ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



ART AND ESSAY CONTEST

“I believe that God is present in my life”

2025 CONTEST WINNERS LOOK BOOK

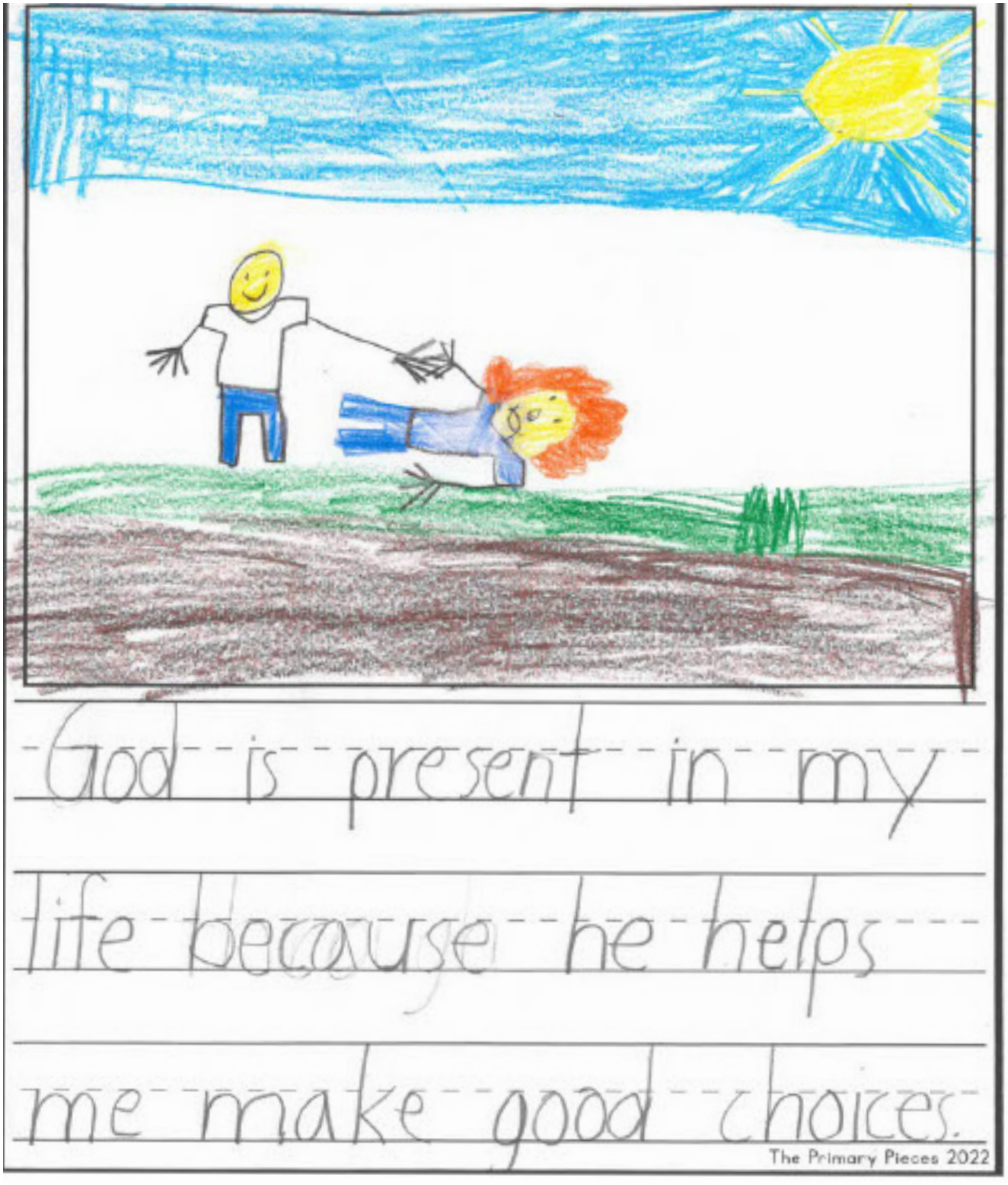
featuring visual and literary artists
of our Catholic Schools

Alice Broderick
3rd grade
St. John Fisher School

GOD'S HAND IS ON MY SHOULDER



Cameron Brogan
2nd grade
Immaculate Conception School (Talcott)



Madison Carcellar
5th Grade
Divine Providence School



I believe that God is present in my life because I feel His presence whenever I am surrounded by nature. From the fresh air to the serene flow of water and the vastness of the skies, I sense His divine creation. Through nature's beauty and tranquility, I am reassured that God is always near.

Montserrat Carrera
4th grade
St. John Vianney School

MY LOVE, MY FAITH, MY HOPE

Have you ever wondered why the earth is so beautiful and peaceful? Have you ever felt love and joy with God? My belief is that God is present in my life helps me feel this way.

I believe that God is present; He put me in this school. He helped me when I fractured my arm. God made my family so I can be happy with my family and I am never alone.

I believe that God is present because he made my brothers and parents. God made my friends to cheer me up when I'm sad and they make me laugh. Thank God for my family and friends.

I believe that God is present because He made the earth peaceful and beautiful. God made the Bible and the Holy Spirit. I want the men who wrote the Bible. They were inspired by God to learn all the gospel. To learn about God and to love one in another. God made the world and people to help us to know him deeper.

