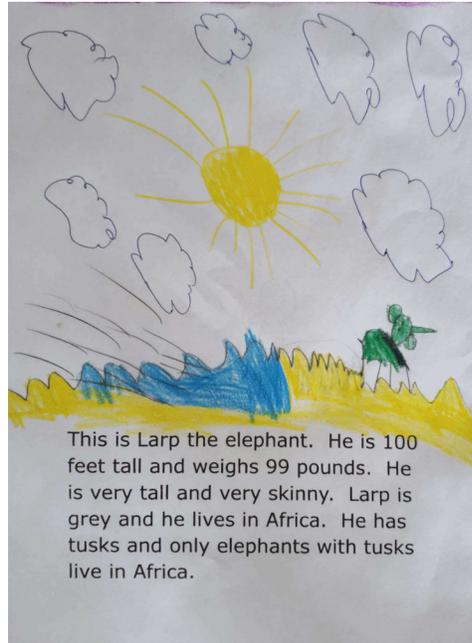
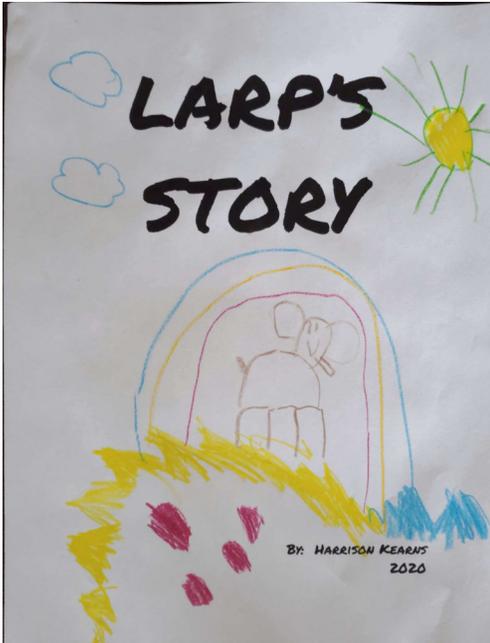
ONCE UPON A TIME  
THERE WAS A GIRL  
WHO LOVED SO MUCH.  
SHE CARED AND FOUND  
A MAIL BOX AND INSIDE  
THERE WAS A NOTE.  
THE NOTE SAID  
LOVE IS THE BEST  
THING TO DO, AND  
CARE. AND DON'T  
FORGET TO LOVE  
YOURSELF.

THE GIRL LATER  
FOUND A DOG. SHE  
NAMED THE DOG  
PODDLE. ~~SO~~ THE  
DOG WAS WHITE  
AND BROWN AND  
SWEET. THE DOG  
BE CAME HER  
BEST FRIEND.



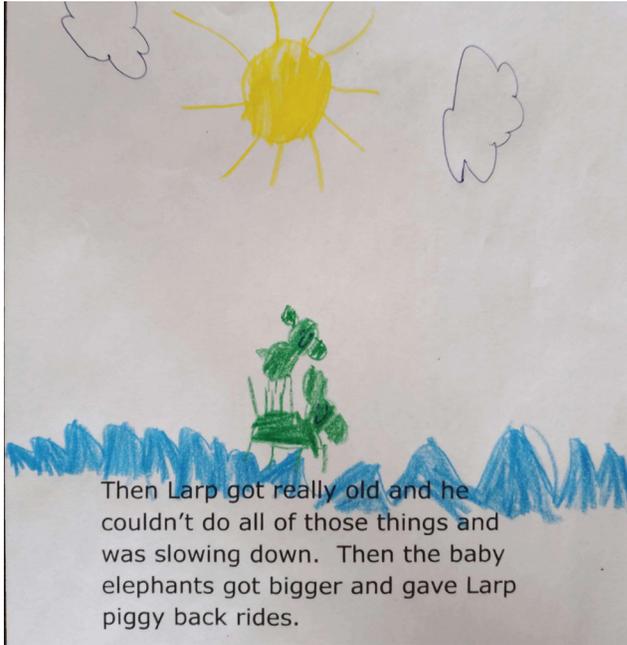
# Larp's Story

by Harrison Kearns, Kindergarten  
Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy





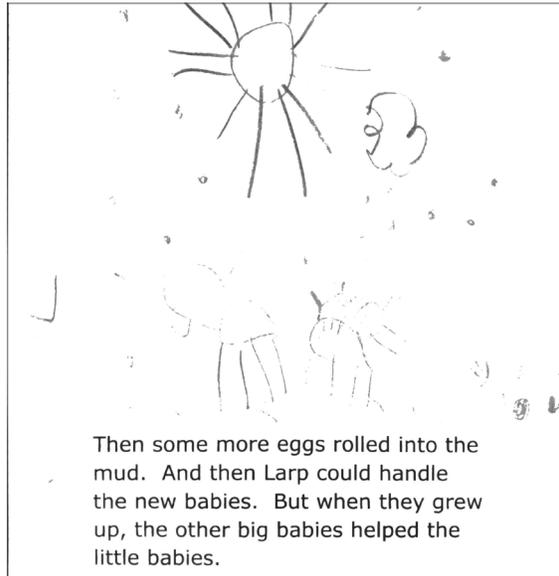
Then Larp lifted up his trunk and the baby elephants slid into the water and splashed Larp.



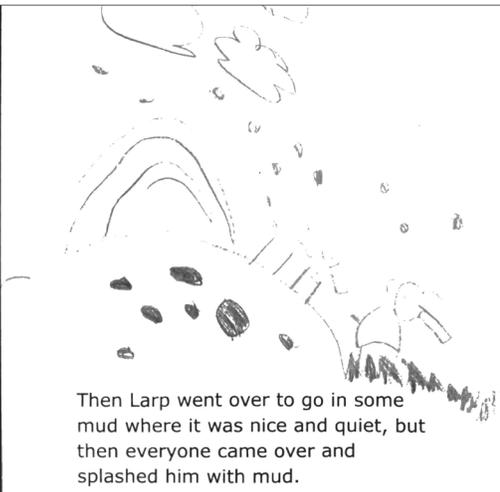
Then Larp got really old and he couldn't do all of those things and was slowing down. Then the baby elephants got bigger and gave Larp piggy back rides.



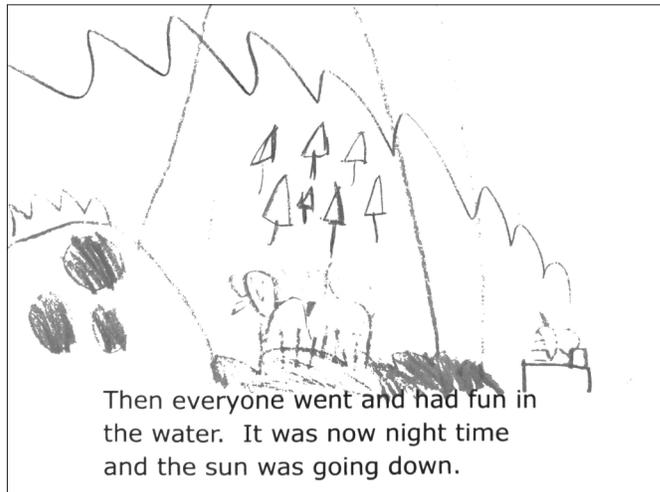
And then everyone was happy.



Then some more eggs rolled into the mud. And then Larp could handle the new babies. But when they grew up, the other big babies helped the little babies.



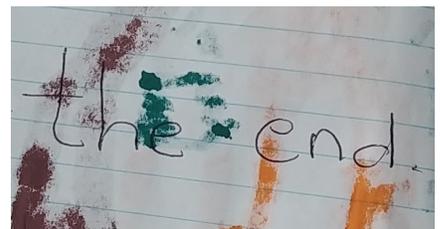
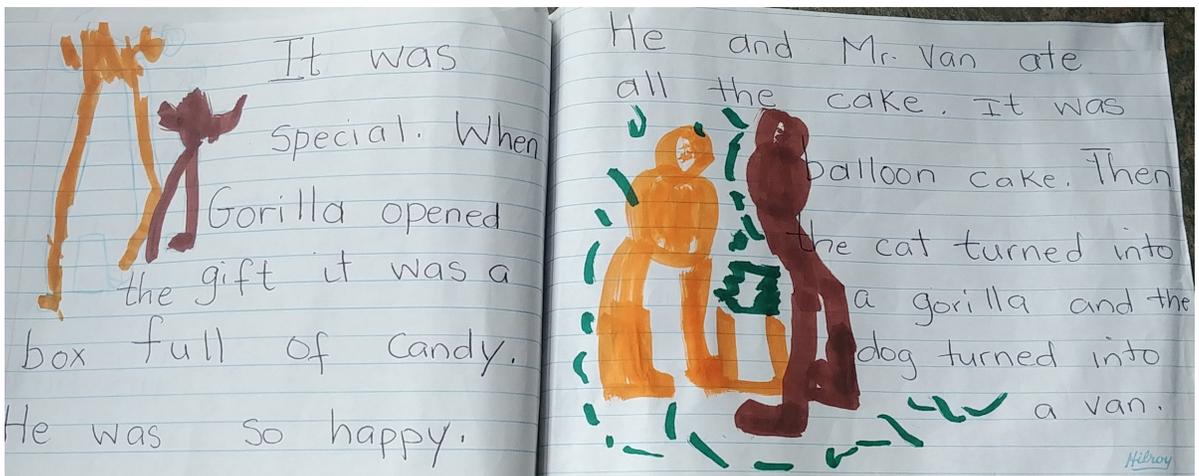
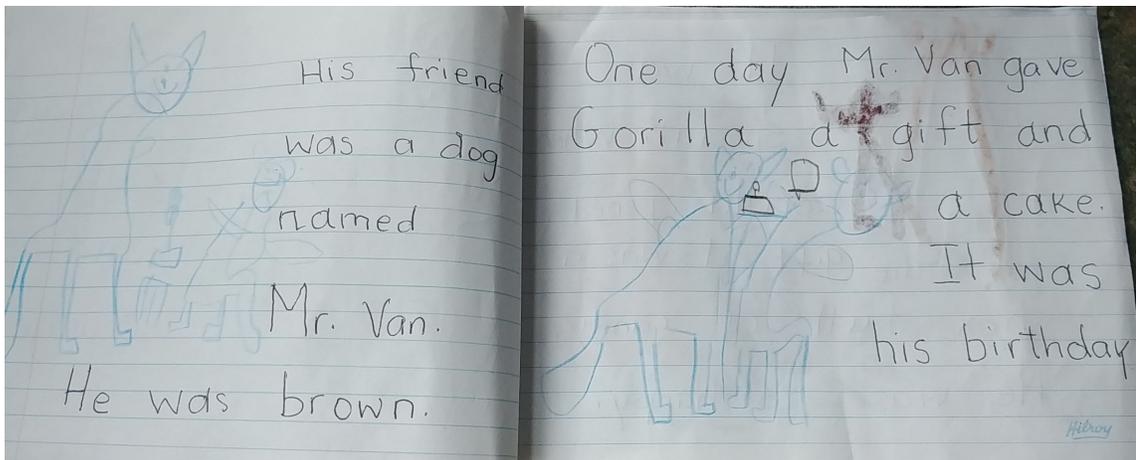
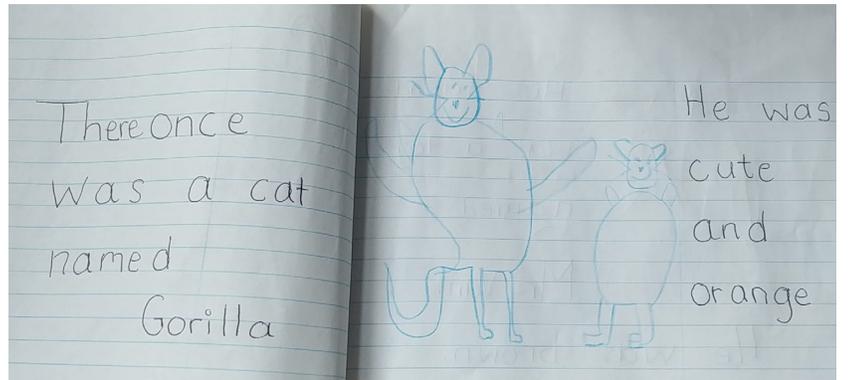
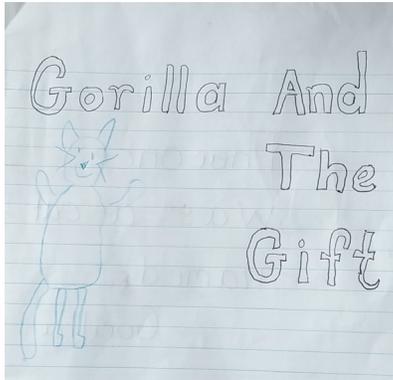
Then Larp went over to go in some mud where it was nice and quiet, but then everyone came over and splashed him with mud.



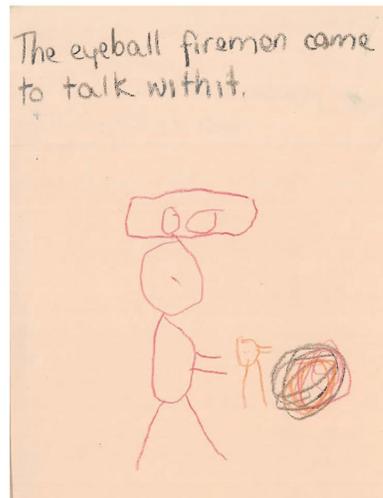
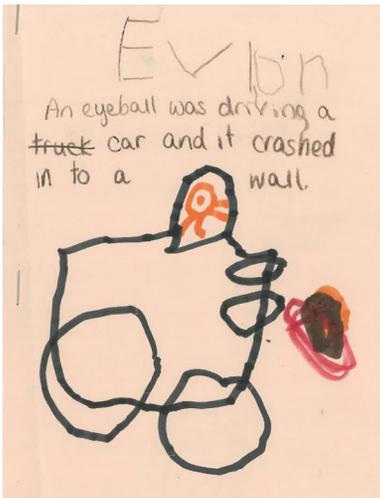
Then everyone went and had fun in the water. It was now night time and the sun was going down.

# Gorilla and the Gift

by Noel Fisher, Kindergarten  
Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy

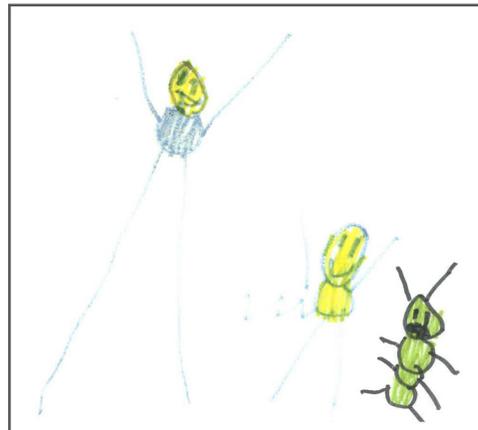
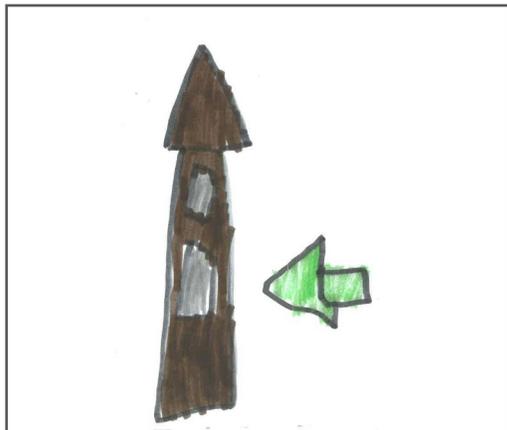
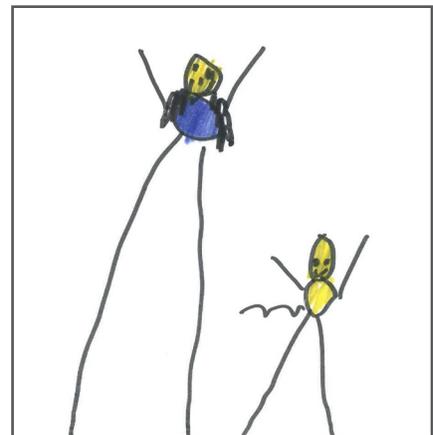
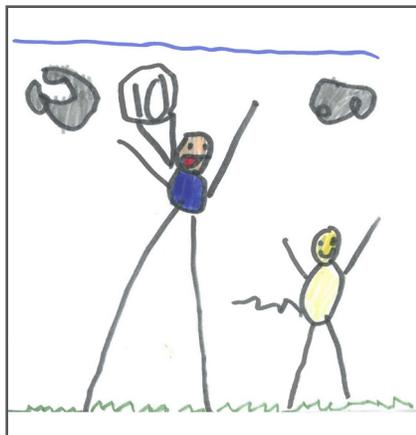


by Evan Wagner, Kindergarten,  
Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy



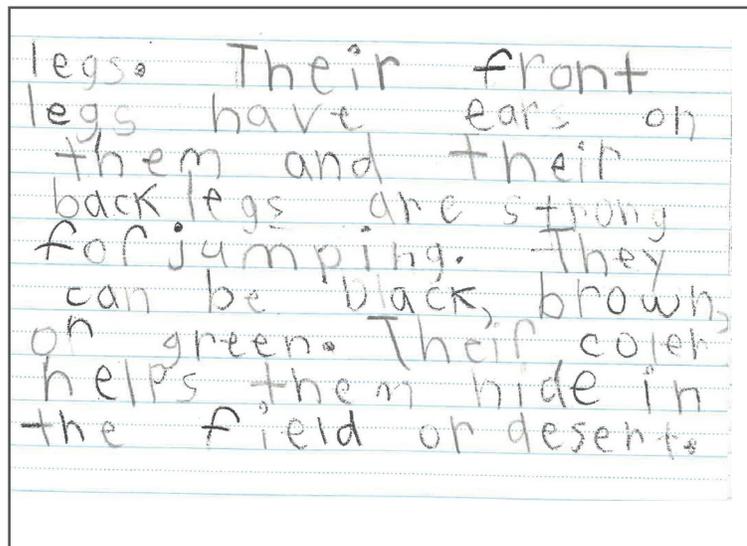
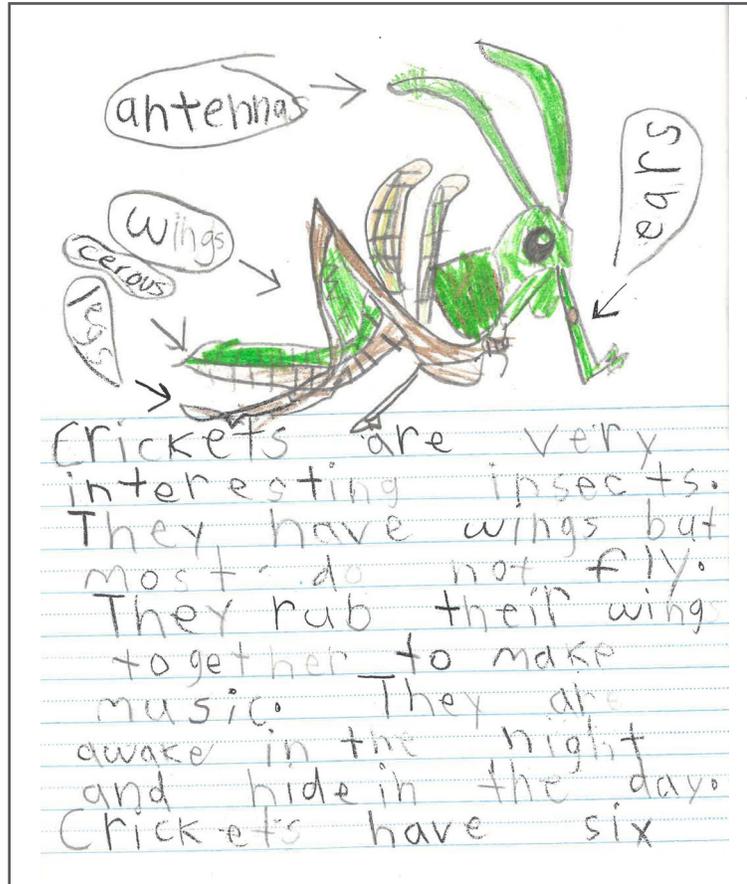
# The Pokemon Book

by Hendrix Hillier, Kindergarten  
Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy



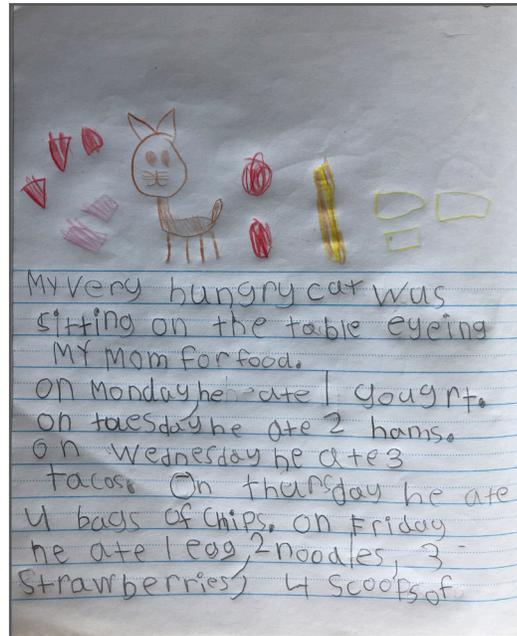
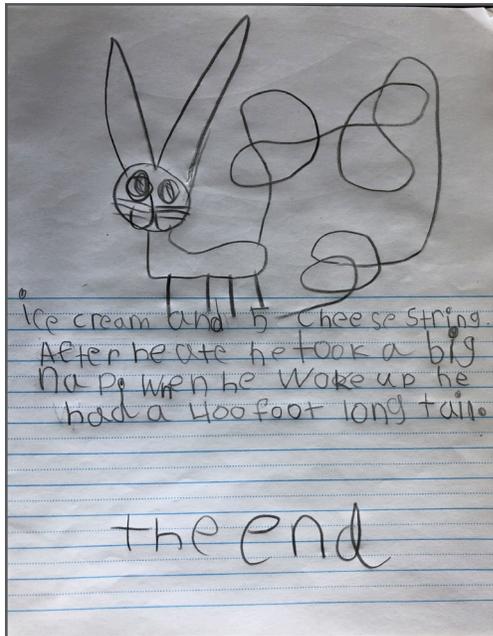
# Cricket

by Ayla Bisharat, Gr. 1  
Sacred Heart Academy

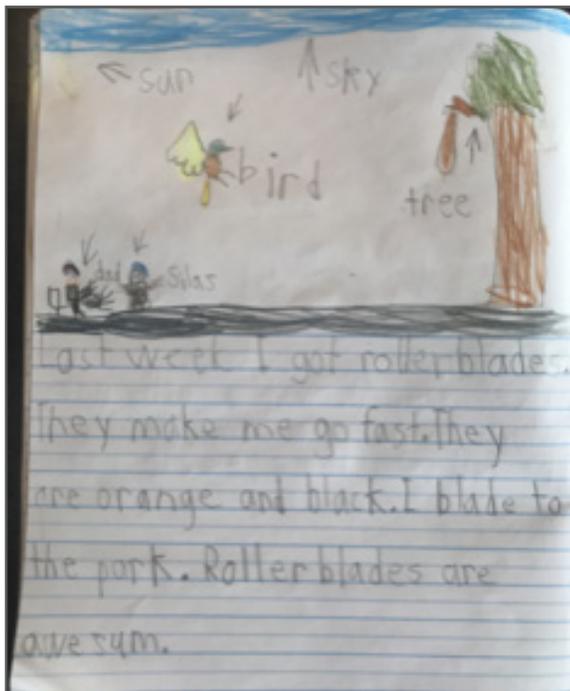


# The Very Hungry Cat

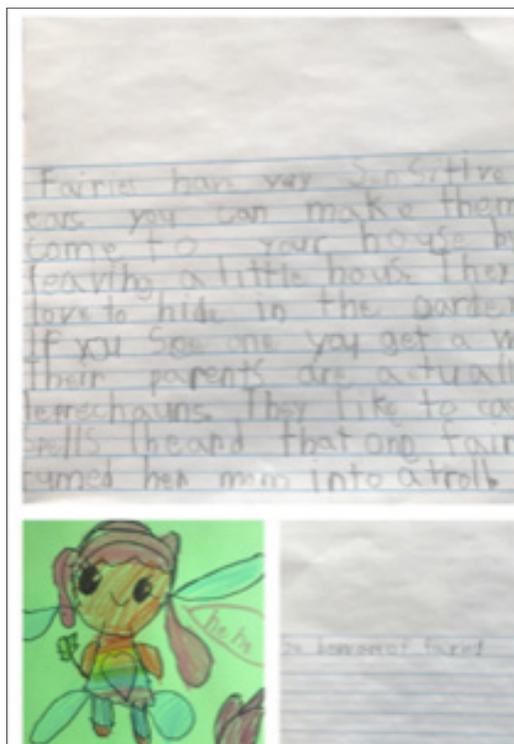
by Kaylee Beddome, Gr. 1  
Sacred Heart Academy



by Silas Falconberg, Gr. 1  
St. Mary's School



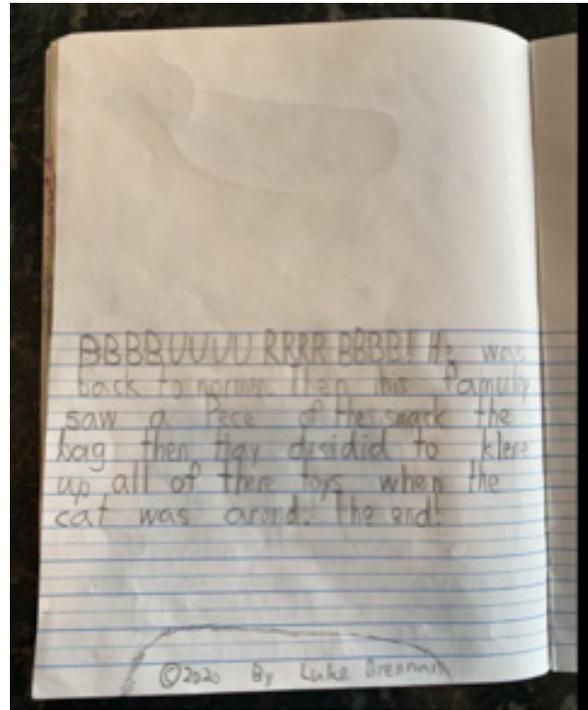
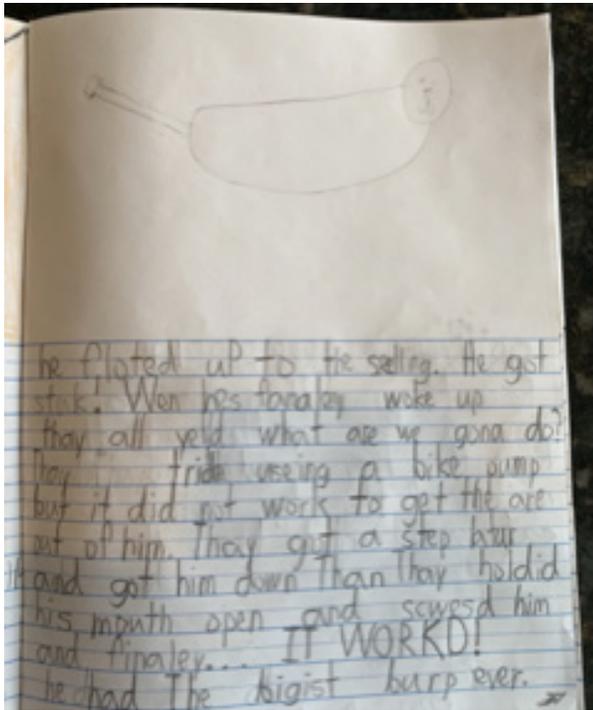
by Avery Clark, Gr. 1  
St. Mary's School



by Luke Brennan, Gr. 1  
St. Mary's School



Wonce a pua a fine there was  
a cat named Marley and  
he loved to sleep One morning  
when his famaly was sleping  
he got in to a big catastrophe  
he ate a toy, cold a smack  
the bag. This toy costs a cema cema  
reashin and farsis it to icksplate  
he got bigger and bigger and  
bigger, he was the size of a horse



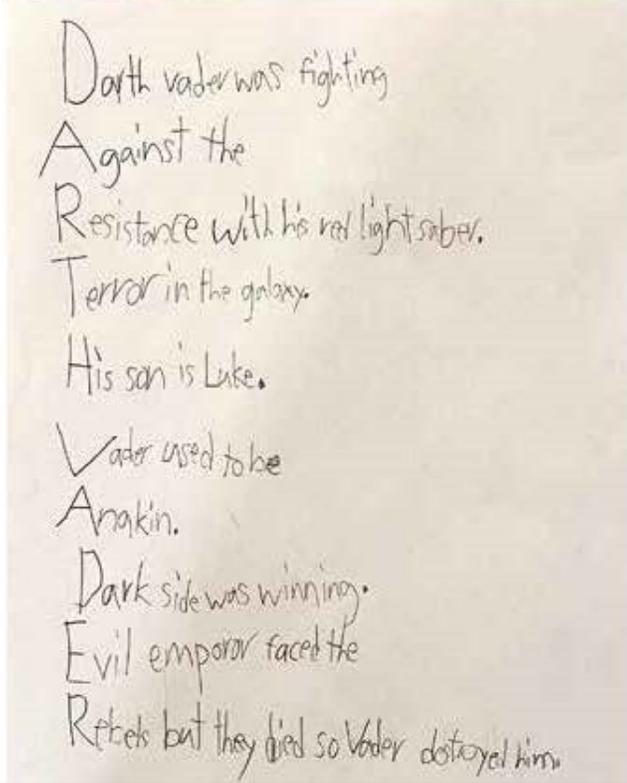
# Darth Vader

by Charlie Wagner, Gr. 2  
Holy Family Academy

Acrostic Poem  
during Distance Learning  
by Charlie Wagner  
Grade 2 - Holy Family Academy

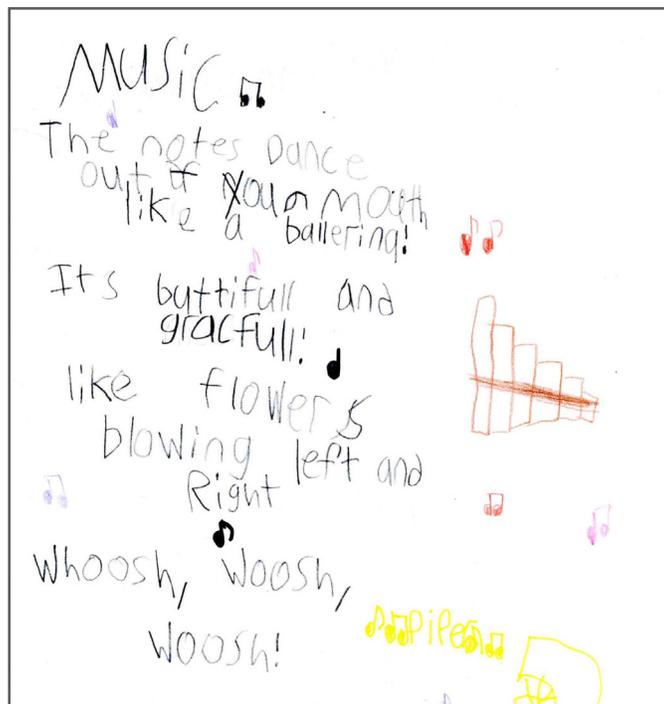
**D**arth Vader was fighting  
**A**gainst the  
**R**esistance with his red light saber.  
**T**error in the galaxy.  
**H**is son is Luke.

**V**ader used to be  
**A**nakin.  
**D**ark side was winning.  
**E**vil emperor faced the  
**R**eBELs but they died so Vader destroyed him.



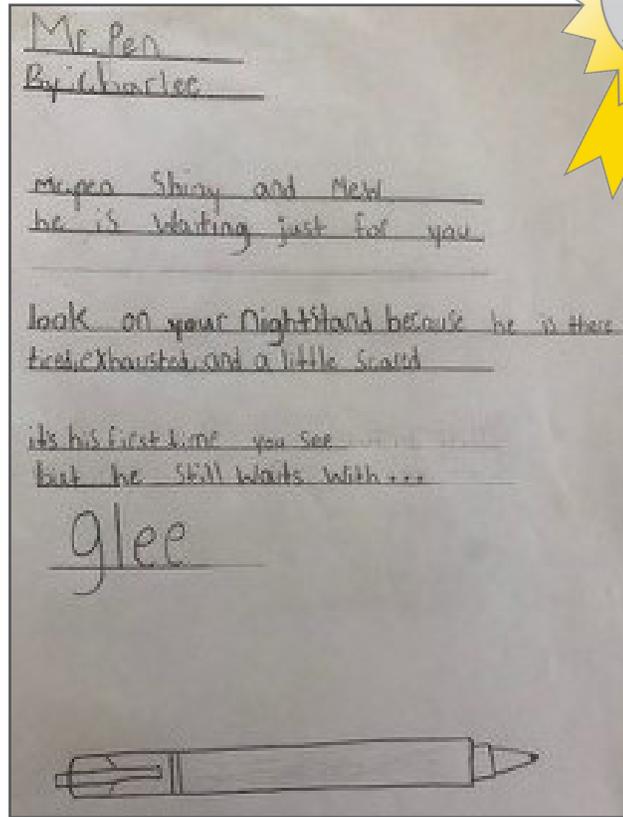
# Music

by Piper Nightingale, Gr. 2  
St. Mary's School



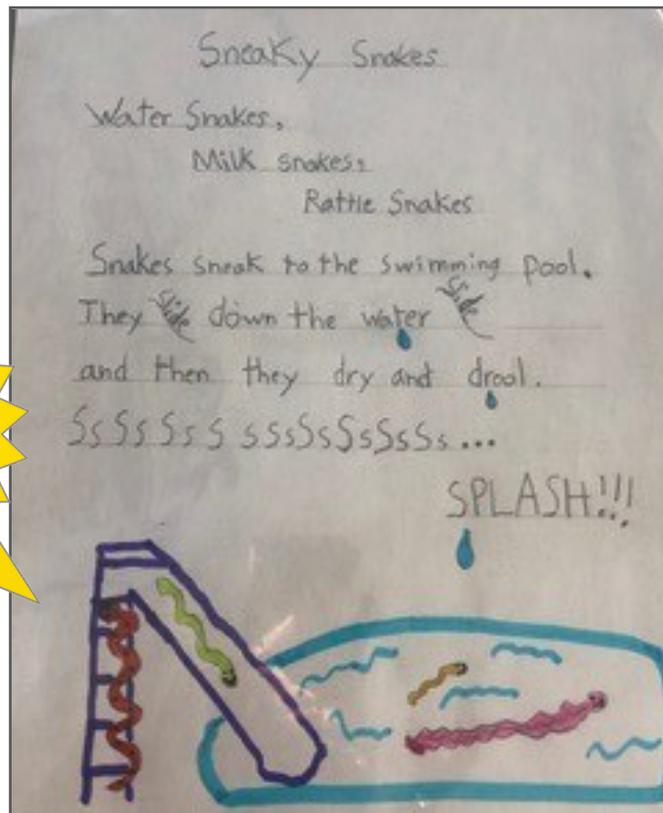
# Mr. Pen

by Charlee Croucher, Gr. 2  
St. Mary's School



# Sneaky Snakes

by Ellie Nickle, Gr. 2  
St. Mary's School



# The Little Cabin

by Avea Scott, Gr. 3

École Good Shepherd School

In a cold snowy forest, there were giant icicles that shone like gold. The ground was icy and snowy. It smelled like dry rain and it was also very quiet by the big mountains. It looked beautiful and shiny beside the mountains. There were big trees covered in snow and ice everywhere. It was beautiful and white. On a giant mountain, a little cabin lies. Side to side, a girl named Lizzy held her tiny brother named Jake. Around their cabin, a stray puppy slept in the deep snow. The problem was he had not eaten in five days. He was awfully skinny. The girl Lizzy felt so, so, so sad! She wanted to cry, so Lizzy went to her room to think. So she thought, and thought until she had an idea to take care of him, but their mom and dad were coming home tomorrow! The other problem was that Lizzy and Jake's mom and dad did

not like pets. But why don't they like pets? Across the mountain, there was an enormous bear that was starving! Inside the cabin, Jake was playing and all of a sudden, Jake heard a really loud sound. Suddenly, Lizzy ran so fast. Jake asked what was going on? Lizzy said there was a giant bear. Lizzy told Jake to pack his toys. Lizzy said, "We need to go to the basement." So they were safe! Jake said no because he would not leave without the puppy. Lizzy said she would go get the puppy, but he had to pack! Jake was packing as fast as a cheetah! Lizzy came back with the puppy! Jake was so happy. Lizzy found some beef jerky. She gave it to the dog! Lizzy looked at her phone. She said "Yes!" "The bear got killed!" she said. They lived happily ever after.

# Moi et mon chat

par, Caleb Wagner, Gr. 3

École Good Shepherd School

Un matin à ma maison, j'ai joué avec mon chat. Premièrement, j'ai marché en bas des escaliers et j'ai vu mon chat jouer avec un ballon jaune. Il était une petite cloche dedans qui a fait un grand bruit. Ding! Ting! Dong! Quand mon chat a vu moi, il a regardé comme il a fait rien. J'ai vu un petit sac sur le plancher avec du pain dedans. Mon chat a regardé très curieux. Après ça, j'ai vu mon chat avec le sac dans sa petite bouche. Vitement, j'ai poussé mon chat et mis le sac sur une table! C'était très drôle et j'étais content!



# Woodrow S Lloyd

by Torin Pederson, Gr. 3  
St. Mary's School



Woodrow Stanley Lloyd

1913 - 1972

## The Early Years

Woodrow Stanley Lloyd was born July 16th 1913, to Allen Edward Lloyd and Myrtle Belle Lloyd. He was born in a small town, Webb Saskatchewan. Woodrow grew up on a farm, and He had 15 brothers and sisters. The Lloyd family farmed their land with oxyn, and grew lots of grain. That is how they made their money.

## Growing Up

Woodrow worked hard on the family farm, and in school. He grew up and studied engineering. Because of the Great depression, Woodrow changed his mind and decided to become a teacher. He graduated at 23 years old from the University of Saskatchewan.

## Worked Hard

Woodrow became a teacher in the early 1930's. He also worked as a Principle until 1944. Woodrow joined the government and became the youngest cabinet minister in the history of Saskatchewan, Woodrow did great things for education and medicare in Canada, so people don't have to pay money to see their doctor.

## An Inspiration

It was people like Tommy Douglas, Premiere of Saskatchewan from 1944 -1961, who supported Woodrow on his hard work and his ideas. Tommy inspired Woodrow, and it was in 1961 Woodrow became Premiere of Saskatchewan taking over for Tommy Douglas.

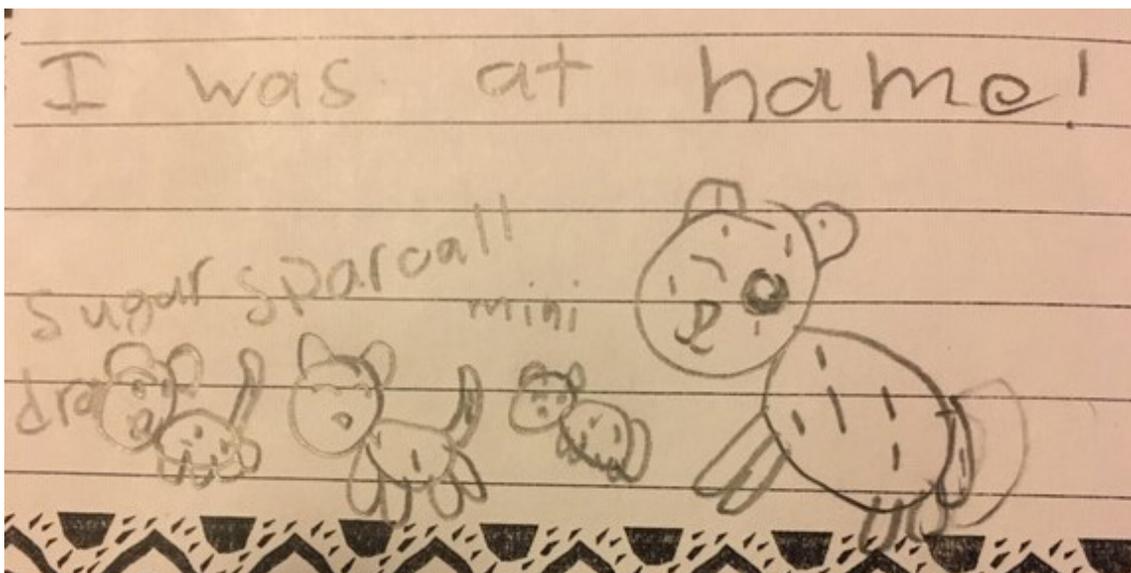
My name is Torin Lloyd Pederson and Woodrow was my Great Uncle, He was a wonderful man and did many great things. Woodrow is also my inspiration.

# My Amazing Journey

by Olivia Nemecek, Gr. 3  
École Good Shepherd School

Icy snow crunched under my paws. Throughout the blazing sunlight, I could make out the outlines of some dens for polar bears. Sunlight bounced off snow making it glisten. Icicles hung from the trees clanging together making a sweet sound echo off them. Upon the sky, birds cheeped filling the land with sound and life. Seeing the happy blue sky made me feel at home. The winter wonderland place felt cold, windy and warm. I looked for some meat, but couldn't find any. A breeze whipped through my fur and chilled me making it hard to breathe. I was surrounded by snow whipping

below and over me. By the way, my name is Halo, Halo the snow leopard. I got lost and that's the whole story. Back to the story now. I ran so fast that I had to stop to breathe, hah, hah, hah. Suddenly, a miraculous cold snow blasted my fur! I ran quicker, faster and on the horizon I gasped. "There!" I cried. "My babies! My home!" The wind sped up making me speed up too. I rushed straight to it waiting and panting the whole time. Hah, hah, hah. There snuggled in were my babies, Sparkle, Sugar Drop and Mini. "Guys!" I cried. "Mama!" they cried. They were at home. I was at home! The end!



# Mother Theresa Biography

by Lana Denise Berreta, Gr. 3  
St. Mary's School

**BIOGRAPHY**  
**MOTHER TERESA**



Written and Illustrated by:  
Lana Denise Barreda

**Paragraph 1**

**Introducing Person:**

Mother Teresa or known as Saint Teresa of Calcutta was born in a little town called Skopje, which is the modern day called Macedonia. Her father Nikola, was a successful businessman, and her mother was Drana, a housewife. Mother Teresa was born on August 26, 1910. Mother Teresa birth name was Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu.



**Paragraph 2**

**Early Life and School:**

As a little girl, Agnes (Mother Teresa) was a very disciplined, thoughtful little girl, who didn't seem to mind helping her brother and sister. She was apparently shy and introvert as well. When Agnes (Mother Teresa) was 9 her father got sick and he died. This left the entire burden of supporting the family on her mother. Mother Teresa went to a high school named Loreto Abbey, Rathfarnham. She was given a permission to join a group of Nuns in India.



**Paragraph 3**

**What made them famous or important:**

Mother Teresa At a young age she felt a calling to be a Nun and serve through it by helping the poorest of the poor. The important stuff about her despite of the struggle that she doesn't have enough money. She still organized the Missionaries of Charities. On 1960 the world open the door for her and she was recognized. On 1979 she won the Nobel piece Award. Now her Missionary of Charities has 4000 sisters members 300 associated brotherhood and 610 missions in 123 countries. Two miracles was recognized by the Vatican and made her a Saint.



**Paragraph 4**

**Role models and people who supported them:**

Father Julien inspire her to continue her passion of teaching and helping the poorest of the poor. Mother Teresa had little supporters at first and when she started the missionaries of Charities she got 10 more supporters. Today there's over 4000 people 300 associated brotherhood and 600 missions in 123 countries continued her work.



# Max Domi

by Parker Shippit, Gr. 3  
St. Mary's School



Max Domi

By: Parker Shippit

Max Domi was born in Winnipeg, MB on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1995. Max is currently 25 years old. His parents are Tie & Leanne Domi, he has two sisters named Avery & Carlin. Max at an early age had a love for hockey and wanted to follow in his Dad's footsteps. At the age of 3 Max started doing hockey training camps. You could always find Max at the arena with his Dad during practices and games.

At the young age of 12 years old Max was diagnosed Type 1 diabetic, the first thing he asked the doctor after being told the news was "Can I still play hockey?"

Max achieved his goals and in 2013 Max was signed to the Phoenix Coyotes hockey team, he then on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Max was signed to the Montreal Canadiens who he still plays for today.

Max has a golden retriever named Orion. Orion is a specially trained medical support dog, if at any time during the day or night (mainly the night) Max's sugar levels go low or too high, Orion will detect it and wake Max up by barking.

Max has written a book called "No day's off" this book is all about his journey with T1D and the NHL.



Max was born in Winnipeg, MB, but grew up in Toronto, ON. They move to Toronto when his Dad was traded back to the Toronto Maple Leafs in 1994.

Max enjoyed life growing up as there was never a day he wasn't at the arena with his Dad. Max remembers when his dad would be out on the ice for practice, the trainers would throw him a laundry hamper and push him down the hallways.

Max at a young age was caught in the middle of his parent's divorce, he believes it didn't really affect him too much. However, it was clear how busy his dad was when he noticed he was not around much due to conflicting hockey schedules.

When Max was 12 years old, he had a pee-wee tournament in Detroit, MI, on the way home it was then when his mom Leanne knew something was not right. Max was thirsty all the time and they had to keep pulling over so he could go to the bathroom. This is when his mom took him to the hospital, and they found out he was Type 1 Diabetic.

Max Domi attended Upper Canada College for grade 3-10, this was a private all boys school. Max preferred this school over regular school's due to everyone's parents were somebody, he was not in the light of fame due to his Dad Tie. Max was accepted into a University in the US but never attended as he was drafted to the NHL.



Winnipeg Free Press

PAGE 3

Max is well known for being an NHL hockey player with the Montreal Canadiens. Though hockey is his primary passion and what he loves to do.

Max is also well known for his involvement with the JDRF foundation (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation). He is currently the head ambassador for the Quebec location, Max loves being involved with the T1D community and helping kids get through their battle with T1D. When he was younger Max would hide the fact that he himself was T1D, he didn't want anyone looking or treating him differently due to it.

Max is also an ambassador for Deacom (a continuous glucose monitor) and he also wore an insulin pump for 8 years then decided to go back to self-injections. Max loves empowering children to not let diabetes stop them from achieving their goals.

Max thought when he was diagnosed that he would never be able to make it to the NHL with having diabetes, he over came it and was signed to the Phoenix Coyotes.

He just recently wrote his book No Days Off to explain his struggles and obstacles he had with his T1D and getting to the NHL.



PAGE 4

Max looked up to Mats Sundin on and off the ice. Mats and Tie weren't only teammates, but they were good friends as well. Max remembers just sitting in the locker room in Mats stall talking about anything and everything. He admired how hard Mats would play every shift, how much he sacrificed and how he always knew how to make someone smile.

Max has always considered Mats as an uncle to him, he is his biggest role model, he use to smack around a tape ball with Max in the Toronto Maple Leafs locker room, and always genuinely always tried to engage in a conversation with him as well.

Max's biggest supporters were his family and friends. When Max was only 2 1/2 years old he was at his sisters skating practice when the coach confronted his Mom and said it looked like Max was really eager to start skating and that they had room for him to start.

Max's mom was not one to break the rules but knew this is what her son wanted the coach knew how old Max really was when his mom blurted out, he was 3 years old. From that point Max started his dream of becoming an NHL player just like his Dad. His mom has always been one of his biggest supporters along with his dad, sisters and Mats Sundin.



# Realistic Fiction

by Claire Macdonald, Gr. 3  
École Good Shepherd School

On spring break Bob's parents took him to Disneyworld. It was a windy and cold but he couldn't wait until he got on the Expedition Everest ride. After waiting in a long line he finally reached the ride. He buckled himself in and his heart began to pound as it started to pull away. It twisted and turned, it was so much fun until boom it stopped...

Bob is so scared, feels really sick and super worried. How is he going to get off the amusement ride? He takes a big breath and counts to five. Then he unbuckles his belt and

back down on his seat. He sits there for a long time, what feels like forever. Suddenly he hears a noise. He leans over the side and looks down. He sees two enormous trucks that drive under the ride, and stop. Then the workers set up two big nets right under the ride. He was so scared that he had to jump down. They called his name. He stood up but it was that scared feeling again he had before. So he sat back down, shaking with fear. He started to cry. How is

Two hours go by. His stomach was rumbling and he really had to go to the bathroom. The sun was starting to set when he heard the blades of a helicopter. He was so excited. A few minutes later Bob sees a woman throw a rope out of the helicopter. The rope was hovering above his head. He stood up on the tips of his toes but couldn't quite reach it. He takes a big breath and stands up on his seat. His legs start shaking, his heart starts pounding, he bends his legs and jumps. He grabs the rope. The helicopter starts pulling him up. He gets close to the helicopter and his hands start slipping.

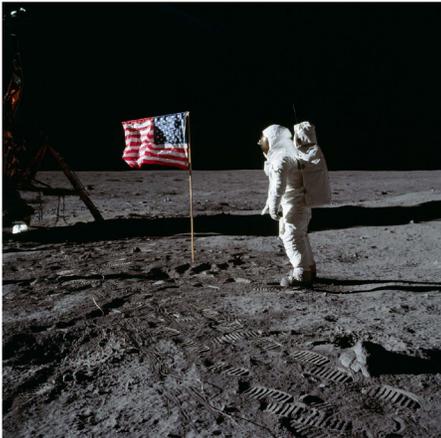
The lady grabs his hands. He crawls onto the helicopter and it zooms off. Two minutes later, he sees a huge hotel. The helicopter starts going down and lands on the top of the hotel. He opens the door and runs to his mom and dad and gives them a big hug. His dad says "do you want to go on another ride?" They all laughed. THE END!

# Neil Armstrong

by Landyn Meikle, Gr. 3  
St. Mary's School

## Neil Armstrong

By: Landyn Meikle



### Paragraph 1

Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon. Neil Armstrong's birthday is August 5th. He was born in 1930 in Wapakoneta Ohio in the U.S.A. He died on August 25 2012 Cincinnati U.S.A. His parents were Stephen Koenig Armstrong is his dad and his mom is Viola Louise Neeengel. His younger siblings are, June his sister and Dean his brother. Neil Armstrong stopped signing autographs after he found out that people were selling them on the internet for a lot of money. More than six hundred million people watched the first moonwalk on tv.

### Paragraph 2

Neil Armstrong was very smart and loved school. He grew up in Ohio and several different locations. He lived a rich life as a child because he went to university. And back then it was very expensive. Neil attended Blume high school and finished at age 17. At age 17 he started university. He went to Purdue University. Armstrong was called to Pensacola Naval Air Station in Florida there he earned his pilot wings at the age of 20 years old. Making him the youngest flyer in his squadron.

### Paragraph 3

One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind is a famous saying from history. Neil Armstrong is famous for walking on the moon. The U.S. was in a competition with the Soviet Union. He had to take control of the manual control of landing this was not the plan and if the landing took too long they would have less fuel to go home. He was the first one out of the shuttle and put the United States flag on the moon. They took rocks from the expedition. The moonwalk was one of the biggest things on tv.

### Paragraph 4

Neil Armstrong's mom was supportive to him. His mom read to him every night. This helped his reading level be at a grade 5 level so he skipped grade 2. His mom helped him get to his goal because she taught him how to love school and this helped him graduate university at a younger age. And he helped himself by working as a grease monkey at a local mechanic shop to pay for fly lessons.



# Mission Archie

by Justus Cormier, Gr. 3  
École Good Shepherd School



Mission Archie Justus

My Mom just tucked me in.

I heard Purrr's coming from my brother's room. They reminded me that I really need my cat Archie to fall asleep. As I lay here looking at the twinkling lights of the city I know that Archie would rather be with me. I have a much better view than Tietjen does. Toys are scattered around my room and I have lots of stuffies to cuddle. I just can't fall asleep. I need Archie.

Justus

I can hear my dad tuck king someone in. I'm pretty sure it is Alexia. Now is my chance. I fell out of my bed. My dad could have heard that. He rushes to my room. Get back in your bed right now. My dad just left the room and shut his door to his room. I am a lot more quiet this time. I do it again. In his room now. Justus get out of my room right now. Tietjen busted me. I will not stop trying. Good everyone is asleep now. It is my chance. I am in his room. Good Tietjen is asleep.

JUSTUS

I can see Archie resting like a sleeping beauty. Yes I grabbed Archie. Mission accomplished. Now I can fall sleep peacefully.

The end

# Realistic Fiction

by Jude Leinster, Gr. 3  
École Good Shepherd School

It was cold in the garage. Quinn had to pack his hockey equipment in his bag quickly because he was freezing. Quinn saw his Connor Mc David Jersey. The Oiler's logo was on the front and Mc David's number 97 was in the centre at the back. Quinn wanted to meet Connor Mc David because he thought he was the best hockey player ever. Quinn spent all of his screen time to learn more skating techniques. Quinn would do anything to meet his hero but it did not seem possible. Quinn quickly left to go to hockey practice.

Quinn's dad was waiting inside the car. "Hurry up Quinn!" said his dad, as Quinn put his hockey bag in the trunk. While Quinn and his dad were driving to

some possible to see Connor Mc David.

The next week Quinn went to hockey practice. His dad saw how good Quinn was doing on the ice. Quinn did slapshots, crossovers, and passed to his teammates. Quinn's dad was sitting on the bleachers secretly filming him. His dad had an idea to send the video to Mc David.

The next day was a bright and sunny winter's day and Quinn was brushing his teeth, when he heard the door bell ring. Quinn's younger brother Jude answered the door and yelled "Quinn come here and look!" "OK" Quinn said and ran to the door. Quinn saw Mc David standing there. Connor Mc David said "can I have your autograph?"

the arena, Quinn asked his dad if he could go to one of Connor Mc David's hockey games. "Those hockey tickets are \$200 each," said his dad. Quinn frowned and said, "I wish we could win the lottery." Then the brightest idea came into his head. "A letter, dad! I can write a letter to Mc David, right dad?" said Quinn.

Quinn was exhausted when he got home from hockey practice, but he shot upstairs to write a letter. A few minutes later Quinn ran downstairs to mail his letter. Quinn's huge black dog Mugs grabbed the letter out of his hand and Mugs' slobber went all over it. Quinn's face turned red and he clenched his jaw he yelled "Mugs!!!" None of his ideas worked. Again it did not

Your video was so good!! Quinn was so surprised that his toothbrush fell right out of his mouth!



# Journey

by Maximillian Kinsberg, Gr. 4  
Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy

Hi, I'm Anna.

This is my bland home in New York. Not much is happening inside.

My mom is cooking some frothy, steaming elk stew, and chatting with the picky landlord. Don't want to interrupt her, but wow, that beautiful aroma is just mouth-watering. The heavenly smell snakes its way through all of the house.

I walk down the hall, only to see my dad clacking away at his keyboard on his matte white computer, the bright, convex screen reflecting each word onto his black, square glasses. As I head upstairs, I notice my big sister playing on her portable video game console, lying on our murky green sofa.

Yeah, that's my everyday life. Everybody doing their own thing. Alone. I might as well go to my bedroom.

To my surprise, my cat, Melissa, beat me to it. Perched on top of a furry, woven rug, she's giving me the laziest, far-eyed stare known to humankind under that long coat of thick, musty, stone-grey fur. She's sitting across the room from my favourite red crayon. Lifting herself up with chubby legs, she wanders out of the room.

I wonder what it would be like in a world of glory and adventure?

(Very unlike mine.)

I wonder if maybe, just maybe, that red crayon is my ticket out of here. What if I drew a door on that boring, colourless drywall?

I wonder what's behind this portal-of-a-door? A ferocious, scarlet, ash-covered dragon? A vast, deep, dark blue sea? A burning, scorching, deadly underworld? Or perhaps a wide open sky, as far as a crystal-clear eye could see, with light, fluffy cumulus clouds inhabiting the watery blue across the horizon like cottony white lambs in a luscious, open, green pasture? Wow. Something much, much more majestic. A beautiful, shady forest with towering trees with slender, smooth trunks and strong roots tunneling

through the earth like a beluga whale surfacing for a gasp of fresh, crisp air. Blanketed across the ground is a layer of silky moss covered in a thin veil of dew. The thick canvas of tall trees casts dark, looming, creeping shadows across the mossy, rooted terrain.

Majestic, sapphire-blue, glowing lanterns sway from the thick arms of trees. Some lanterns are tall and thin, others short and round. But they all have awe-inspiring wavy designs of swirls and waves painted in deep-ocean blue. Weaving through the labyrinth of branches are feathery blue strands with small, pulsing, blue-white bulbs, almost like festive christmas lights. Even with their bright blue light, they hardly illuminate the shady woods.

I hear rushing water nearby, could it be a stream? As I venture deeper into the woods, they grow darker with each stride of my red and white sneakers, the snapping of twigs and sticks is muffled under them. Something catches my eye, an edge. Is that a dock? As the shade embeds a light level of nearly pitch-black, it's hard to make out the shape of the ancient-looking wooden dock. When I get to the end of the dock, my toes on the edge, I draw a little wooden oarless boat out of thin air with my little red crayon. Hopping in my tiny cute vessel, the stream pushes me along. It silently glides along the still water, a small wake behind. As I drift out of the creepy, hardly illuminated forest and into the light, I squint before my slightly frazzled eyes readjust. When they do, the amazing sight of a kingdom fills my eyes. It has rustic, mighty stone walls and huge, golden bulbs atop tall, spiraling chapels. Ahead of me are a few water locks that each raise me higher, until I'm gliding along a soaring, elevated artificial canal.

Now branches break off from the canal, each with a path and story to tell. Between two forks is a platform, with men atop it. They are all dressed the



same, with forest-green suits and caps. The brims of the dark green caps shed shadows of the men's forehead, making it nearly impossible to see their eyes. They are each controlling a paddle-like divider, which each open and close off different branches. My puny little boat is no match for the strong current, so it gains a monopoly over me. It decides which path I will take. Now drifting along a thinner channel, I hear gushing water ahead, almost like a waterfall? Oh. It is a waterfall! No! No! It can't end here! Not here! Not now! My eyes fill up with tears. I gain control of my skyrocketing and plummeting emotions with deep, calm breaths, and thinking fast, just as I tip over the edge, I speedily sketch a hot air balloon. I tumble into the basket with a thud, never more relieved in my life. When I said I wanted an adventure, did I get a crazy adventure!

Now floating up and over a wall in my airborne balloon, one of those strange men in green suits waves to me from a tall spire. I wave back. I now head into dark grey sky. A huge, rustic airship soars in the distance. Close to me ten or so men are gathered on a grey zeppelin. They aren't dressed like the men back in the kingdom, though. They are wearing dark grey-blue overalls over grey long-sleeved tunics. They have pointy leather hats almost like garden gnomes, with circular bases and floppy tips. They are securely holding the calves of another man, who is leaning off the edge with a net firmly gripped in his hands. He is trying to snatch a purple bird, waving the net frantically through the air.

It's the most beautiful bird in the world. It has long, curly tail feathers, and is slim and majestic in the body.

The men snatch the bird in the net and toss it into a bag. What!?!

They can't do that to it! The men turn their blimp and head toward the huge airship.

I immediately follow. When I land on the truss-packed tail of the huge ship, I realise how big it really is. I sprint through all the rooms, not even paying attention to what's inside them. Then I spot the pillar which a little roofed platform is on. It's big enough for two guards in traditional Japanese armor and the

prisoned bird atop a pedestal.

I climb up a tiny iron ladder to the top, slide between a guard's legs, snatch the bird and cage, and climb, as fast as I ever could, down an opposing iron ladder. I run to the bow of the ship, exhaust filling my painful lungs.

When I get to the end, I release the caged bird. Without thinking twice, it soars off. I was so distracted by the bird, I didn't notice guards running up to me, sternly barking at me like angry hounds in a foreign language. They grab me and snatch my red crayon. They toss it into the gray abyss below. No! They bring me to a steel cage and throw me in it. When they threw that crayon away, it ripped something out of me. Something intangible, something special. Hope. Now I'm hanging in a rusty, cast-iron cage. Hopeless. Then a purple figure flies out of the stoney mist. No... It can't be! It is! The purple bird! Although it is simply violet, it seems like a plethora of colours against the ashen void of clouds.

And my precious red crayon perched in the bird's thin beak. The bird swoops down onto one of the prison bars and drops the crayon in my cupped hands. I draw the matching key to the lock and revolve it. Skreee! The sound of grinding metal tortures my ears as the door slowly swings open. I draw an antique carpet out of thin air. But not just any antique carpet, a magic flying antique carpet! It zooms off, waving the flame-red fringes like the tail of a peppy puppy dog. Now soaring over the same kingdom from before, it looks completely unrecognisable in the flaming, orange, setting sun. I glide past the coast into the deep blue ocean, and I see a little island, a silhouette in front of the blood-orange sun sinking into the blue. I land on the island, which is occupied by a single, lonely palm tree. On the opposing side of the tree is a door. A purple door!? Like the purple bird! I cram myself through it, and end up guess where? Back in New York! But someone calls out to me.. A boy. He says his name is Noah. He's pretty nice. I guess we could hang out.

You know, maybe ... just maybe .... my home isn't that gloomy after all.

# Dad's Waffles

by Payton Wagner, Gr. 4  
Holy Family Academy

Procedural Writing during Distance Learning  
by Peyton Wagner  
Grade 4 - Holy Family Academy

## Dad's Waffles

You will need: waffle iron, butter, flour, milk, eggs, baking powder, sugar and salt.

Syrup, whipped cream and fruit for toppings.

Heat up the waffle iron. Mix together in large bowl:

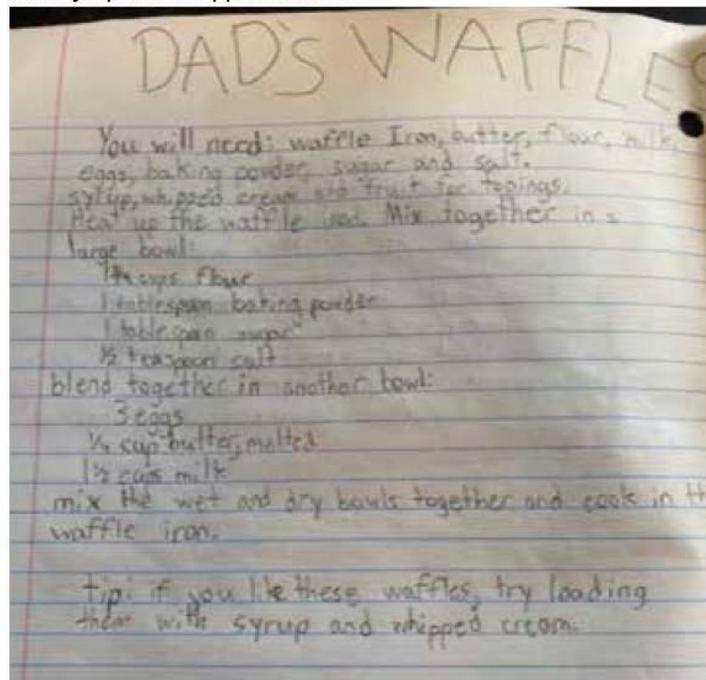
- 1 3/4 cups flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

blend together in another bowl:

- 3 eggs
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1 1/2 cups milk

mix the wet and dry bowls together and cook in the waffle iron.

tip: if you like these waffles, try loading them with syrup and whipped cream.



# Hulk's Day Off

by Cassie Dash, Gr. 5  
St. Mary's School



Trying to avoid any embarrassing situations, Hulk lumbered to park with his dog Dave. "What a nice day out!" the Hulk said even though it was super foggy and gloomy out. Especially when he is mad, Hulk is not always the brightest, and he didn't really pay attention to the weather, and he didn't really care about the fog and so he thought that it was not such a bad day out. As he entered the park, a fierce wind started blowing the leash away from the Hulk's muscular arms. Making things worse, Dave saw the leash was loose and started to run. Sadly, the swampy dark emerald superhero was not paying any attention to the loose dog. He was more annoyed because the fog was getting worse. "Grr...I can't see anything!" he exclaimed. "I... wait.....Dave? Dave!? Where are you!?" the superhero raged. The dark brown spaniel border collie mix had run away!

Hulk ran all over the park in search of Dave, but had no luck. "Wait! Dave loves the pet store! He might be there!" the Hulk exclaimed. Bolting out of the fog, the Hulk burst through the door of the local pet shop. "How may I help you, sir?" the clerk asked. The green monster wasn't listening. In search of Dave, Hulk was ripping open dog food bags and emptying them out, snapping the doors off pet cages, and breaking chew toys. "Um... sir, how are you going to pay for the mess you made?" the clerk growled at him. "Where is my dog? Grr! Stop asking me questions!" the muscular creature screamed at the clerk.

The beast ran out of the store and lumbered to his house. The store clerk started to dial 911 as the angry beast ran away. Ripping his furniture apart, he tried to

find Dave. "Dave!? Where are you!?" he screeched in a loud and manly way. Luckily, he had an idea! Hulk bolted to the park again. "I lost Dave here, so I should check here again because he might still be hiding here!" Then he heard sirens. The police were getting out of their cars. The police started asking Hulk a load of questions such as "What is your name, sir?" and "Did you do it?": "Huh? What's going on?" asked the clueless green giant. The store clerk was tapping her foot at the Hulk. "Sir, is THIS your dog?" the clerk asked. She held up a dark brown dog. He found him! "Yay!" Hulk said. "Oh no, not YAY! You need to clean up the pet store! Your dog also did some mess there! He ate all the food and ate all the dog treats!" she complained. "B..but.. where was he!?" the buff man asked her. "He was in an empty bag of dog food that you tore open! Come on! Clean it up now!" she yelled. The police nodded their heads. The monster eyed his dog with an evil eye. "FINE," the swampy man growled.

He thumped to the pet store. He was raging mad. Hulk grabbed empty dog food bags and chucked them out. About an hour later, the Hulk finished cleaning. The superhero, who was feeling not so super, had spent \$400 that day at the pet store. When he walked home after all that, he remembered that his furniture was torn apart. The angry beast let out a super loud scream. Today was a very embarrassing day for him.

# Once I Was...

by Sadie Mclsaac, Gr. 5  
St. Mary's School

Once I was a...

Once I was a tree but I had a seed  
Once I was a lilac but I had to leaf  
Once I was a seed, but I tunneled a bit too deep  
Once I was a Bed, but I couldn't sleep  
Once I was an orange, but I was a bad orange  
Once I was my mothers grandpa, but I got too old  
Once I was a cat, but I got caught in a tree  
Once I was a Hiking trail, but I got overgrown  
Now I am a Child that is wondering when this  
poem is going to end.

# A Christmas Poem

by Vivian Bailey, Gr. 5  
St. Mary's School

## A Quiet Night

A soft breeze dances with the twinkling stars,

this quiet night is special by far.

Click, Click, Click the camels hooves say,

while muffled voices escape the day.

## The Angels News

Singing and rejoicing the angels' voices ring,

They are talking to the shepherds and telling them that they have a New King.

Little did they know that it was a baby, they had no idea what burden the baby's life would carry.

## Loving the King

Sparkling stars hovering above, inside the stable is full of love.

Long swaying grass waving to the king, Singing and rejoicing, letting the hallelujahs ring.

## Thank You

Thank you Jesus, for all YOU have done, we are a very grateful one.

# Prince Edward Island's Song

by Sadie Nightengale, Gr. 5  
St. Mary's School

Sun sinks down

The moon rises

Fox steps out to lead the chorus

Timid coyote follows to the rocky ledge

Geese above trumpet with pride

Fox trots to the big oak

throwing back his head he sings to the star Coyote  
joins him letting his voice echo through the valley

Distant herds thrum their hooves as they prance

Creating a steady beat...

Evening breeze whistles in harmony with jittering  
muskrats below

Deep rivers flow

Soaring eagle searches with bravery

Then

All

Is

Silent

As the orchestra ends their song

Peacefulness hushes over the

Darkness

And God blesses nature's lullaby



# Hulk's Horrible Dogless Sunday

by Ethan Henry, Gr. 5  
St. Mary's School

Today he was going to try his very best to not find himself in any embarrassing situations Hulk thought as he thumped into the park. It was a foggy and rainy day so the park was dark and gloomy, it had a weird deserted feeling to it. It didn't bother Hulk but what did bother him was how his dog Joe kept looking up at him then around the park as if Hulk were a giant, buff, brainless monster and the park was his lair. While Hulk was standing there Joe slipped out of the old broken leash and ran towards a nuclear power plant in horror of the Hulk. When Hulk looked down he realized he put on the wrong leash because his neighbor took his other leash and that his new dog Joe was scared of him.

"Woof-woof" barked a dog from somewhere by the edge of the park so Hulk charged towards the sound of the dog thinking this is the twentieth time this week he ran away in horror of me! Is it really that scared of me? When he got to the place he heard the sound, there were hundreds of dogs there so Hulk started calling "Here boy!" "Come here Joe." When no dog came he threw the broken leash towards the city then he realized that he should print flyers.

As Hulk was putting up his first flyer the police came and told him that he can't put up flyers and they'd mail him a ticket in a few days. When Hulk came home to get lunch he was so frustrated that when he saw that his car had been randomly egged and spray painted he picked up his car and threw it as far as he could. "Woof" came the terrifyingly scared bark of Joe from the direction of the next door nuclear power plant.

Why would Joe be there? Oh, it's the closest place to hide from the park. Why didn't I look there? Oh ya I'm very forgetful, Hulk thought as he smashed towards the power plant. When he got there he was stopped by a guard saying "Thank goodness you're here. "I think your dog ran in there we tried looking for him but couldn't find him. "Also your car flew into the smoke stack and we heard your dog." "I think I'll wait till night time so Joe will be a sleep, to look so he doesn't run away again." said Hulk as he crashed towards the nearby ice cream truck to get ice cream.

Half a day later. Hulk walked into the power plant looking for his dog. The first thing he did was go to one of the rooms on the list of rooms that they didn't check that the guard gave him. The first room he checked was the smokestack room but when he tried to open the door it was blocked by something. So Hulk ripped the door off the wall only to find his car wedged in the doorway!

Hulk couldn't get it out of the doorway so he charged off to go look for a large pipe. When Hulk came back with the pipe he saw in a supply room he jammed it in the doorway and pushed out his car, when he got in the room he saw Joe under a pile of pipes. Hulk lifted the pipes and grabbed Joe. When he got out he saw that the guard had called the vet to make sure that when Hulk found Joe they could check him for injuries. When the vet was done he said that his dog was fine and Hulk should put him in obedience class. That's how Hulk found Joe and stopped him from being scared of him.

# Balloon Dog

by Maya Talbot, Gr. 6

Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy

I am running through the fields, my dog Blue floating behind me. The warm summer air has a slight breeze that makes the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. It makes Blues dark brown hair blow from side to side. You see, my dog has really never been able to use his back legs, he was born that way. My family doesn't have much money so we couldn't afford the fancy wheelchair thing for Blue. My brother suggested balloons, he was young then. At first I wasn't certain that would be a good idea but my opinion has since changed.

Right now we are playing fetch but Blue can't really go and fetch so I have to pull him towards the ball. Just as I'm reaching down to grab the ball from the porch mother yells,

"Dinners ready"

I respond cheerfully with "coming!"

"Cmon Blue," I encouraged. A few seconds later, I pull him inside and pump up his balloons and set him down on the couch. Calmly, I sit down for dinner with my family and that's when my mom says something to me that makes me freeze in my spot.

"Hunny I think it would be best if we put Blue down, recently he hasn't been that healthy and he's in a lot of pain."

My eyes immediately go to my little brother Jake, who is sitting in his chair picking at his food.

"Jake...?" I ask.

Jake sets down his fork and replies with.

"To be honest I think it's what's best for Blue, so I agree with mom.

I am so stunned but then a moment later I think about all the times he has had to go to the vet and how sick he's been

getting. Blue has been through alot, he has seen my parents get married and have me then Jake and he had a front row seat to see us grow up. Blue can sense that I'm upset so he whines, I walk over to him and I start stroking his back.

"I love you so much Blue" and I kiss his head.

The past few days even I have noticed Blue getting sicker and sicker and each night at dinner my parents mention it. I'm not gonna lie, Blue doesn't seem as happy as he was two months ago and it's making me more upset thinking about it but I know it's true.

The next day when I am taking Blue out for a walk I notice it seems as though Blue is floating a lot higher today.

"Weird," I mumble to myself just a bit concerned. The next day when I'm playing with him in the field I notice it too but this time he is even higher. I observed this for the next 5 days until one bright, sunny day when Blue and I are playing fetch outside I hear a noise, almost a snapping sound. I turn around and I see my dog, Blue floating up into the sky. I screamed but of course no one heard us. I was just about to run inside for dad when I noticed a goofy dog smile on his face. As he floated above the clouds that was when I looked down and saw that the leash that he and his balloons were attached to looked like it had been chewed off. I looked back up, a smile on my face and wet salty tears running down my cheeks. All I could see was sky no Blue. That's when I realized that this was his time, Blue was finally happy.



# Alarme de feu!

par Cadence Normandeau, Gr. 6  
École Good Shepherd School

L'année passe ma famille a eu un  
alarme de feu à la maison! Nous nous  
somme assis à la table sauf maman.  
Parce que maman était dans la cuisine  
entraîné de préparer l'énorme gâteau  
pour papa. Brin a regardé l'énorme  
gâteau et elle m'a dit. Maman a mis  
les chandelles et un cierge magique.  
Maman a commence à allumer les  
chandelles et le cierge magique. Ça  
a regardé comme des petits feux!  
Maman a apporté l'énorme gâteau  
à la table. Maman a mis l'énorme



gâteau devant papa. Papa a soufflé  
quand nous étions entraîné de chanter  
bonne fête à papa! Quand nous avons  
fini de chanter les alarmes de feu  
ont commence à faire Bi Bi Bi Bi Bi!!!!  
Moi et ma soeur avons commence  
à crier! AHAHAH!!!! Maman a  
ouvert la porte. Quand la porte  
était ouverte j'ai couru dehors et Epic  
a couru derrière moi! J'ai crié quand  
j'étais dehors! Epic a commence à faire  
Wof Wof Wof à moi parce que j'étais  
entraîné de crier! Quand je suis venue  
les alarmes de feu ont arrêté. Maman  
a fermé la porte et on a commence  
à manger l'énorme gâteau! C'était  
tellement amusant et tellement drôle!

# A Giant Catastrophe

by Brody Dick, Gr. 6  
Assumption School

Dylan breathes in. The damp morning air swells his chest like a water balloon ready to burst. Inside his brain the saltwater smell forms a mental image. Surprisingly not of gloomy days with crashing waves and deafening thunder, but of sunny days playing at the beach with his older brother, Brody. His eyes twinkled with mental images of sand squishing beneath his feet while standing on an endless beach, staring dazed into a september ocean of nothing but graceful ripples and soft foam. Those were the good old days. Sure he can still play at the beach all day, and sure he can still stare dazed at the ocean. But he wouldn't be with his brother Brody, and that makes all the difference. During the walk home he started counting down the minutes until Brody would get home, "ten more minutes," he whispered to himself, "ten more minutes." You see, today was September first, the first day of school and the last day of everything fun. Today was the worst day ever!

Ding! Dong! "Hi Brody!" shouted Dylan as he opened the door, too happy to control himself. "Do you have your swim trunks?" asked Brody in an overattentive tone that people use when talking to a baby or trying to mock someone. (In this case trying to mock someone.) "The real question is do you?" replied Dylan, just as enthusiastically as before. Finally when they left the house they heard a deafening stomping noise coming from the beach. "What's that sound?" asked Dylan. "Probably just construction," answered Brody. Cautiously, they reached the top of the hill. When they peered over the top of the hill their faces instantly turned white as a clean sheet. Beside the water stood the fattest, scariest, most hideous giant any movie watcher has ever dreamed about.

What are we going to do?!" cried Dylan, without even running it through his head. "Get down," Brody ordered. Surpris-

ingly, as if Brody could predict the future, a huge scrap of wood flew over the hill exactly where their heads used to be. "We have to help them," yelled Dylan. "I guess you're right," moaned Brody. "Let's make loud noises to scare it away. It works with most things," suggested Dylan. "Agreed," replied Brody. Quietly, they carried some scrap metal to the shore line. In the water stood the giant, it was bigger than a house. Bang! Bang! Bang! The boys started hitting the metal together. Instead of scaring it away, the noise only made it angrier. Without warning it started charging toward the two. It was sheer luck when the giant missed them with its punch. Shocked, they ran under a nearby bush while the giant was looking the other way. "That failed," said Brody airily, trying to lighten the mood. "We have to try again," blurted Dylan, with a moody sigh. "Yeah," answered Brody, "you're right."

"Whenever I get frustrated I listen to music to calm down," said Dylan. "So you're saying I should run home, get a speaker, and a phone?" guessed Brody, already confident in the answer. "Exactly," exclaimed Dylan. Once Brody arrived back from the house with everything they needed, they set off to the shore. Loudly, they blasted the macarena right next to the hideous giant. "Flawlessly executed," cheered Brody as the giant walked away with the speaker. "Indeed my good friend," exclaimed Dylan, even more enthusiastic than Brody. "I learned a very valuable life lesson today," stated Dylan, trying to be serious this time. "What was it?" asked Brody. "The macarena solves all problems," laughed Dylan, not even trying to hold it in anymore. The two laughed all the way home, just like the good old days.

# Dreamers

by Brody Dick, Gr. 6  
Assumption School

We're all dreamers whether young or old

We're all dreamers whether day or night

What would the world be like

Without dreamers

Every invention was made by a dreamer whether big or small

In school we learn to follow God's path and to be more like him

God is a dreamer

He made the earth and everything in it

He gave us free will, a body, a mind

All his creation would go to waste

If we were not dreamers

## National Geographic Inspired Setting

by Emma Walson, Gr. 6  
Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy

My head started pounding as I opened my eyes. The world was spinning and freezing cold. I couldn't feel the ends of my fingers or toes. Where was I? How did I get here? As my vision started to clear, I looked around to see where I was. The world looked bright and beautiful as the light bounced off of the snowflakes that covered the ground like a blanket. It looked as if the sun was about to set because of how the sky looked pink, orange, yellow and red. The air smelt of pine needles and burnt wood and I could only hear the soft breeze of the wind passing by me. It looked like I was on a mountain. A huge mountain that looked like it could touch the sky. I felt lost, alone and scared. I was like an ant compared to the world. The sky looked like it could keep going on forever and ever but I could only see it go so far. The world looked like nothing I have ever seen before.

I thought back to see how I got here but nothing came to me. I only heard the ringing in my ear. As I slowly stood up I heard the crunching of the soft snow beneath my feet and I could feel frost pinching my nose and my eyes watered because of the cold. My ears and nose were numb and for a second I thought they would fall right off. "Hello?" My voice cracked, thinking that someone could actually hear me. I slowly brushed snow off of my thick black snow pants and my blue and grey jacket. If someone did leave me here, at least they left me with some warm clothes for the snow. I decided to start to walk down the mountain but the snow was so high and powdery that I had to kick at it then step forward. I knew that wherever I was going was not home, and that this was only the beginning.

# The Next Bigfoot

by Cleo Caskey, Gr. 6  
Assumption School

My boss called me into his small stinky office “Hey I got a mission for you. Are you up for the job William?” “Yeah I am up for the job” I mumbled. In a loud booming voice he bellows “okay I am going to give this to you straight. Go out into the desert, I need you to investigate a lead about the next Bigfoot!!! Go there get some information and report back asap” demanded my boss. “Yes sir”, I’m on it! I’ve been dreaming of the chance to write about a breaking news story for months. Nervously I think this is my big chance to prove myself. Running back to my desk, With my old camera my grandpa gave to me and a pad of paper, I feel prepared. I wonder what could be out there?

When I wake up I am in a different place. I’m in the desert in this little tent. I am shaking with excitement “lets go” I say to the crew. “We need all the information we can get on this mission!” I notice there are 6 tents off in the distance. One step at a time I start asking people about the next big foot. “Hey have you heard about the 2nd bigfoot around here” I murmured to the stranger. “I am a scientist that is looking for the same thing you are so stay out of my way.” He blurts. “Okay” I say as I walk off so I go off into another tent. “Hi what are you doing today?” trying to start the question off easy cause you know what happened last time. “I am good, why are you asking?” “Well I am trying to write a story about the next Bigfoot so I was wondering if you had any information on it? I replied. “I am looking for the same thing you are but I guess that I can help you. My name is Lizzie,” she murmured.

The young beautiful reporter starts to describe what she has heard so far but there is no real evidence to back it up, she explains. I grab my walking stick, water bottle and with determination I say “I think the two of us are going to solve this mystery!” “We have until dark, before I have to get my story back to my grumpy boss to make the deadline. With teamwork this is possible! Are you in?”

“Yes of course i am!!” She said with happiness as we left the tents. I said to my crew “stay here and see if there is any more information that you can get”. The next thing I know is that I see the next Bigfoot standing there doing nothing at all. So I grab a net and try to capture the bigfoot and we catch him for a split second. He ripped the ropes and tore it apart. So I think to myself how am I going to catch this beast now? Then I ask Lizzie for her opinion. She says maybe we do not need to capture it, maybe we need to become friends with it. “EXCELLENT idea!” I yell “but how are we going to do that when he is super angry at us?”

“All we have to do is sit here and watch it,” Lizziereplies. “Well I think that second bigfoot will rip us apart like the rope”. I nervously claim. “Then it does! There is nothing we can do but what if it doesn’t is the thing?”, Lizzie says reassuringly. “Okay I will go with your idea. But if we get ripped apart like the rope I blame it on you.”

The Bigfoot starts going crazy. It is about to wack us with a tree so I close my eyes, then I can peek a glimpse of Lizzie on the bigfoot back having fun. She fed it our dinosaur candy. Now I have tons of things to write about, they flash in my mind. I pull out my grandpa’s camera and start taking pictures! Glancing at my watch, I have 2 hours to make the deadline! This is going to be the best BREAKING NEWS STORY EVER!

# No Bike Ride Today

by Nina La Cock, Gr. 6

Our Lady of the Sbows Catholic Academy

I am awake at nine, still rubbing my sleepy eyes.

Suddenly I remember, it's the weekend rise.

Adventure awaits!

I storm upstairs excitedly

Imagine my helmet-hair waving free.

Wheels spinning through the gates!

Today my dad and I will ride our bikes

Through trees, streams and dykes.

Let the fun begin!

I already smell the wood in the shed.

Just then I remembered my broken tire and collapsed like heavy lead.

Like a bird with a broken wing.

My deep disappointment really shows,

Sunshine streaks disappear as the dark cloud blows

My day was upside down!

Just then my dad steps in, telling me that tomorrow we will ride instead.

"I can't wait!" I said.

My sunshine smile changes the deep-creased frown!

# I am an Artist

by Meil Moran, Gr. 6  
St. Mary's School



DIVISION  
2

I am an artist

That's what I do.

That's who I am.

Drawing is all I know, or want, or care about.

It was the first stroke of puffy paint in  
kindergarten that drew me into the world of art.

Mixing the bright, beaming colours onto the  
tarpaulin canvas,

Imagination leading me anywhere.

Filling the blank boring page with blooming  
creations.

Years passing by as I grew more and more  
skilled, I couldn't stop.

Brushes, pens and pencils calling me  
nonstop to flood my sketchbook.

Plastic markers dancing across the pearl  
white paper like daisies moving along the  
blowing wind.

Art makes me feel content.

I can't imagine what my life would be without  
it.

*-Miel*



# The Mysterious, Glowing Pumpkin

by Timothy Alao, Gr. 6  
St. Anthony's School

Kara was staring into the bathroom mirror at her brown curly locks, green eyes and face full of freckles when her dad called her from downstairs.

"I think we should go choose a pumpkin to carve! It's October the 28th!"

"Coming, Dad!"

Twenty minutes later, Kara's dad exclaimed, "Oooohh, I think we should take this one. It's the biggest pumpkin in the patch!"

Kara gasped, "I can't wait to carve a pumpkin all on my own! This is going to be so cool!"

"Hold on now, don't get your hopes up. I only said you might be able to cut this one," replied her dad.

"But pleeeeeeease? You promised I could!" Kara pouted.

"No I didn't. I clearly remember saying that I couldn't promise anything."

"Whatever. But I still think I deserve it. I did all my homework and I did my brother's chores for him, so I'm doing this one."

"Except there's one problem. Your older brother wants to carve a pumpkin for his birthday present. You know his birthday's on Halloween."

"Why don't you just tell Jack to find another present?" Kara sneered. "He's done this for a long time, and I want to have a turn. He's just a selfish old brat."

"Don't call Jack names. But I guess you do have a good point. I still can't promise anything."

"Pleeeeeeeeeeease!"

"Oh, all right," sighed Kara's dad, exasperated. "I'll ask him to give it up just this once. And don't complain to me if he starts being mean to you again. You asked for it."

"Don't worry about me. I can handle that guy. Nothing can spoil my day today!"

Kara marched inside their house chanting, "I'm cutting the pumpkin! I'm cutting the pumpkin!"

Kara's brother called out from his room.

"No, I am!"

"Nope. Dad said I was going to cut the pumpkin. Haha!" Kara's father came in at that moment, struggling to carry a heavy orange pumpkin in his hands. He put it on the wooden brown floor and said, "Quit teasing your brother about that, or else you don't carve it."

Jack stepped out of his room and whined, "But Dad, you told me I was doing that as my birthday present. I can't believe you lied to me."

"Kara hasn't carved a pumpkin yet, and you've been carving them for a while. I think you ought to let her try this time."

Kara snickered and tossed her brown curls.

"Kara, stop," warned her dad severely.

"Okay, okay. Sheesh, Dad!"

Jack said, "I don't really mind that much anymore."

"You don't?" exclaimed their dad, surprised.

Jack nodded. "Yeah. As long as you buy me that--"

"Xbox One you were wanting? Yeah, I figured you were going to say that. Well, I can't," stated their dad, matter-of-factly.

"--New gaming PC," finished Jack. "You can never tell what I'm going to say."

"Can't get that either, it's too expensive. And, Kara, why do you want to cut this pumpkin so desperately? Is it so you can brag about it to Jack or your friends?"

"Yeah, Kara. Why'd you have to steal my birthday present?"

"I wanted to cut one on my own because it looks cool when everyone else does it. And Jack has been doing this for forever."

"Well Jack, what do you have to say about that? I think you should let her. She has a good reason for it."

"Fine, then, Kara. Carve your stupid pumpkin. Thanks for ruining my birthday for me." Jack stomped off back to his room and slammed the door. BAM!

"You're welcome," she called back after him.

"Last chance. I've warned you twice now."

“Okay! I’ll stop.”

A few hours later, Kara and her dad both got out knives and started attempting to carve the poor pumpkin.

“I..... can’t..... get..... this..... thing..... open!” Kara grunted as she strained to get the knife into the pumpkin. Then, suddenly, for a split second, it glowed. Bright yellow. Startled at the unexpected light, Kara jumped back.

“Whoa. Dad, did you see that?” she questioned warily, holding the knife like she was ready to attack whatever came out of the pumpkin.

“See what?” he replied.

“Nothing.” But Kara would’ve sworn she saw the pumpkin glow.

Later that night, Kara rushed back to the pumpkin, knife in hand.

I must find out what makes this thing glow, she thought. Raising the blade above her head, she quickly brought it back down on top of the pumpkin. Again, the pumpkin emitted the same yellow light, except even brighter than before. The pumpkin seems to be resisting my knife, she reasoned. I’ll give it one last try. This time, the pumpkin did break--and blinded her in the process. While Kara was struggling to readjust to the darkness, the pumpkin disappeared and in its place floated a translucent pale ghost. It had almond shaped eyes, a mouth, long straight hair, but no nose. Unfortunately, Kara found she couldn’t scream or even move! The ghost was staring at her with an angry look on its face. Its lips didn’t seem to move but somehow Kara heard a soft voice crying out, You’ve killed my home. You must mend it--with your life. I have lived in this place for 116 years, teleporting around the world to different pumpkin patches because I got killed by someone holding a pumpkin. So now I’m doomed to live in one of these--or I die again. This pumpkin is alive and it needs to stay alive for me to stay in here. I did my best to protect myself and warned you three times, but you have been ignorant. Sadly, I need to take your life so I can live, but don’t worry. Since you are going to be killed by a ghost, you’ll become one of us and won’t have to live in a pumpkin like me. You are permitted to speak now, but I must warn you that no one else can hear or see you now. Kara screamed, petrified, “I don’t want to die! Please! I’m sorry! I’d do anything to live!”

The ghost whispered in her mind, You would? Well, now, come to think of it, there is another alternative. You can stay in here with me for some time and fix this broken house, but hurry! I’m almost out of time.

“Thank you,” sobbed Kara.

The ghost laid a bony hand on Kara’s shoulder. Together, they shrunk and teleported into the broken pumpkin. As soon as they were descending to the “floor” of the pumpkin, the broken wall immediately closed back.

Kara looked around the “house” and saw..... Well..... nothing. The house was bare. Just sticky “floors,” “walls,” and a sticky domed “ceiling.” Kara disliked it instantly.

“How do I survive without food and water?” Kara asked the ghost.

As long as I’m here with you, you can’t experience the effects of starvation and thirst, replied the ghost.

“How long do I have to stay in here?” Asked Kara, relieved.

Well, I hate to tell you this, but as you are here right now, the life in you is circulating around the pumpkin as well, keeping it together.. If you go out, it stops circulating and thus, the pumpkin will go back to how it was after you cut it, which will eventually kill me. Long story short, you have to stay here..... forever. Unless you want me to kill you.

Hearing all this, Kara got increasingly frightened until all she could do was stand there, staring dumbfounded at the ghost. After a long while, Kara managed to gasp out,

“You’re...joking...right? ...What...about...my...family...and...friends?”

I figure you’re just going to have to do without them for a while.

You’re staying put right here. You can’t escape. Forever....

The ghost’s words echoed in Kara’s mind. Forever... Forever... Forever... You can’t escape... Forever... Forever...



# I am a Farmer

by Cruz Canario, Gr. 6  
St. Mary's School

*That's what I do.*

*That's who I am.*

*Farming is all I know, or want, or care about.*

*It was the first time I helped out with my sheep  
and lambs that I knew I loved it.*

*Breathing the salty smell of manure.*

*Cleaning all the water buckets.*

*Feeding all the animals.*

*After that, I didn't want to leave - like a child  
at an amusement park.*

*All I wanted to do was stay and play with the  
animals.*

*Feeding and helping my sheep made me feel calm.*

*It made me feel alive.*

*And now?*

*I'm stuck in winter, waiting until summer strikes  
again.*

# Applesauce

by Kaia Wilson, Gr. 6  
St. Mary's School

My dear little one  
My baby near  
We'll make ourselves  
some applesauce  
While papa makes his beer

My dear little one  
You are nearly four  
Go pick some apples  
For applesauce  
While papa goes to war

My dear little one  
You are so beautiful  
Peel some apples  
For applesauce  
Before we go to papa's funeral

My dear little one  
Oh, how you've grown!

You've brought a young fellow for dinner  
tonight  
How your papa would groan

My dear little one  
How wonderful you are  
I'll bring some apples to your wedding  
Papa would be prouder by far

My dear little one  
I am ninety-two years old  
You've finally lay your tender babe  
Upon the fresh clean fold

My dear little one  
I watch you from above  
Make applesauce for your family  
Papa and I  
Send our love



# Green As Can Be

by Karlie Hopf, Gr. 6  
Christ the King Academy

Grass so bright, it's everywhere in sight!  
Trees so tall, sad they lose leaves in fall.  
Leaves in spring, you would assume they must bloom.  
Mint a delicious taste; never let it go to waste!  
Cucumber, halt! It's best with some salt.  
Watermelon is super sweet, way too good a treat!  
Peas so yummy, taste like little gummies.  
Crocodile with many scales. If you see one, make sure to bail!  
Frogs when they meet a fly, they make sure to say bye bye!  
Snakes with beady eyes, don't believe their lies!  
Emerald so shiny, I must have one or I'll be whiny.  
So green so green as green as can be.



## I am a...

by Danica Olesen, Gr. 6  
St. Mary's School

I am a chatterbox  
That's what I do.  
That's who I am.  
Chatting with other people is all I know, or want, or  
care about.  
It was the second after I was born that swept me into  
loving people.  
Seeing people's joyful smiles.  
Talking and joking around like theres no tomorrow.  
Enjoying life.  
After that I just couldn't stop. I joked with my friends,  
and I chatted with them too.  
Just tidal waves of excitement and laughter.  
I loved talking, walking, and enjoying time together.  
Talking helps me empty out my sorrows like I empty  
my plates of food.  
My kindness jumps from person to person.

# The Miracle Cat

by Joshua Dunn, Gr. 6  
St. Mary's School

“Good game guys!” said Tobey halfheartedly. He had just finished his first game of the season, with unfortunate results. He didn’t have a very good team this season, but that all part of the game, as their dad says. Tobey was a 13 year old boy with a younger brother named Chase who was 11. They got along pretty well for siblings. They had fights here and there, but they were not always at each other’s throats. They were just walking home, arguing over who the best soccer player was, when they heard a faint meow on the other side of the road. They slowly shifted their gazes towards the noise, where their eyes met a small black cat that looked very weak, and covered with white fur with a black spot every here and there. It slowly rose to its feet, and started limping towards them. Tobey and Chase were not very experienced with animals, because the only animal they have ever had was a large dog named Chloe who died when they were young. They both agreed to just continue walking home.

Arriving home, they went straight to the kitchen, deciding to not let their parents know about the cat situation. Sitting down at the table, they had already started to forget about the cat, up until they heard a weak scratch at the door. The boys jumped up on instinct, and still startled, made their way to the door. They then found themselves staring down at the same cat from earlier. Its soft meow hummed through the thin glass door. Outside, it was late afternoon, and judging by the wind and clouds, it was going to be a cold, rainy night. The boys still standing there, dumbfounded, shook to their senses, and decided the least they could do was take the cat in for the night. They opened the squeaky glass door and gestured the cat to enter. It obeyed, and went straight to their old dog, Chloe’s, bed. They watched happily as the cat stopped shivering, slowed its breathing, and took some much needed deep breathes.

After pampering the cat with a bath, food, and clean water, they led the cat upstairs to their beds, where the cat would be sleeping that night. Then, all of a sudden, “Tobey! Chase! Are you ready for bed!” yelled my mother, opening the door. Everybody froze. My mother met the cat’s eyes, and her expression soft-

ened. “We are sorry mom! We saw it in the rain an-” “No, no, I want to keep the cat. There is-is something special about her.” said their mother. Confused, yet excited, the boys didn’t object. They also felt something towards the cat.

Oreo. That’s what they decided to name her after her black and white fur. The entire family adored her. She was small, playful, and always full of energy. The family always took her places whenever they could. She was given Chloe’s old bed and also, Oreo seemed to keep mom and dad in a good mood all the time. Tobey and Chase had called her “Miracle Cat” behind everybody’s back. She was known and loved mostly the entire neighbourhood. Oreo was friendly and never bit or clawed at anybody for any reason. She was perfect, always entertaining the family with tricks or pouncing on the toys we bought her. They did let their guard down a little, though. That made what came next very unexpected,

1 Year Later...

After fostering Oreo for a full year we started to get to know her a little more in depth. She was recently owned by some terrible, cruel people who would starve and hit the poor, helpless, cat. They then drove into a whole new town and literally threw the poor cat out the window onto the side of the road, where she was found a week later by Tobey and Chase. “I-I had no idea” stammered Tobey, his eyes still glued on the papers. “Well, we changed Oreos life for the better” stated Chase, also stealing glances at the papers. Tobey looked down at Oreo. She was softly purring at his feet. “Yes, yes we did.”

Usually, Tobey wakes up in the morning to find Oreo pouncing on his bed and licking his face, but today, that was not the case. He woke up to his alarm clock with no Oreo in sight. Usually, He races downstairs to find Oreo jumping all over the couch playing with her chew toys, but not today. Usually, his parents come downstairs and make breakfast with a smile on their faces, but not today. “Mom, is everything alright?” asked Tobey, worried. Mom sighed, looked away, and plopped down on the couch. “It’s Oreo, Tobey.

She hasn't been feeling well lately" answered Tobey's mother sadly. "Is she going to be OK?" asked Tobey, now even more worried than before. "I don't know..." answered his mom quietly. "I guess all we can do is hope."

The next day was basically the same. No smiles, and no Oreo. She was still in her bed, now refusing her food she once wolfed down in seconds. Tobey made his way to her bed and softly started stroking her soft, warm fur. Suddenly, she yelped in pain. He froze and returned to the spot where he thought she had yelped at, and she yelped again. Parting her fur, He spotted a large bump. He immediately knew what it was.

They sat in a small waiting room of the vet, Tobey's mother with tears in her eyes. The veterinarian then enters the room and approaches us, looking at my parents with pity in her eyes. That's never a good sign. "I'm afraid Tobey was right. Oreo has a tumor" stated the veterinarian. He could see the color drain from his mother's face. Tobey was speechless. "Also, we caught it late, so her chances of survival are dangerously low."

Tobey watched Oreo lay motionless on the operation table. Everybody in the family decided to stay the night with Oreo, because nobody could stand not knowing whether Oreo was alright or not. It was the middle of the night, but Tobey couldn't fall asleep. He stood right next to Oreo, her chest still softly rising up and down. That was a good sign. She was still alive. Out of

nowhere, Oreo started coughing like crazy, a dry, raspy cough. Her chest started to struggle to rise up and down. He yelled for help, and veterinarians rushed in to try to save her.

After an hour, the veterinarians came with dreaded news. "Oreo is suffering too much. I'm afraid we have to put her down." "No, please.." started their mother. "It's the only choice..." said their dad quietly. "She can't keep suffering, it's not right." "Well...I suppose you're right." said their mother sadly. They were brought back to the operation table, where Oreo lied, now barely breathing. The veterinarian prepared the needle while their mother quietly cried in their dad's shoulder. "Are you ready?" asked the veterinarian."Yes" Chase and Tobey said together. Oreo yelped as the thin, sharp needle sank under her soft skin. Tobey stroked her soft fur as he whispered into her ear "Thank you for everything, girl, you changed our lives for the better. But it's time for you to go. Thank you Miracle Cat." and as she took her final breaths, and closed her warm, friendly eyes, she gave a soft meow and her soft tail took one last thump to the ground, she gave Tobey a look, a look only Tobey could understand. She was telling Tobey, she understood. A shy smile spread across Tobey's sad face. "I knew she was something special" whispered Tobey to himself. "I knew it."

# Time Warp

by Gia Capalbo, Gr. 6

Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy

It was a normal autumn day for the Saito siblings. A normal day always started with Toshimi refusing to leave the house and Haru scared to fall out of his 2 foot bed. This was how a day normal went in the Saito household, Mrs and Mr Saito always left early and came home late so they rarely see their kids. Toshimi being the oldest and least responsible would never leave her room, she had everything in there from a bathroom, mini fridge and a camping cooking stove. Toshimi only left her room to make a list to give to her younger brother to go grocery shopping for her, that rarely happens though cause she's very precise on how she cooks. Haru Saito on the other hand is very different from his older sister. Haru is mostly scared of everything, he tries not to be half time but.. He ends up only making it to the front yard and then waiting for his friends to pick him up... Haru is at a point that wherever he goes he has to have a backpack full on first aid. Haru is scared of getting hurt that's the main reason he's scared of every living thing.

It was Sunday August 25th everything was going normal until Toshimi called Haru to her bedroom for the first time in ages it seemed. Haru without hesitation carefully walked up the stairs. Step by step not trying not to get hurt along the way, Haru opened Toshimi's door and saw something he would never forget. In Haru's eyes it seemed to be that Toshimi was building some sort of portal like thing. Toshimi explained what was happening bit by bit. Toshimi said that the next comet to orbit around earth, should open a small gate in time letting them pass through to another dimension. Toshimi then explained that if they want to do this Haru needs to come along with her, of course Haru said yes. Toshimi said to set a time for 12:00am on the dot, that's when the portal should open into the time warp. Haru agreed and set the timer, Haru was on edge at first cause he was scared of getting hurt, but Toshimi soon calmed him down. It was now time, Toshimi got ready to light the portal. As Toshimi lit the portal a bright light appeared in front of them. Toshimi grabbed Haru's arm and ran into the

portal like there was no tomorrow.

While traveling through the time warp Toshimi noticed all the weirdly wonderful colours in the warp, time came so soon, soon enough they were there... In the clock house that stored the warp gate... It was a strange feeling being in another dimension. It seemed that Haru was already looking around. Every now and then Toshimi heard screams coming from Haru cause he didn't want to get hurt, Toshimi was looking around herself when she found a window. Toshimi looked out of the window in this so called clock house, she looked outside and that's when it struck her. Toshimi was in a dimension that time didn't work, it originally seemed that the clock house was stuck on the outskirts of the warp. How were they going to leave if they were stuck between dimension!? Nothing was adding up, how was this clock house in the middle of dimensions. As Toshimi was stuck thinking on how they would get out of this dimension, that's when Haru called her over. Haru said he found a script looking thing and handed it to Toshimi. The script says the origins of between dimension clock house.

Toshimi started reading through the origin and noticed something strange about the last paragraph on the script. It stated that the only way to leave this between dimension clock house is to find all the parts to rebuild the time gate portal. It also said that if you don't fix the portal in the next 24 hours you would be stuck as the clock masters for the next 500 years until the new generation comes along. Toshimi continued to read on then she read something that shocked her, at the very bottom on the page there was a note from the past clock master. It said something along the lines of 'Thank you for coming to 'Gateway Clock house' I hope to see you soon new clock master, goodbye for now. That sentence shock Toshimi and Haru. Toshimi soon regain her cool and started to order Haru to recovering pieces of the portal. Haru carefully started looking for the pieces her older sister needed. Since there was no time in this dimension Toshimi set her watch to earth time

for them.It started...

It's been 23 hours and 35 minutes since they started looking for items,Haru had found 4 out the 8 items. Toshimi found 2 out of the 8 items,their time was running short,they only had 15 minutes left.Things started to get really serious,Haru was now running around looking for things.Haru rarely ran around and when he did it meant something,Toshimi was placing the pieces they found onto the portal like frame.The time was narrowing down,Haru and Toshimi switched positions,Haru was now building and Toshimi was looking for the items for the frame.Haru found one more piece,it was all up to Toshimi now.She had to find the last item,she decided to re read through the script for any clues.She read carefully when she saw a sentence that wasn't there before,it read 'The last piece is where you started'.Toshimi only had 2 minutes and 20 seconds,she ran to the clock door where they came from as fast as she could.She found it,the last piece she ran back to the portal with 35 seconds left.She placed the last item into the frame,she was about to push her brother into the portal when suddenly at the corner of her she read.

'Thank you for being clock master 'Toshimi Saito' Thank you..Tomshimi's time was small but in the last 15 seconds she pushed her brother in and whispered 4 words."Stay safe little bro...";Haru Saito just opened his eyes wide,soon a single tear left his eye.Haru was soon back into the real world and remembered that Toshimi Saito was no longer with him."You really are so

stupid Toshi?"Haru cried.Back in the Clock house was Toshimi Saito,A bright circle light appeared around her. Soon her clothes changed into a robed uniform that belonged to the old clock master.Then text appeared before her 'Saito Toshimi thank you for being Gateway Clocks new clock master,see you soon Saito...'

It's been almost 15 year now since Toshimi Saito left..



# Spying

by, Finn Chisholm Gr. 6, St. Mary's School

**Jan 23rd 2020 6:45 PM. 22nd Vergon Drive New York, New York.**

Speckles crept along the deck and crouched behind the side of the front door. Through the glass he could see clearly the two humans staring out at the dimly lit street. He shuddered at the thought of entering a human household again, yet he needed to. His mission demanded it.

**Great Barn House of the Senate of the American Republic of Animals. Jan 27 2020 10:00 AM.**

Field Marshall Boniface limped into the seat that had been reserved especially for him. HE had always sat there. As the official representative of the armed forces in the Senate he was always required to sit there. He was a war hero, the natural decision for representative.

Boniface had received Animal Hero 1st class, Animal Hero 2nd class, Hoof and Horn award and Order of Liberty. As always the session began with the singing of "God Keep our Land" and the presentation of the first argument. It was given by Senator Pussyfoot, a young cat recently elected, "A number of my constituents have come to me with a simple request" he began "legalize catnip. Now I have heard this desire of cats across this country. Once the Republic was established cats believed that they would eat catnip all day. However they were disappointed to find it banned!" The opposition was run by Senator Grufflebag, a senior dog who opposed cats being high. In the end Boniface voted with the majority in defeating the motion.

Now another cat Senator Striper gave a report on intelligence, "You are all aware that a certain class at a school in Okotoks Canada is in possession of important government secrets." He began "Our allies in Canada have been posting deer around the school in order to capture these secrets for us. They have however been futile attempts, therefore I request permission to send agent Speckles newly returned from his mission in New York to spy on this class." Without opposition the permission was quickly granted an agent Speckles was dispatched.

**St. Mary's School Okotoks Feb. 1st 2020 1:30 PM**

"This is for China" Jaden roared as he did the Da-vid-2 across the front of the classroom. Smith had just

slammed the open laptop turning on blasting music. Just then Finn came into the room with 17 boxes of pizza causing a massive uproar. A couple of minutes passed with the teacherless party getting crazier and crazier. Just as Brayden was finishing his performance of lifting desks when Owen jumped on a chair yelling "Cat in the window, cat in the window!".

Startled everyone turned and looked at the windows, to their utter shock they saw standing there was a cat. He was black with one white stripe running along the bottom of his stomach. Immediately Finn rushed and pulled him in, "Well call him J Wayne." he declared. They decided to make J Wayne their cat and keep him with them.

That night as the students slept Speckles crept out from the box where the students had put him to sleep and prowled the peaceful classroom. His goal was to find the secrets that the animals had lost. He needed to find them, the Republic needed them. As he crept across the room he caught sight of it, the plank of wood propped on a wall across the room. His target. He moved swiftly to reach it, the secrets painted in black on the wood still showed clearly. The board was too large for him to carry but that did not matter he would just get it out the window before receiving help from the Canadians. He started quickly.

**Great Barn House of the Senate of the American Republic of Animals. February 7 2020 10:51 AM**

And therefore agent Speckles is hereby awarded the Order of Liberty in honour of his brilliant retrieval of the secrets!" Hollered President Hoof-tonson, and a chorus of applause broke out. "Speech, Speech, Speech." Screamed the crowd. Speckles had no choice but to give in and deliver a speech. He streamed slowly forward and began, "I did not enter the spy services with the desire to become a great hero like this, I entered simply to serve. My father spied on the Russian animals and died when they broke his neck. My grandfather spied on the German animals and returned alive. The point is my family has always served as have many of your families but many of you do not serve. I call you to service." At last it was over. Speckles work was done.

# Errtu's Gift

by Nathaniel Russell Windsor, Gr. 6  
Holy Spirit Academy

Mordai's tail curled around his leg as he stared out through the open window of his bedroom. The wind blew back his black hair, revealing his horns that protruded from the side of his head to curl around his ears. His body trembled as the small gusts of cold air blew onto his red skin. His eyes, pure red with no pupils, would not look away from the humans beside the house who were looking up at him and sneering at him. Mordai turned away from the window so that he couldn't see them sneer at him, though he knew in his heart that they would start to say terrible things about him as soon as he turned away.

He also knew that they were being mean to him in this way because he was a tiefling. He knew that they would not actually come up to try to fight him because they believed that he was secretly a demon.

Mordai flopped onto his bed and looked at the ceiling of his room, trying to understand why his ancient ancestors would do this to him. He laid there for a little while, pondering that question until the darkness of sleep took him.

Most of his sleep was uneventful, until in the middle of his sleep which was when he started to sweat profusely as though he were standing next to an inferno, but when he turned to see the blazing fire, he saw a demonic shape instead. It was a huge fiend, the size of a mountain. The demon had massive wings that protruded from his shoulder blades and claws the size of Mordai's head. It had teeth the size of his arm and it looked like it had fire instead of eyes in its eye sockets. It had a bear-like snout except it had no fur and its skin was red, like Mordai's. The fiend held a sword made of lightning in one hand and a whip of fire in the other. In a flash of light and fire, the hulking demon in front of him disappeared. Mordai's back felt as though it was bubbling as the feeling that he was standing right beside a fire turned into the feeling that he was standing in one.

"You are destined for more," a harsh, gravely voice said from behind him.

Mordai turned around to see that the demon was

behind him right before it vanished

again.

"You could be more powerful. I could give you that power. You are destined to be my

warlock. A servant of the great Errtu," came the voice, once again coming from behind him.

Mordai turned around again expecting Errtu to disappear, yet this time he did not.

"So you are the famed Errtu? The burner of worlds? Well guess what, I would never be your warlock!" Mordai yelled at the inferno that was the demon.

Then, a great whirlwind of ash and fire, the demon disappeared. Mordai looked all around, but he could not find the demon. All of a sudden, he felt his feet burning. He looked down to see that there was a fire burning underneath him.

Mordai woke up, drenched in sweat. He got up out of bed and drank a glass of water before falling back into the depths of sleep. It was barely a few minutes after he fell asleep when he felt the same heat as he had in the last dream, and he could see that there was a wall of fire surrounding him, trapping him in the one spot.

"Be my warlock, and you will have all the power you want," came the voice of Errtu once again, except this time, Errtu was nowhere in sight. Mordai looked all around, but he couldn't see anything but the wall of fire.

"For the last time I will not be your warlock!" Mordai yelled into the wall of fire. No sooner did he say that though, the wall of fire collapsed on him, burning him alive.

He shot up out of his bed, covered in his own sweat. He immediately decided that he would visit another warlock in Phlan to decide what to do.



Mordai opened the door to an old friend of his. Sitting in a chair, eating his breakfast was Keth, a half-orc warlock who already served Errtu. Keth smiled when Mordai came in, showing his two massive teeth.

“Well what brings you here, old friend?” Keth asked in his rough voice.

“I have come to tell of what I dreamed of last night,” Mordai answered. He told Keth everything that he had dreamed of the night before.

“What do I do to make him stop pestering me?” Mordai asked when he was done explaining everything to Keth.

“You should become his warlock,” Keth replied. Mordai was astonished by his answer. “I mean, normally, Errtu is right,” Keth stated.

“Really now, the person who burned me alive in my sleep knows what he is doing?!” Mordai yelled.

“Yes!”

After that retort, Mordai was confused. Why did he trust his best friend who was a servant of Errtu when he did not trust Errtu himself? He had spent so much time with Keth in his childhood when almost no one cared about him. They had helped each other out countless times when one of them was not feeling good. They had to help and trust each other because both half-orcs and tieflings were frowned upon in almost every society.

After a while it hit him. He realized the keyword in the question. Keth was Errtu’s servant! Mordai would never want to be a servant. Aside from that he was completely fine with the idea of becoming a powerful warlock.

Later that night, Mordai fell back into bed and let the empty abyss of sleep take him.

Almost immediately he felt the presence of Errtu behind

him. Mordai turned around to see Errtu standing right behind him and instantly Mordai felt as though his decision was a bad one.

“Will you be my warlock?” Errtu asked in his terrible voice that sent shivers down Mordai’s spine.

“Yes, but you must treat me as a partner, not a slave,” Mordai responded. Errtu considered this for a moment as he started to fade away.

“I will,” Errtu said, right before he was gone.

The next morning, Mordai woke up feeling weird. He went to scratch his back when he touched something leathery protruding from his back. He looked to see what it was and what he saw truly astonished him.

It was a pair of wings!

Mordai got up out of bed and opened his window. The gentle breeze tousled his hair as he leaned forward. He then jumped out of the window, and soared through the sky of Phlan. His hair was blown into his face by the morning wind, and his new wings-how powerful they

were!-propelled him straight through the sky of Phlan. He could see everything from up in the sky as he launched through the air, wing beat after wing beat. The air whistled past his ears, making it so that he could not hear anything, but he did not care, for he could smell some delicious pastries being baked in a nearby bakery, and it was in those few moments that he knew that he made the right decision.

Thanks Errtu. Mordai thought silently to himself.

You’re welcome. a familiar voice replied.

# The Dream Makers

by Amélie van Meenen, Gr. 8  
St. John Paul II Collegiate

If anyone finds out I wrote any of the following, I will be arrested and thrown into the Badawan for treason. Call me crazy, but I am not in the mood to get thrown into an inescapable pit filled with basilisks.

I am Callyn Klaynes, a Dream Maker. I love being a Dream Maker, more than anything.

My entire life is dedicated to making sweet dreams for people rich enough to afford it.

Happiness has a cost. At least, that is what the King says. King Xvor claims that the peasants of Scaran don't deserve sweet dreams. I disagree. So, I give young children nice dreams in secret.

My superiors wouldn't approve either, come to think of it. If my superiors were to find out, I would lose my powers. There is no way they would let me remain a Dream Maker.

Read carefully, for I have little time.

The Council of Dreams is corrupt. They have been for centuries, but never as much as now. The Head Councillor is the right hand of the King. The two of them will stop at nothing to keep Dream Makers and Keepers weak.

I overheard Head Councillor Arkan talking to King Xvor about the future of Dream Makers. They intend to make us reliant on the Crown. To do this, they plan on taking the Mystic Stone, the one thing we need to keep us strong.

The Mystic Stone, the heart of our power as well as that of the Keepers. We are required to perform the Dream Maker's Ceremony on the summer and winter solstices in order to renew our powers. Without the Ceremony we lose our powers and we go mad after three days.

I'm sure you have heard of Dreamless Madness. The Dream Makers who suffer from it start to wander until they reach the edge of the Badawan and jump into it. There is no saving them.

You must help me prevent this, for all our sakes.

Arkan and Xvor plan to take the Mystic Stone to Port Civin and hide it deep within a labyrinth at the heart of Xvor's palace. They will take the Stone the night before

the summer solstice. I could not receive any more information because they went into the war room. If I entered, all this would be useless, they would know someone knew.

The Dream Makers must not fade. If we do, the Keepers will too and the kingdom of Scaran will fall. The Keepers have protected us for centuries but even they have their weaknesses.

King Xvor is coming. He must have found me out. I must go, my young apprentice. Don't let all I wrote here go to waste.

I sit unmoving and uncertain of what to do. I read it once more. I am just an apprentice.

How am I supposed to save an entire country? I can't exactly tell the king if he is corrupt, as Callyn claimed.

I fold the letter and place it in the pocket of my uniform. I set out to find my friend Layne, a Keeper.

I walk through the corridors of the secluded academy, where apprentices like me train. I make my way to the Keepers' wing. Like us Dream Makers, the Keepers all have their own small room. I knock on Layne's door. It swings open to her smiling face.

"Hey, Issa. What are you doing here? I thought you were supposed to be doing whatever it is you Dream Makers do." Layne pulls me in.

I shut the door behind me. "I think King Xvor and the Council of Dreams are corrupt." Layne frowns. "What, in the name of the Stone, would make you think that?" "Remember Callyn Klaynes?" I sit on her cot.

"The Dream Maker?" I nod.

"Everyone knows her, Issa. Why?"

"She wrote a letter before she disappeared. I don't know how she found this stuff out, Lay, but she did."

Layne holds out her hand. "Give it here, then. I want to read it." I hand it over.

She reads through the letter at least twice before looking back up. "How do we know she wasn't just saying these things to try and put Scaran at war with



itself?" She crosses her arms.

"I don't know. She was my mentor before she disappeared. I have to trust her." "How do you know it was her?"

"It's her writing. Please, I won't be able to do this on my own." I fight to keep the desperation out of my voice with no prevail.

"Fine. I'll trust you. When are we leaving?"

Her question takes me aback. "What do you mean?"

"Issa, the solstice is in eleven days. That means we only have ten to get to the Mystic Stone and stop King Xvor and Head Councillor Arkan."

"Tonight. We leave tonight."

Layne grins. "That's what I like to hear." "I'll meet you in the gardens at midnight?"

"No, that's too late. We can pretend we're going out to one of the parties. We are allowed to do that, no one will think twice."

I sigh. "Alright. After supper, then?"

"Count on it." Layne pushes me out the door and into the hallway.

I walk through the long corridors back to my room, my steps echoing off the sandstone walls. I can't help but wish Layne and I had more time to plan. How are we supposed to keep something from the two most powerful men in Scaran?

I sigh as I open the door to my chamber. It has only enough room for my trunk, my cot and my desk that is squeezed into the corner. I lift the lid off my trunk and set it down on my cot.

My cot will be dusty and dirty later but... it won't matter! I am leaving the Academy of the Mytsics, the only home I have ever known, tonight! The realization of it nearly knocks me off my feet. If we fail I will get Dreamless Madness! And if Callyn really was crazy... I'll be banished from the Academy forever!

The gong sounds for supper, wrenching me from my thoughts. I leave the trunk open and I hurry downstairs for what might be my last meal at the Academy... at least for a long time.

I walk through the archway and into the dining hall. Grabbing my supper of stew, I take my usual spot in the corner the farthest from the door. Layne comes and sits beside me.

"Aren't you excited to go to the party at the Donnhabain's tonight?" Layne nudges my arm.

"What?" I frown, confused.

"Don't you remember? We're going to their party tonight." She leans in and whispers in my ear, "It's a cover story. Just play along."

Another Keeper sits down across from us. "Really? A bunch of us are going too. Why didn't you tell us, Layne?"

"Because... I had no idea you were going too."

One of the Dream Makers, Mila, claps her hands and practically squeals, "I'm so excited!"

We can walk down there with the two of you. Can we, Arlen?" The Keeper, Arlen, nods. "I suppose we could."

"Actually, I was hoping to talk to Issa about something. Is that okay?" Layne looks away. "Sure. Will we see you there, though?"

"We'll see."

Layne and I finish our supper and she walks me upstairs to my chamber. Layne pauses before leaving. "Do you have everything you'll need?" "Not yet." I gesture to my open trunk.

"Don't take everything. Just put on one of your nice dresses and bring any valuables and food. We can't make it seem like we're leaving. They'll get suspicious."

I nod. "Meet me in the courtyard?"

"Count on it." Layne winks and strides down the hall towards her chamber.

I pull a blue, cotton dress over my head. I grab my cloak and wrap it around myself. I gaze around one last time and make for the door. At the last moment, I hide Callyn's letter in the small pocket of my cloak.

I rush out to the courtyard, my slippers padding quietly through the corridor. I nearly run into Layne.

She turns around and smiles. "Shall we?"

I nod and allow myself one last look at the Academy.



# My Blankey

by Arwyn Weist, Gr. 8  
Christ the King Academy

(After The Red Sweater - Joseph O. Legaspi)

I hold tight in my fists,  
soft and faded pink yarn,  
what I love to snuggle with  
during my sleep, so tender and warm  
my mom got someone to make  
so she could give to me as a babe  
I'll cherish it forever  
thank you mom again.  
Blankey smells like memories  
young childhood  
but soon just another reminder  
of young things that once stood.  
I'll have blankey forever  
that there is no doubt  
but for now,  
until then,  
blankey can hang about.

## Similes

by Bryce Yokoyama, Gr. 8  
Christ the King Academy

(After Metaphors by Sylvia Plath)

Poems are like snakes,  
A spaghetti squash, or a rotten potato.  
They make me cringe back in my chair,  
And make me sick.  
O the pain you inflict upon me  
Stings like my cat's scratches.  
They are like chores, like clash blasters,  
And like eating a banana after drinking sprite.  
Unfortunately, I still have to write them,  
Like having to finish challenges for a videogame that I hate

# The Little Star

by Clare McKenzie, Gr. 8  
St. John Paul II Collegiate

Thousands of years ago, high up in the sky, 4.37 light years away from where you are reading this now, lived a star. His name was Little Star. This star lived with many other stars. There was a problem though, Little Star was not extremely large or bright. No one ever took notice of Little Star, always gazing past or over him. That made him awfully troubled. All Little Star wanted was a friend. There was one particular star, Little Star wanted to meet and become friends with, the Sun. Everything about the Sun, Little Star adored. Thinking about the Sun, Little Star felt a little less alone. But when Little Star finally met the Sun it was not at all how he imagined.

“Ok ok, deep breaths, deep breaths.” Stressed Little Star.

As Little Star was getting closer to where the Sun was floating, he could not keep his excitement in. Little Star rushed up to the Sun and started blowing out complements.

“Oh wow! Wow! Sun, you are so amazing! You are the best! Oh wow!” Blurted Little Star.

“Excuse me?” Jeered the Sun. “Can you please stop speaking to me and move out of the way?”

“Wha-” But before Little Star could get out any words, the Sun had left.

Little Star was crushed. He did not sleep for many nights, playing back what happened with the Sun and wondering what he did wrong. Days and nights went by and Little Star did not rest. He eventually passed out due to lack of sleep, only to get woken up by none other than the Sun.

“Little Star, Little Star.” Whispered the Sun. “Wake up, wake up. I have something to say.”

“I’m up! I’m up! What have you got to say?” Shrieked Little Star.

“Oh I have a few things to say! You wonder why you have no friends? It is because you are too tiny and your shine is a little dull.” Boasted the Sun. With that he turned around and left.

The nasty words did not stop there. The Sun continued to go out of his way to pick on Little Star. Finally after a long time Little Star had enough and so wanted

to have a chat with the Sun. Maybe not in the way you would think though.

“S-sun, p-please stop-p being so w-wicked to me.” Mumbled Little Star.

All the sun did was chuckle to himself, then turned around and floated away.

The vile comments got no better. If anything they got worse. Three more times Little Star tried to tell the Sun to stop. Each time the Sun ignored him. It became so bad that Little Star caved in and started crying.

“Little Star, Little Star. Why are you crying?” Little Star layed eyes on the most beautiful star in the sky, the North Star.

“The sun will not stop picking on me.” Wept Little Star.

“Well you just have to be more confident. Right now you act as if you do not matter. Well you do! You make the sky a little brighter.” Explained the North Star.

“You really think that?” Sobbed Little Star.

“Yes.” Whispered the North Star. “I really think that”

“But every time I try to tell the Sun about my feelings... He never listens.” Wailed Little Star.

“You just have to be assertive. Make him listen” Stated the North Star. “Remember you are a diamond in the night sky.”

With Little Star’s new found confidence he went up to the Sun and gave him a piece of his mind.

“Sun we need to have a conversation.” Announced Little Star. “I do not fancy the way you are treating me. It makes me feel useless, and I am not useless!”

The sun was a little taken aback and realized that he was behaving horribly unpleasant. Also he had been hurting Little Star’s feelings a lot.

“Little Star I am so sorry. Seeing you just made me feel so jealous.” Stammered the Sun.

“Really?” Gaspd Little Star. “Why?”

“You are truly beautiful. Yes I may be huge and bright but no one can actually observe me. Everyone can lay on their backs and stare at you all night to marvel at your elegance.” Rushed the Sun



“Don’t be jealous.” Urged Little Star. “You make the sky a little brighter.”

As the Sun and Little Star discussed more and more about themselves, they found out they had more in common than they thought. They both enjoyed afternoon naps and disliked Jupiter and Mars. One night as Little Star was falling asleep, all the stars and the Sun

started singing a soft melody.

“Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star, how I wonder what you are. Up above the world so high, like a diamond in the sky. Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star, how I wonder what you are.”

## Let Summer Come

by Jewel Badua, Gr. 8  
Christ the King Academy

(After ‘Let Evening Come’ by Jane Kenyon)

Let the students wait for the clock to strike 3:30 pm

as the girls hold hands with their friends,  
while the boys clench their fists and run around the classroom.

Let them run out the door and go towards their lockers,

like a stampede of wild buffalos.

While only a few stay behind to say their last goodbyes. Let summer come.

Let the students cheer and jump around,  
as much as they want. While others hug and cry in each other’s arms.

Then teachers dismiss them for the wonderful summer break.

Let the other children pass through the clamorous hallway.

Let the doors swing open,  
as the summer breeze greets them hello. Let summer come.

Let the teachers wave goodbye to their wonderful students,

as the hallways get quieter, and quieter each minute.

From afar, a piece of paper lying on the floor,  
along with a mushed sandwich.

Let them have a great summer, a wonderful one.

As teachers start to tear up, missing their superb students.

The doors still open, letting the summer breeze call them. Let summer come.

# You Have a Dream

by Anna Rutten, Gr. 8  
St. John Paul II Collegiate

I am happy to join you today in what will go down in history as the most light shed on one of the worst issues in Canada.

In September 2016, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau changed our country by establishing the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. This momentous action is important because it finally showed that these issues were seen.

It would be horrible for our community to overlook the severity of this problem, and how often it is ignored.

Some might ask me, “when will you be satisfied?” I can never be satisfied as long as Indigenous women are more than twice as likely to experience violence than any other demographic. I can never be satisfied as long as the rate of homicides for Aboriginal women and girls is almost seven times higher than that for other females. I cannot be satisfied as long as people continue to overlook the problem, simply saying “It’s because of their lifestyle”. No, no, I am not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until “justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.”

And so even though we face difficulties. I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in all of our community.

I have a dream that one day our community will open our eyes and see the large number of missing and murdered Indigenous women in this country.

I have a dream that one day on the mountains and lake shores of Canada the people will sit together as a family.

I have a dream that little girls will one day live in a com-

munity where they will not be harassed and later ignored because of their culture, but instead will have their voices heard.



I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day the RCMP will put equal effort into missing Indigenous women’s cases as they do for others.

I have a dream today!

With this faith, we will be able to hold the police accountable for the overlooked cases of Aboriginal girls. With this faith, we will be able to hear the voices of these women. With this faith we will be able to protect these women, young and old, from being targets of hate and violence.

And this will be the day, this will be the day when all of Canada will be able to sing with new meaning ‘The True North strong and free’.

And when this happens, when we let their voices ring from every mountain top, we will be able to speed up that day when all of the Indigenous females in Canada and the United States will be able to live their lives without fear and say “ We are heard, and we are safe”.



# Casino

by Jack Lines, Gr. 8  
St. John Paul II Collegiate

The sun beamed down intensely as I made my way through the ever so busy Nashville International Airport. Excitement is all around as thousands fled the airport on this bright June day. With school just dismissed many had started their vacations for the summer just as I would be along with a few business meetings in which I had been travelling from nebraska for the next 6 days.

Music was all in the air as the humid southern air breezed through my light brown hair, cruising through the energetic downtown. Buildings stood tall above me while weaving the busy downtown streets. "What a beautiful place" I whispered among myself. Just then the magnificent resort came into view as the Music City Resort and Casino sign glowed brightly. A rush of excitement filled me as I slammed the red doored convertible shut. Moments later I made my approach up the enormous staircase stumbling in awe of the city above me.

Music blared as I entered the rowdy casino while hundreds hollered in good spirits. I paced up and down the rows of the gold plated slot machines as hundreds crowded, allegedly wasting their money in hope of the big score. I paced through the maize of faces when to my surprise what seemed to be a larger body knocked me to the ground while I scanned all around making my way to my feet trying to find who had knocked me down. Looking all around there was a sign of who it could've been as people were scattered everywhere. It was then I noticed a suspicious man larger in stature light skin then he was gone disappearing into the crowds. Shaking it off I continued weaving through hundreds. Minutes later I made my way up the steep stairs before making my way to the hotel.

The door swung open as I made my way through the rather fancy suit. Throwing my bags to the floor I plunged down on to the sofa in exhaust as it had been a long day off travel. I lay there for minutes before flipping on the television. Channel 6 news popped onto the wide screen. Where a blonde haired lady babbled on for what seemed forever before moving on. A look out has been issued she went on to say

before saying that "24 year old international criminal Jared James has escaped custody in Tulin county". "Jared James" I questioned. He's an international criminal I quoted from the lady on the tv thinking to myself. And Tulin county is no more than 30 minutes from where we are here in Nashville as it lies along the city outskirts. The lady then continued to say "he is armed and dangerous". I sat there in awe as a profile picture glowed on the screen along with a short description for his arrest. My heart dropped as the familiar face sat up on that screen. He is someone I swore I had seen before and. Thoughts raced through my head as I began to put everything together before a chilling thought as the description added up to exactly what that man I had ran into earlier this afternoon. I then realized the man I saw earlier could've been one of the worlds most well known criminals. My heart began to race just at the thought. Laying there in silence I lay speechless, questions raced through my head. "Could that really be him?" I muttered among myself. "It couldn't have been" I added once again. Trying to shake it off and not stress but it lay there back of my mind.

3 hours later

Clank, Clank, the door banged as I suddenly awoke springing off the sofa, stumbling to the door wondering who it could've been at the odd time.

"Housekeeping" screeched in a high pitch voice, as I peeked through the eye hole in which a small elderly woman stood as I opened the heavy door. "What time is it" I questioned before looking towards the the digital clock towards my left as it read 7:43 pm. What an odd time for housekeeping I thought to myself. Going on with her orders I then grabbed my grey sports jacket and fixed my hair before making my way down stairs where I was supposed to be meeting a co-worker from Nebraska here about 4 hours ago. Minutes later I stepped out of the elevator and into the even more roadway casino. Thousands crowded the darkened building as people surrounded slot machines, round and poker tables while music blared in the background. I continued on into the mob of

people keeping my eyes peeled for the short red headed man as I sped through the maze of gamblers. When to my surprise out of the corner of my eye I noticed another suspicious man around 6'3 muscular light skinned man stood anxiously. My thoughts raced right back to earlier, "Jared James" I muttered among myself? I peaked over again hoping to get a closer look, but he was gone, just like that something seemed real suspicious I thought again while putting everything together. The instance from earlier, the warning on television and now started spinning my mind a hundred different places.

It was then the whole building went dark and gunshots suddenly rang out before a lady screamed, a large gas filled the place from surrounding people. My heart was racing by now as gunshots continued to fire as bullets flew wildly flying past my body piercing my ears. I braced behind a flipped poker table as my mind spun rapidly with thought while trying to get out of this horrific place. Each shot fired I could feel piercing my skin. I began to question everything, what if I don't make it out? Could this be it, I questioned?

Pushing through I began to creep towards the closest exit. When suddenly large footsteps began to creep closer and

closer with every step. A moment later just as before another large man stood just steps away this time armed eyeing out his next victim, by now everything in my body was shivering with fear as sirens cried out in the background growing closer and closer surrounding all of us. People continued to cry for help as I lay there silent as the man trampled on.

A minute later silence then broke out before the policeman crashed the casino ordering for the shooters arrest. Medics fled everywhere in hopes of saving the wounded and recovering as much as possible from the now war zone. Everything was turned inside out as I stumbled through everything, making my way out of the tragic scene.

My clothes were torn from top to bottom as my whole body bled out in wounds, but that was the least of my concerns regarding how lucky and grateful I was to still be alive. I had survived but one thing was still in question was that really Jared James I had seen all that time?

## Curiosity

by Kate Caspe, Gr. 8  
Christ the King Academy

(After 'Harlem' by Langston Hughes)

What happens when you lose hope?

Does it float away

like a balloon?

Or crawl into a hiding spot-

And then act like a loon?

Will you be able to sense it?

Or build up dust-

like an old exhibit?

Maybe it wanders

like a lost child?

Or does it go wild?

# Letter to God

by Jade Schinnour, Gr. 8  
Christ the King Academy



(after "Letter to Someone Living 50 Years from Now" Matthew Olzmann)

You have probably thought we wasted your word  
Not giving you what you were expecting  
Hours spent on devices and electronics

It must seem like we ignored your rules  
Nothing but rage and attention  
Sins of great flame.

You probably doubt that we listened to you at all,  
But I assure you we have.

We still have churches  
And like the generations before us, the Bible was read  
Praying and trusting  
Hope, love and Christianity

Absolutely, priests will preach  
Absolutely, we have spread your name.

What I'm trying to say is were not perfect  
But some of us try, we try hard  
Saving ourselves when we ask for guidance,  
To come straight to you

And then your word was spread!



# Untitled

by Kathryn Blaikie, Gr. 8  
St. John Paul II Collegiate

(After The Red Sweater - Joseph O. Legaspi)

Slips perfect on my foot,  
Black leather, what my idols wore  
Back in the day, and for me  
To have a pair I had to save all the money i earned from collecting bottles.  
The boots look just like theirs,  
Snug to the foot, and pointed at the tip.  
As i strut in them for the first time,  
I see the ones being chased through London,  
And walking across those legendary white painted lines.  
People might think it's silly,  
But what do they know, it's been like this before i was even born.  
How many more years will it be like this?  
How many more people will sit, listen and fall into the land of their lyrics?  
I can't tell you. But I do know that it's all well in history now. There's no escape. The only  
ones who taught us that "love is all you need"  
will never fade away.

# Ponyboy

by Melanie Lacusta, Gr. 8  
Christ the King Academy

(After The Red Sweater - Joseph O. Legaspi)

Full denim and all navy  
A red bandanna hanging out my pocket  
I had a ponytail and swoop bangs  
I had only two things on my mind  
Paul Newman and a ride home  
"Mr. Syme, this is Ponyboy"  
That was my first line  
I always had butterflies before performing

But not this bad before  
I was the main role; I had to be there  
Not sure what I felt when it was cancelled  
Disappointment or relief  
But now I really know  
After all my drama experiences  
Nothing gold can stay



# Waking Up

by Samuel Thiele, Gr. 8  
Christ the King Academy

(After Shedding Skin by Harryette Mullen)

Pushing out of the deep slumber  
(Dark murky substance, I want to be free  
I struggle and strain "Let me go" I say)  
All are entrapped, by the dream, the trance  
Strong hands lift me up,  
out of the nightmare, into the light  
I scrape off the murk, the Devil's lie  
Flicking darkness, deceit and dread.  
To the abyss where they will never,  
Steal, kill, or destroy  
Blinking to the light, the glorious light  
Brighter than the sun, yet, I can see clearly  
In the twinkling of the eye, I am made new  
And I see, The Almighty One, The Creator, The King of Kings, The Lord of Lords, The Great Lion, my  
Redeemer.  
The world behind, Eternity in front  
Shout for Joy, run leap for Joy  
To the wedding feast of the Lamb.

# Picture This!

by Emanuelle Jamaquio, Gr. 9  
 St. Joseph's Collegiate



This was me, 6 years ago, when we went to the Philippines for the first time after 7 years of getting used to the ways of life in Canada, as I discovered where me and my family truly came from. Here, I was 8 years old., turning 9. Here, I was in a zoo, holding a huge albino burmese python at a booth when our huge family - including my cousins, uncles, grandparents and aunt who live in the country - just arrived at the zoo.

It all started when this thick-musclcd snake was first placed on my very fragile and light shoulders. The snake was a beanbag, as if dumbbells were mixed in with the styrofoam cotton and beads as its stuffing; while the smooth, glossy white and yellow-spotted scales moved through my fingertips slowly. Look closely at my hesitant smile, and you'll see that I am trying to ramble and handle this one tough snake; I was vibrating as my adrenaline rushes of terror under my skin, and I was sweating way more than being outside in its spicy climate. I'd be ready to drop the snake like it was by accident and, after the first ten seconds of relief, I'd feel the scorching pain of the python's bite.

Overall though, it felt great. With the snake's shy head not facing the camera, you can tell that the python was actually really cautious with it's as much as I was when during this photo session; and as I strided out from the booth, I felt like I broke a world record for being the youngest girl to hold onto a heavy snake for about like 2 minutes or so.

Anyway, right after taking this photo - which is now kept in my bedroom - my family and I would, of course, go run off to see all the other crazy things the zoo has in store. From a tiny show where they showcase truly quick-witted parrots and budgies doing some tricks and playing games (when they asked for volunteers, I participated! I might've felt like a laughingstock, but it was honorably fun), to a bus tour where we

can witness the beasts from the leaf-dressed abyss - that is the rainforest - and the sizzling savannah, we all had a really awesome time.

Maybe, the craziest thing the zoo offered were the frightening tiger sightings in the bus tour, where the tour guides feed them raw chicken pieces, so that those beasts would approach the bus and smudge their infamous, carnivore teeth-filled mouth against the bus' slick iron-barred windows! It made my skin hairs flare up straight, I even wondered if there were any other tour guides that had a missing finger because of this!

Now, I'll admit it, I find my experiences in the Philippines pretty significant and impactful in my life. Usually, when I'm asked to talk about a specific memory I had, the first lightbulb that would brighten my brain up were some experiences there. I have been to the Philippines three times in a row already, and to me, every second that fills every one of my moments there transforms into the jigsaw puzzle pieces that would put together a picture of a memory. That picture would then become another puzzle piece that fits in with other memories to form the nostalgic beauty of my past I wouldn't forget. The main reason being is that viewing about the Philippines in general is like looking through a pair of old binoculars, covered in dust. Fun fact: I actually have been living in Canada WAY longer than the Philippines - I've been here for over a decade. I feel utterly bothered whether people ask me about the Philippines; I even barely speak Tagalog and have little knowledge due to some unfortunate obstacles I had to fight in my "question able" childhood. So when it was the time to take some time off for vacation. they were the perfect opportunities to finally shape my views, experience the places my mom and dad grew up in, and encounter the life I would've lived in - well, if I was really aware of the world itself.

Hilariously, I thought this photo would also describe me in three of the many adjectives you can find in a dictionary that possibly fit me: adventurous, curious and brave (sometimes); despite all the spiritual boundaries I was in growing up.

It's really worth looking back to when I took some deep dives into my identity through traveling, and I'm proud of them.

# Memory

by Zafan Li, Gr. 9  
St. John Paul II Collegiate

I started piano when I was 9 years old which means I've been in plenty of recitals, but yet I'm always extremely nervous when performing in front of audiences. Overtime I manage to figure out that if you practice an immense amount then you will do just fine, but even so it's still not a guarantee that I'll even do decent. I'm the kind of person that absolutely don't want to screw up in front of a magnificent amount of audiences, especially in music.

I was twelve at that time, however, an astounding amount of folks inform me that I'm older because of my height and voice. It was December, night time and snowing in High River. We entered the High River United Church and seems like we arrived slightly late because I overheard the music of a very young singer, filled with confidence, singed with joy, and accomplish it with pride. A few seconds past and I realize that the church is filled with an unbelievable aroma, as if I'm smelling the cup of coffee that my mom rarely make, she would make a normal coffee then add almond milk, then add cinnamon & nutmeg, then add vanilla extract, then Ice cream, then a piece of chocolate... and voilà, perfection. The essence becomes more attractive as I head down the corridor, eventually leading me into the core of the church where there's a vast space along with rows of chairs curved delicately around the stage. The walls are as clean as crystal, and the stage floor is smooth as marble, and the carpet is soft as velvet, and the stage lights are luminous as the sun, and the grand piano is gleaming as a diamond.

In my head I reanalyze the piece by tapping my fingers on my knee as if I'm still at home practicing and memorizing. I keep count in my head on how many people still needs to perform before it's my turn. As the list becomes shorter, I realize that my right leg is shaking unconditionally and irrevocably. Finally, after an eternity, it's my turn to shine.

"Next, we will have Zifan.Li playing Rudolph the

Red Nosed Reindeer by Johnny Marks" says Mrs. Grayce

I rise up and start advancing to the stage, feeling every single eye in this room staring at me. The stage lights make my white dress shirt glitter like the snow and before I can distract myself even more, I am standing beside the gigantic black instrument facing the audience. I perform the usual bow to the audience and then do a 180 degree turn so that I can situate myself. I keep telling myself in my head that this is going to be a piece of cake, that this is going to be super easy. I take deep breaths and finally lay my long skinny fingers on the keyboard and start playing...

Abruptly I halt, I didn't even finish the first two phrases and for some reason I can't seem to recall the music piece, as if my memory of that music is erased. Shattered. Wiped. Obliterated.

I tried again, ignoring the fact that I just mortify myself in front of a tremendous amount of people, except this time, It. Was. Worse.

I sat frozen like a snowman. My heart pumping twice as fast, my ears are scorching, sweat dripping in every inch of my entire human body. Finally I manage to use fire and melt the ice around me so that I can reflect. A split second later the piece flow back in my memory as if a jolt of lightning have hit directly in my hippocampus. I tried One, More, Time, but this time I have nothing to fear, nothing to be embarrassed, and nothing to doubt.

Life is full of obstacles that you have to overcome, sometimes you just have to be patient and not rush through it. It's also essential to not let problems consume you and instead halt, consider, and then pursue.

# The Symphony of Life

by Maria-Theresa Allen, Gr. 9  
St. John Paul II Collegiate

A soft melody of a harmonious tune gently flows through your ears as you tickle the river of ivory keys. Satisfied with your lifelong growth and advancement, you smile with pride as the audience roars with approval and encouragement. Although it may have taken many long hours practicing simple, primary skills such as hand positioning and understanding the organization of the chords, the results of developing those abilities into a collection of melodic compositions reflects the great amounts of dedication and determination that was needed to succeed. Impromptu slip ups may occur which discourage you and cause you to doubt your talents, but learning from those errors is what drives you to become the influence of others. The outcomes awaiting us begin with the fundamental skills we use to base our lives on, hoping that with time and patience, they progress into values others can be affected by, motivating our decisions as well as the decisions of the people around us. Recovering from your pitfalls and taking advantage of every moment you can is essential in becoming a better person and building a successful future. The lessons you retain from the experiences in your life broaden your horizons and impact your way of life, allowing you to not only become the person you desire to be, but the inspiration of others.

Just like you have to know how to walk before you can run, you need to master elementary principles before you can proceed to complex, life-altering decisions. Some individuals spend the majority of their childhood focusing on sharing and being kind, passionate souls, which may lead them to choosing a path revolving around charity and working towards the benefit of other people. Many others concentrate on discipline and commitment to their goals, no matter what, possibly finding joy in a lifestyle concerning fighting for the rights of humanity by staying true to their values and beliefs. The ability to have a clear melody in our heads of the ideologies we find significant sparks the journey of becoming mature, contributing members of society we should all strive to be.

The form has been achieved. The average tonality has been achieved. However, reaching a perfect melody cannot be obtained without combining the notes to form a bar. Ludwig van Beethoven discovered his musical talent at quite an early age. His father had educated Beethoven with harsh criticism and an overwhelming sense of commitment to his natural gift.

Yet the never-ending push to perfection was the foundation that was needed to ignite the mellifluous fire inside of him that had been snuffed out by his unexpected condition. If it had not been for Beethoven's roots in endurance, he would never have become the inspiration of countless musicians, including German composer Johannes Brahms. Just like Beethoven, the core principles we firmly establish in the earlier years, evolve into substantial skills used in everyday life.

While performing the song one has chosen, it is likely undesirable errors may occur. Any good musician has them. By understanding the mistake made and starting over, once again you have advanced the graceful knowledge and expertise that has been cultivated all these years. The pursuit of one's impending future can also be filled with such oversights. A disagreeable post or an embarrassing picture may be posted online, but a personal dedication to showering positivity over the shame can ensure the possibility that the situation can be overlooked. Participating in any activity where you are not fully aware of all the details or you are taking part because of peer pressure, such as skiing for the first time, may result in a humiliating accident, but by acquiring experience from the incident, enables you to avoid similar repercussions. Being capable of adapting your life to recovering after you fall is a vital importance in the composition of becoming a better person and strengthening your character.

Studying the major keys and identifying different intervals, utilizing these basics to advance your abilities to begin performing measures and benefiting from setbacks is auspicious in performing an euphonious song. Considering the value of comprehending simple childhood lessons, applying them to our complicated lives and persevering even though we become disappointed are requirements for getting us to where we aspire to be. The construction of the ballad may start off as another composer's goal, but overtime, because of the amount of effort implemented into this objective, it can become your individualized dream. Not only does the journey benefit our futures, but the prospective aspirations of our friends, family and all the people around us.



# The Story in the Eyes

by Paige Shawaga, Gr. 9 St. John Paul II Collegiate

My parents have always stressed to me to be thankful for what I have. They often tell me to be hardworking and not take things for granted. I assumed I knew what they meant, but later on, I realized, through one momentous act of volunteering, I wasn't even close.

I was sitting in the back of my dad's truck, admiring the way the sequins on my red dress flawlessly reflected the street lights as they passed. I have never volunteered before, let alone go to an extreme for preparing a Christmas meal for someone I have never met.

Work then play. I never was a person who is gift-oriented around Christmas. I understood that I have more than the other 9-year-olds you see a breaking news story on. The ones who are living a life I couldn't bear to handle. Yet the joy and ebullience that filled me up when I imagined myself opening that new shirt, doll, or game was unlike none other.

I truly was put hard to work, as there was so much chaos on what to do. Steadily, I unraveled the streamers and lights, placing them on every table in that church hall. I scrambled for candles, plates, and cutlery, all the while thinking that I still have hours left. "The food is coming out!" I heard echoing from the kitchen. In an instant, everyone snapped out of their jobs in a hurry to tend to the call. It looked like bees to honey, like they have that same wide-grinned expression that I know I will express when I get home.

Eleven turkeys were cooked, along with sides darting in and out of the kitchen. This is enough to feed half of the town! Whenever I considered feeding these people, it had always been under the premise that it would take 30 minutes max. Work then play. The phrase echoed in my head repeatedly once again.

My inquisitiveness kicked in, I peeked my head outside the church hall window to see if anyone had arrived. My mouth dropped. I rubbed my eyes, checking to substantiate these sights. In front of me stood a huge crowd of people, all piling in to receive this meal prepared for them. My legs carried me in one instantaneous motion to the front, where my mom and I greeted and welcomed each one of them. As I extended my hand, a sense of guilt swept over me as I caught sight of the glittering diamond bracelet I was wearing. These people in front of me didn't have the

latest clothes or fancy accessories, just enough to keep them comfortable in this frigid weather outside.

Soft chatter filled the room occasionally. They mainly sat quietly and didn't interact, taking in the views of everything I helped to create. When everyone was inside, the food started to be served. I was in charge of the stuffing and vegetables, nearing the end of the long table. I spooned mounds of each onto their plates, hearing soft thank-yous in return. I glanced up, making eye contact with one specific gentleman. I gasped for a short breath of air. My breath was unsteady, falling deeper and deeper into the pit of my stomach. The strike of his captivating blue eyes seemed to freeze me into place. Numbness swept over me, leaving me no choice but to remain fixated on this man. His eyes seemed to tell a story, one with difficulties and challenges, but a story that is not yet completed. His face altered completely from a timid, quiet expression to a genuine smile that warmed my heart. Snapping back into focus, my head on a swivel, I regained notice of my surroundings. I recognized why this whole event is happening. It's for individuals like himself. My hands were trembling. My body did not know how to handle strong emotions such as this. For the second time, the smell of turkey cooking, the sound of holiday jingles, and the joy slowly spreading across the room came into view. Except for this time they had a completely different meaning, a more powerful one. I watched, stunned, as I knew this is exactly as Christmas should be.

When I finally got home, I wasn't thinking about presents. My mind wandered to this eye-opening experience. I didn't just serve food to those without family, but I got to see who they are, their background, how they live, and the day by day struggle they face to get back on their feet.

This is a heart-warming feeling most of us have in common. We take on a simple task of volunteering because we want to do a good job. Perhaps we don't realize why we've had a sudden pull to give our best. It's just a natural notion that lives inside of all of us. Yet I know that church was exactly where I was supposed to be. Without that night, I would've never learned the fulfillment that comes with helping another human being.

# Playing for Confidence

by Tom Rodehuts Kors, Gr. 9  
St. John Paul II Collegiate

Football has always been my escape from the world. Once my helmet goes on, it's like I'm taken to a whole new reality where nothing else matters. My helmet is like a portal; but it's also like a cage. It protects me from hits, sure; but it also blocks out all of my problems. All of my worries and fears from the outside world vanish. Football is funny like that though. It brings its own set of problems: "what angle am I gonna have to take to block that guy?" "How should I adjust this route so that I can get open?" But there's also bigger stuff, things like getting benched and having to watch from the sideline while someone else plays the sport that you love so much, and not knowing if you'll even play at all. The helmet blocks out your real-world problems; but once your vision narrows and all you can see is the grid of your facemask and the field in front of you, you're locked inside a plastic cage with all the things that plague your mind on the gridiron.

I've always based my self-image on my football performance. If I'm doing well, I'll be on top of the world and nothing can bring me down. But all of my lowest lows have come after something bad happens in football. Maybe I dropped a pass or had a bad practice, but the worst was when I got benched for the season in 2018. My whole world turned gray for what felt like forever. But being benched taught me a lot about who I was and what I would have to do to get to where I wanted to be. It lit a fire in me that had been dormant for most of my life, and I chose to embrace it and let it drive me to be better. Going into my last season of minor football with the Eagles, (the team I had played for my whole life), I had a lot of questions about myself. I was desperate to know if all the work I put in was worth it, and I was anxious to know if I was good enough. I knew I'd find out at the Jamboree.

I knew I would get a chance to start right away because I was a veteran. I just needed to use it the chance. Our first three games were exhibition mini-games at the Jamboree in August. It was a perfect day

for football, warm, clear, and not at all windy. Through the first two games, I had played well; but still had yet to make a play that truly wowed anyone. Our last game was against the



Cochrane Lions and was in the biggest stadium at the park. The coach told the offense the first play before the game even started, and it was a deep throw to me! I would line up in the right slot and run a streak between the two safeties. The play worked perfectly; I burned my defender and split the two safeties, the quarterback threw a great pass; and just like that, I had scored a 40-yard touchdown on the first play! Immediately after that, I rattled off two more back-to-back catches and a 25-yard run.

I was already having a great game and my confidence was high, but there was plenty of game left and I knew I hadn't had enough yet. On our next drive, we pushed down the field all the way to the 15-yard line. Coach called a pass and I had a drag route. I weaved my way through the congested middle of the field with my eyes staying perfectly straight. I was eyeing a wide-open space of grass and my eyes got big knowing I would be open. Within a few steps I was standing five yards from the end-zone; and I couldn't see a single defender through the narrowed view of my facemask. I threw my hand in the air and started to call for the ball as I turned my head to see the quarterback. He wound up the throw, right as I started to see my defender appear straight out of left-field. He had caught up to me and by now was matching me step-for-step and playing perfect defense; but the ball was already in the air, and I knew that it was up to me to make something happen. There was so much riding on this and

I could feel the pressure.

All of the questions I had asked about myself were



about to be answered, “was I good enough?” “was all my hard work for nothing?” But even with everything riding on this catch - the least of which was making the play and trying to score - the first thing that came to my mind was, “I got this”. I wound up my arms, getting ready to jump as the ball flew closer. I could see the back of my defender’s helmet inches in front of me; but I was laser-focused on the ball and knew that nothing could stop me.

I was in the zone.

The ball was now only a few feet from my hands. I leaped as high as I could and stretched my fingertips out as far as possible. I felt my hands get tangled up with my defenders like a pair of old headphones in someone’s pocket. The ball hit my palms and I gripped it with all the strength I could muster. As I ripped the ball away, I heard the most satisfying noise that any football player can hear: the entire crowd, almost in unison, let out a loud and low pitched “Ooooooh” and suddenly a rush of adrenaline shot through my body like a sugar rush on Halloween. By the time my feet hit the turf I was in a frenzy; and fought my way to the one-yard line with it taking three defenders to finally bring me down.

I heard the Ref blow the whistle; but I was still feeling the huge surge of adrenaline from the previous play. I jumped to my feet and looked straight into the stands,

and with anger and confidence pumping through my veins like blood, I let out a muffled scream through my mouth- guard, “they can’t guard me!”, I said as I pumped my fists in front of my chest, as if punching a ghost that was standing right ahead of me. My helmet shook and my loose-fitting jersey ruffled with excitement. I had just answered the question that had been plaguing my mind for months. I had just jumped over my defender and stolen the ball right out of his hands! I had proven to everyone in the stadium that I was, at that moment anyway, better than anyone the other team had and that no matter who they put on me,

I was un-guardable.

This moment taught me a lot about myself and about football. It showed me that all my hard work was about to pay off and it showed me that I was good enough to compete at a high level. But most importantly, it gave me the self-confidence to have my best season ever. For that entire game, I was locked in. Once I put on my helmet, nothing else existed except for the turf in front of me and the ball in the air. Only this time, I wasn’t trapped inside that helmet with my on-the-field problems, I was stuck in there with a little bit of success,

And it felt great!

# A Graceful Step

by Olivia Leonard, Gr. 9  
St. John Paul II Collegiate

We pulled up to the big, tin building. It was exactly the way I remembered it. The white tin building with the dark, forest green trim. The sign was still the same. Mountain Shadows Gymnastics Club. Everything was all too familiar. It felt like the entire scenery was playing a cheesy Taylor Swift song in my mind. I got out of the car and put my hand on the door handle. That too had not changed. It was silver with a copper tone shining through the worn button. The moment I walked in I recognized everything. The smell of chalk, and the mats, the sound of the lights and the squeaking of the uneven bars. I hadn't done gymnastics since I was seven years old. I was now thirteen and I once again realized everything.

I walked past the desk and walked up the ramp and stepped onto the springmat. The feeling of the fibers under my toes was amazing. It felt like if I stood there for long enough it would grow past my toes and wrap around my legs.

My view was the same. The uneven bars was where I wanted to go immediately after I warmed up. I did My old warmup. The balancing, bending, and flexing felt all too familiar to be true. Just like any average human, when you are eager to do something time slows down instantly. While I was warming up it felt exactly like the rest of my life had passed. But then I looked at the clock's hands that I thought were speeding past. It had been exactly twenty minutes. Time to start.

I walked up to the uneven bars. I took a deep breath and while I was exhaling, I felt my heart's pace jump into action. I reached into my backpack to grab my grips with purple velcro. I put them on and tighten them around my wrapped wrists. I put my fingertips into a bucket of chalk and rubbed it into my grips. Then I clapped and watched the satisfying excess chalk gracefully float down to my feet. I put more on and clapped my hands together once more. This time the chalk falling looked like fog in the middle of a bright sunny day.

I look up at the bars in front of me. I jump onto the

smallest bar and put my feet back together and pull myself onto the bar. I lift my feet up until I am doing a handstand on the bar. I put both of my feet together and glide to the other bar. I felt the chalk under my hands. It was like sandpaper was smooth. I felt my breathing get heavy. I let go of the bar and twist twice. It felt like I stepped through time travel. My landing came so fast. I landed and automatically bent my knees. I proudly put my hands above my head and exhaled slowly. If I was a cup, I would be overflowing with adrenalin. I looked down at my feet to step off the mat. My green lululemons were covered with the white, dusty, sandy chalk. I walk over to my backpack and take off my grips. Then I wrap my ankles with medical tape.

I looked at the brown surface highlighted with white chalk. I run my hand along the beam until i get to the middle. Then I put both of my hands in front of me with my palms facing down. I take another deep breath and put my palms down on the sandy surface and lift my feet up. My feet land on the beam and clouds of chalk fly through the air on either side of me looking like smoke or maybe even a waterfall. I feel a drop of sweat drip down my forehead and run down my rosy cheeks to my chin, where it then leaped off of me like a skydiver. I focus and do two back hand-springs and a flip and a twist off of the four inch wide surface. I can't help it but to smile. Me and the beam never got along. We were always like two kids wanting two different things. But now it was like those two kids that were finally able to play nice together.

I looked and started to walk over to the white trampoline. As soon as I got close to it I started comparing it to the one in my backyard. This was an ugly albino version. It looked like if you cut it off you could run to the ocean and start catching fish. I jumped on it and did exactly what anyone would do. I did flips and all sorts of other tricks. Then it was time to leave. I brought a towel and good thing I did. A quick dab and swipe of my forehead and the towel looks like it jumped into a swimming pool.



I put the towel in my bag, tied my shoes, put my coat on and walked out to the car. On the drive home I really started thinking. Gymnastics will always be a big part of me. Not a day goes by where I wonder how different life would be if I was still a gymnast, but I will never know. That was a life changing decision but I am happy with what I do. I love the animals and the people I ride with. Just going to my old happy place taught me

## Art

by Keisha Allones, Gr. 9  
St. Joseph's Collegiate



This photo of my dad and me was taken on November 28, 2007. Just the two of us relaxing and coloring turtles. I was two here, and this was the moment I fell in love with art.

When I first saw this assignment, this exact image emerged in my head. I rushed instantly to my mom, “Ma! Do you know where that picture is of me coloring turtles with papa?” She had a confused look on her face but I convinced myself I wasn’t making it up. I knew this distinct photo existed. I forced her to look through all the photo albums, and old posts, but sadly, it wasn’t there. I felt so upset, but I didn’t want to give up searching for it—I was determined to find it. This was the perfect photo to write about because it was a moment where I found a big part of me, all captured in a timeless shot.

As soon as my dad came home, I told him all about it. To my satisfaction, he also remembered this exact photo.

“See ma, I wasn’t making it up!”

The three of us dug for this exact photo through our old, sluggish computers. We even resorted to taking turns because our eyes began aching after staring

that no matter what you did that was part of your past, will always be a part of you. You might have to practice a lot more to pick up where you left off but it doesn’t mean you can’t be just as good.



at digital screens for so long. We struggled and struggled. I started getting frustrated and nearly gave up, so I turned to taking screenshots of cool outfits my parents wore, and silly pictures of me in fairy costumes.

“Kei, I found it.”

When my dad said that, I was so relieved that I finally got my hands on the picture above after searching for hours. My mom was so surprised and even praised me for remembering that turtles were in the picture.

Although poorly lit, this photo captured my accomplished, beaming smile, sticking out of the shot, accompanied by my dad smiling proudly at his new art apprentice. I remember the patterned mat, the rubber smell and bumpy textures were all a nostalgia to my childhood. The cool breeze from the electric fan caressed my skin, and blew my hair, I could almost feel it from the screen. It was just after lunch, and dad had just come home with this big book and a pack of crayons. He started showing me what these wax cylinders could do with little pressure. I was so mesmerized with how the colors would transfer on, reducing the sharp tips of the wax with every stroke. He made me assist him in coloring this friendly turtle. Even with the 12 crayons I had, I was so immersed in the lines and shapes that could be created with your imagination.

My dad was, and is still, my biggest art inspiration. Although we’ve mutually agreed I’ve surpassed his skills now, and my constant teasing, I still look up to him greatly. I would always look at his drawings of

boats, houses, and even the ones of my mom, and would be in awe of how he'd be able to replicate life and inanimate objects onto paper. Every art piece I make today, I try to apply the techniques he'd teach me constantly when I was little. It was always "Don't waste the space right there," or "Color in one direction always," and, the infamous, "Draw something other than flowers." He taught me that art should convey messages and purpose. Every choice made regarding the color, lines, or composition, tells a different narrative, whether that be a happy or sad one. Art impacts the viewer, which is why I utilize this to tell others my story, or what I want to tell the world. I will confidently say that this was why I could draw and create the things I can today. I'm not saying my art is perfect, because it is not at all. I have long ways to go but the obvious improvement I've gotten is all because of my dad. He pushed me to finish a contest entry, days before the deadline,

and because of this I even placed 3rd in all of Alberta. His attention to detail and ability to freehand impressively straight lines never fail to amaze me.

Looking back from when this photo was taken to now, my love and enjoyment for art has never changed. I started small, with only 12 crayons and a small watercolor palette and created pieces you couldn't even interpret, but that was art. No matter how bad or good it was, it was something I made with my own hands. Art has always been my outlet for self-expression—that's why I've always cherished it. Art gave me a voice when I couldn't express how I felt in words, rather, in paint strokes, varying complexions, or deliberately planned markings. To this day, I still smile about how my dad made that turtle orange.

## Letter to My Younger Self

by Chisel Joy Anasco, Gr. 9  
St. Joseph's Collegiate



This photo was taken on my first birthday on June 11, 2005.

For this assignment, I decided to write a letter to my younger self (from when I was a year old, to now).

Dear Chisel Joy:

I hope you are happy and are doing well. You've just experienced a very significant moment of your life: your very first birthday. It's been officially

365 days since you've entered this wonderful world we live in. I hope you anticipate a lot, because as you grow older you will meet new amazing people, and have the most incredible experiences and opportunities in life.

First of all, I would like to remind you to always live your life to the fullest. Being a child who doesn't have many things to worry about does not last forever, so please, live happily and enjoy your childhood. I also hope you store in all of the valuable and joyful memories as well, so that in the future we can vividly reminisce on our happy moments.

You've got a lot to look forward to in life. However I'll be honest with you— to appreciate any beautiful thing, you'll also have to endure difficult obstacles as well. You're going to face a lot of different struggles and some might even come on

days you least expect. There are going to be moments where you'll feel weak, alone and helpless, to the point where you think giving up is the best option. It's tough, I know, but don't worry— it gets better. There is always a rainbow after a horrible storm, and at some point even the most dreadful time ends too. Always maintain a positive mindset, so that you can stay resilient whenever these situations occur. Remember, "You're braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think (Winnie the Pooh)."

On your 5th birthday, June 11, 2009, you will experience one of the toughest goodbyes yet. Your father who has been by your side for the past five years, will soon take off to another country, where he will work alone and sacrifice for your family's needs. Since your father is your favourite person, handling this situation will be very difficult and painful. And given the fact that you are still a young girl who lacks knowledge, accepting his sudden departure will also be very challenging. Quite frankly, not having a father physically by your side will not be easy, but thankfully there will always be a way to communicate despite being 6 921 miles apart. Nevertheless, I still wish that you will always appreciate all the sacrifices he makes for you and your family. All your needs and wants were always met due to his hard work and dedication. Remember to always thank him whenever you can, because he is the reason why you have come so far.

Moving out of the Philippines will be something you will never expect to happen. However, after a memorable reunion with your father, you will realize that the reason for his sudden homecoming, was to actually take your family with him to Canada. Moving to a new country will affect your life entirely. You'll have to leave behind your family, who has always been there for you, and your childhood friends, who you always had fun with. It's sad right? Yes, I know, but as bad as you may think it seems, it is actually one of the greatest decisions you won't regret. Moving out of the country will feel like a new adventure. A sequel to your life story that awaits great things. Canada will provide you all sorts of great benefits, and endless opportunities so that you can achieve all your dreams and goals. It will also be the place where you will meet new amazing friends, who are very caring and supportive, almost like family.

Overall, I just wish you a happy life in your new home. Don't forget to be grateful to your parents, because they are the reason why you have such a bright future in Canada.

It's no surprise that as you grow older, school will get harder. And it does, believe me. However, your education will be the foundation for everything, so it's best to really try your hardest. I admit, school is super fun, but as the perfectionist that you are, receiving a bad grade will make you really disappointed. For instance, your first English grade 9 essay. It will be one of those essays where you will put a lot of effort in and await great outcomes. However, not everything will go as you expect, and instead, you will receive a grade that you think is beyond unacceptable. You'll feel like you've reached rock bottom, and will probably cry about it all day. Even so, I hope you understand that failure is just another learning experience that can put you back on the right path. Yes, writing may not be your best suit, but it is definitely not an excuse to give up right away. That essay of yours will only help you get better after each writing piece you write. So please, don't beat yourself up too much, and be kinder to yourself when the time comes. Make sure you keep your head up high and achieve all your goals, because you deserve nothing but happiness.

As you move on with your life, there will also be certain people who will try to ruin the way you see yourself. They will purposely bring you down at your lowest point just for their enjoyment, and nothing good will come out of it. Instead, you will be the one who will experience all the pain that you never deserved, and it will tear you down into pieces. It's actually quite sad, since there's really nothing you can do to avoid this horrific mess. However, if you keep your chin up high, the situation will only make you stronger than before. Don't ever let anyone change who you are, because you are a beautiful human being, who was born to shine in your own way. Don't let their words control how you feel, and always stand up to what you believe is right.

Maintaining a healthy relationship with your parents is also very important. Make sure you always come to them whenever things start to get tough. They are your source of happiness who will never leave your side, so always be grateful to them and love them with all your heart.

Most importantly, make sure you also maintain a healthy relationship with God. Trust in Him always, and come to Him too when life gets harder. He will ease your heart and help you conquer all the obstacles you will face. He is your bestest friend who is always willing to listen to you anytime.

You were so eager to grow up, but now I just wish time would slow down. We are slowly entering adulthood, and a new chapter in our life will soon unfold.

Remember to always do what you love the most, and follow your dreams whenever possible.

Be always happy and smile brightly.

Good luck!

Sincerely,

Chrisel Joy (age 16)

# The Good Memories

by Jacquelyn Cyr, Gr. 9  
Notre Dame Collegiate

I felt a warm liquid tear dripping down my cheeks as I replayed the memories that my grandma and I had in my head. It's been a week since my grandma's death and she had a heart attack. By the time my grandpa got home it was too late. My mom has tried to get me out of my room. She bribed me with money and candy which I'll be honest almost worked. I woke up and went downstairs to have breakfast. My mom said she was taking Sarah, my little sister, to the pool with her friends. If you want to go you can bring friends.

"I'm ok mom" I said I'll just stay here. I sat on the couch doing nothing. The house was so quiet that you could hear a crumb drop. I watch the movie that we would watch every time I went over to my grandma's for the night. I cried and cried A LOT.

later that night mackenzie came over and we went outside. It was beautiful.

The trees had frost and snow was glistening underneath the street lights. Mac grabbed a pile of snow and thought it up to the stars, I thought I saw something in the snow.

"Mac do that again" I said as the snow fell gently and I saw my grandma's silhouette, the third time I ran under I could feel her hand resting on my shoulder and could smell her rich perfume. I started crying

happy tears, I kept running as Mac threw snow in the air. I felt so happy to see her even if it was just a dream. I couldn't stop smiling as I ran like a shooting star through the snow holding my purple sapphire necklace she gave me for my 10th birthday.

I was still running when I heard a honk, I stopped dead in my tracks to see a car racing to me.

"WILLOW" Mac screamed, BAM. I had been struck down by a car, the driver got out and dialed 911, I was lying on the road, my head was bleeding but I wasn't panicking, I was bleeding a lot but I wasn't in pain, I claimed. My blue eyes were barely open, I could hear Mac and my mom crying while the paramedics used their tools on me. My mom bent down and held my hand, the paramedics said that my lungs had been smashed in and I was losing a lot of blood. I looked at my mom and followed her lips trying to hear what she was saying

"I love you my baby I love you my baby" I kept listening as I went into the light. I was standing in front of two big golden gates that started to open up. I saw what looked like my grandma. I froze and dropped to my knees. I cried as she wrapped her arms around me, she picked me up and said she will never leave again.



# Am I Beautiful?

by Yzabel Bauyon, Gr. 10  
St. Joseph's Collegiate

I turn on the hot water and step into the shower, avoiding the judging stare of my reflection. I scrub my body hoping that the soap washes away my bruises and my scars. I let the piping hot water hit my body, as I blankly stare at the blue tiles that surround me. I let my melancholy breath mix with steam; they blanket my mirror.

I stare at my blistered toes, disgusted by the way they twist and curve.

I stare at my bruised legs, saddened by their length and size.

I stare at my stretch marks, horrified by the way they invade my thighs.

I stare at my stomach: "why doesn't mine look like hers?"

I sob. Angry at myself for being the way I am.

Why can't I be normal?

Why can't I be like other girls? Why do I have to be me?

I stand disgusted at how I look; I try to silence my thoughts. I push pain into the dark corners of my heavy heart.

Although, this time, my coping methods fails me.

A phrase repeats in my head. Buzzing, like a stubborn fly on a sticky summer afternoon.

"You're beautiful," a voice echoes in my head.

No, I'm not.

Yes, you are.

Am I really? Look at me, I'm hideous, and I don't look like other girls.

You don't have to look like them to be beautiful.

I ponder at that thought for a while. Two voices. Two ideas. Arguing inside my head. Gradually my stares turn into admiration. The soap cleans the hate I covered every inch of my body in, making me feel clean, and

radiant.

I begin to realize that the same God that painted the sky with breath-taking shades of pinks and oranges made me.

The same God that built astonishing mountain ranges, strong and determined, made me.

He made me.

I look at myself again, but this time with admiration instead of hate. I begin to admire my toes, and giggle at their shape. I wiggle them happily. They dance to the beat of the water hitting the bathtub.

I begin to admire my legs. I begin to understand that they're size is the optimum amount for my perit body. They dance along with my toes.

I begin to admire the art embedded on my thighs, and decide to stop trying so hard to erase them.

I begin to admire my stomach; "I know that mine doesn't have to look like hers to be beautiful."

I tilt my head to the water; the genuine smile that disappeared a while ago finds its way back to my lips.

I thank Him for helping me begin loving myself again.

Satisfied, I finish my shower. I wipe away the steam that covered my mirror and found an encouraging smile where a judging stare used to be.

I look at the girl behind the reflection and I say to her: "You are beautiful just the way you are."

I.

Am.

Beautiful.



# At Your Hospital Bed

by LeeAnn Wynder,  
St. Francis of Assisi Academy

(Dedicated to all those who have waited next to a child in the hospital.)

At your hospital bed I watch

At your hospital bed I wait

At your hospital bed I stand, I sit, I pray,

I stare, I pause and reflect and wonder how  
and why and what.

More questions

More thoughts

More time to think

A time to ponder and look.

I look at you, your face, your toes, your fingers.

I hold you, let your little fingers wrap around mine.

I hold you, count your toes again.

I hold you, or just hold the bed you lay on....

holding on to what I can.

My fingers gently rub your head.

I wait, wait for what,

for a moment to look into your eyes,

a chance to hold you in my arms no matter how  
many cords are attached

or how many people need to help.

At your hospital bed I wait as medical staff observe,  
monitor, discuss,

plan, change plans, assess, wait, watch, discover,  
learn, record...

Do we know our next step, the future, what's to  
come?

Do we have a choice? Can we take you home, or not?

At your hospital bed I am here my love! I am present.

# Away from Your Hospital Bed

by LeeAnn Wynder,  
St. Francis of Assisi Academy

(Written for those who've felt that pain of walking  
away from the side of a hospital bed.)

I leave you for a moment, an hour, a day, longer

I leave your hospital bed

I leave so I can go to the washroom, eat, find food,  
shower, sleep, care for others, work...

I leave the beeps, the rings, the alarms...

I leave the smell, not a bad or good one, simply that  
smell

I leave for an x ray, a test, an exam to be done

I leave you for a break, and a chance to walk outside  
in the fresh air

A chance to get away from it all, yes it's tough.

I leave you there.

And while I'm away from your hospital bed I think

I think of you and wonder

Wonder how you are

I think of you, from your head to your toes,  
and God only knows.

I think of your monitors, the tape, the things you're  
hooked up to

I think of the people I've left you with... strangers,  
friends, family

Being away from your hospital bed is hard,  
but I need to care for me so I can care for you.

Away from your hospital bed I love you,

As I always do!



# A Winter Alphabet

by Lisa Scarpelli,  
Sacred Heart Academy

A is for appealing apple cider,  
a hot spicy treat –  
that warms us right up,  
and makes the aroma of winter so sweet.

A is also for the atrocious Arctic winds  
that artistically blow –  
an icy cold blast,  
and fill our country up with snow!

B is for the bitter cold below zero  
that blasts blustery blizzards so brisk,  
and for the bold boots we wear on black ice  
so we don't slip!

C is for Christmas,  
the best time of the year.  
We celebrate the birth of Christ  
with cakes, cookies and cheer!

D is for the dark and dreary  
mornings and nights  
that we decrease with  
dangling decorations and dazzling lights.

E is for the enchanted evenings  
everyone spends by the fire,  
while eagerly drinking eggnog  
before it expires.

F is for the flannel and fleece  
worn by our family and friends  
on foggy and freezing days to combat frostbite –  
oh what comfort these fabrics lend!

G is for the glimmering and glistening grapes  
on a wreath,  
that are gorgeous to behold,  
even when you can't use your teeth!

G is also for gingerbread ~  
The houses! The men!  
from the country of Germany,  
our European friends!

H is for heated car seats  
and all the hot drinks –  
hazy London fogs, hot chocolate  
and all of the Tim Hortons treats!

Now when it comes to I,  
it certainly is a no-brainer –  
the ice of the winter season  
makes us feel like we live in a freezer!

We also insulate all of our extremities  
and the icy intensity  
may make the indoors  
feel like the remedy!

J is for "just" wait a minute –  
when folks moan and complain,  
that the season of winter  
drives them insane.

Please remember that Jack Frost  
is one of our friends!  
Button up your jacket and enjoy  
the justifying beauty that he jolly-well sends!

Now K is for kooky,  
which you just might call me,  
for truly loving winter,  
(it's a little rare you see).

I'm not sure  
what you may rather do ~  
perhaps go to the land down under  
and see some kangaroos?

Our country is named after  
the Iroquois word "Kanata" ~  
embrace being Canadian  
and sharing the same land as Santa!

L is for the lovely lit logs  
in the fireplace ablaze,  
and for the long Johns we bust out of our drawers  
that make us feel brave!

M is for our many multi-colored marvelous mittens  
that make our hands feel as soft,  
warm and puffy  
as the paws of little kittens!

N is for the nippy nights  
that farmers trudge through the snow  
to check on newborn calves  
nicely nursing, row after row.

Now think of the Tim Hortons donuts  
that make the shape of an O ~  
there's an outrageous amount of choices:  
sprinkled, jelly-filled and Boston Creams to go!

O is also for the oranges which long ago  
children received as presents

on Christmas nights overjoyed,  
as my Grandmother told.

P is for the Polish pickles  
which are made in the fall ahead of time,  
to pick through during the winter  
in the pretty jars that shine!

Q is for the quilts we quiver under  
when we're feeling queasy with the flu,  
they are quick to make us feel like royalty ~  
I bet the Queen enjoys them too!

R is for the rightful times  
that we revel in our radiators,  
as they stop our cars from freezing  
and sitting still like alligators!

S is for the situations of shivering  
while skating on sparkling and slippery ice ~  
twirling like sugar plum fairies with snowflakes swirl-  
ing ~  
isn't the solstice a slice?

T is for the times when the thermometer thrills us  
and makes us say what the heck ~  
today I'll try to toboggan after I tug from my pile of  
sweaters ~  
my favorite turtleneck!

U is for usual,  
as winter is our longest season,  
and the utmost importance of snowplows  
utterly stands to reason!

V is for the very cold days  
when we visit with voices over the phone ~  
it's really not safe to go anywhere,



but you can play your violin at home!  
 W is for the wintry winds  
 that whistle and wail,  
 while we wait with fuzzy-wuzzy woolens  
 for milder weather to prevail.

X is for x-rays  
 as ice can be a dangerous thing -  
 Please walk carefully in the school  
 when the recess bell rings.

There are so many reasons “Y” we yawn  
 and feel extra cuddly at the end of the day -  
 it’s the coziest season to button up your pajamas,  
 brush your teeth and hit the hay!

And on that note, are all of the Zeds,  
 the cartoon sign that we’re sleeping all snug in our  
 beds.

After all of the frosty fun,  
 another day on Earth is done.

## My Mother Who Art In Heaven

by Jason Olynyk  
 Holy Trinity Academy

Today, I honor heaven’s new caregiver.  
 Loving pain flows from my loss;  
 I miss her embrace infinitely.  
 Memories abound -  
 I see her, I hear her, I miss her.

She beautifies heaven’s decor,  
 Energizing all that is alive.  
 Her sweet breath caresses the trees,  
 Inspired doves voice peaceful melodies,  
 Flowers blossom in her footsteps.

Heaven’s new treasure lights the sky,  
 Her presence warms the sunshine,  
 Forever she supplies the raindrops of life.  
 At dawn, she leads angels in song,  
 At dusk, she celebrates my life.

Once she sees me suffering on the tiny globe,  
 She quickly jumps into my shadow.  
 Her smile comforts me during my struggles,  
 She showers my world with encouragement.  
 Blessed my rock of strength!

She follows wherever I lead,  
 Oft to a place she has already been.  
 She shares in my gifts and in my happiness;  
 My prayers touch her heart.  
 She sees me, she protects me, she loves me.

A special angel holding hands with God,  
 I dedicate my life to thee.

# We Are One

by Rachelle Hitchner  
Holy Spirit Academy

The desire and passion for life, To live each day  
to the fullest.

The love of life, to share, to dream each other's  
dreams.

...to explore the unknown paths.

The need for friendship, the undying bond that  
holds strong Throughout life's experience.

The will and desire to succeed and to never give  
up No matter how hard times may seem.

The power of family  
or the strength to live without.

Finding the path of courage and choosing light In  
times of darkness.

The power of the Spirit to guide and keep us  
strong.

Love, the ever seed of life.

Faith, the knowing in our soul.

For all that we know let the above reign.

A desire for a world that cares, neighbours that  
say hello And fear to be unknown.

The need to understand purpose, one's place and  
being.

Be free...to know thyself and a complete under-  
standing of...ME.

I belong to the sky The openness, the clarity  
And the endless beauty of the stars.

Fly

I belong to myself,

My deepest sorrows and fears And knowing He  
will guide.

Believe

We are made to feel, to hear, to care, to hold.

We help and we guide.

Kindness

Above all else and with all this knowing, we are  
the chosen.

To touch the lives of thousands, To hold the  
hands of those in need,

To guide hearts and minds,

And to hold true that we are striving to make this  
world a better place.

We are teachers. We are strong. We are One.



# Teacher of Love

by Rimma Goodfellow

Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy

- Letter written in response to Girl of Love by Charlotte Froese (pg 3)-

ONCE UPON A TIME  
THERE WAS A TEACHER  
WHO LOVED SO MUCH,

SHE LOVED EVERYTHING EXCEPT  
CRAYONS. NO, SHE DID NOT LOVE  
CRAYONS. NEVERTHELESS, SHE CARED  
AND FOUND A MAILBOX WHICH WAS  
PROBABLY MAGICAL. INSIDE THERE WAS  
A NOTE. THE NOTE SAID "LOVE IS THE  
BEST THING TO DO, AND LOVING CHILDREN  
IS THE BEST THING ONE CAN DO WITH  
THEIR LIFE, AND CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER  
AND FOR YOURSELF IS VERY IMPORTANT."

THE TEACHER LATER FOUND THREE  
DOGS. SHE NAMED THEM JAZZ,  
BAXTER AND FINN. JAZZ WAS  
BLACK AND WHITE AND TAN AND  
BAXTER WAS WHITE (WITH ATTITUDE)  
AND FINN WAS TAN.

THE DOGS BECAME HER GOOD FRIENDS  
AFTER HER CHILDREN WERE GROWN  
AND KEPT HER REALLY BUSY WITH  
THEIR SHENANIGANS.

HER STUDENTS KEPT HER BUSY AND  
HER HEART FULL AS WELL, AND  
FOR THIS SHE WAS THANKFUL. 



**Submit to next year's Tablets & Doorposts!  
Email [jnickerson@redeemer.ab.ca](mailto:jnickerson@redeemer.ab.ca)**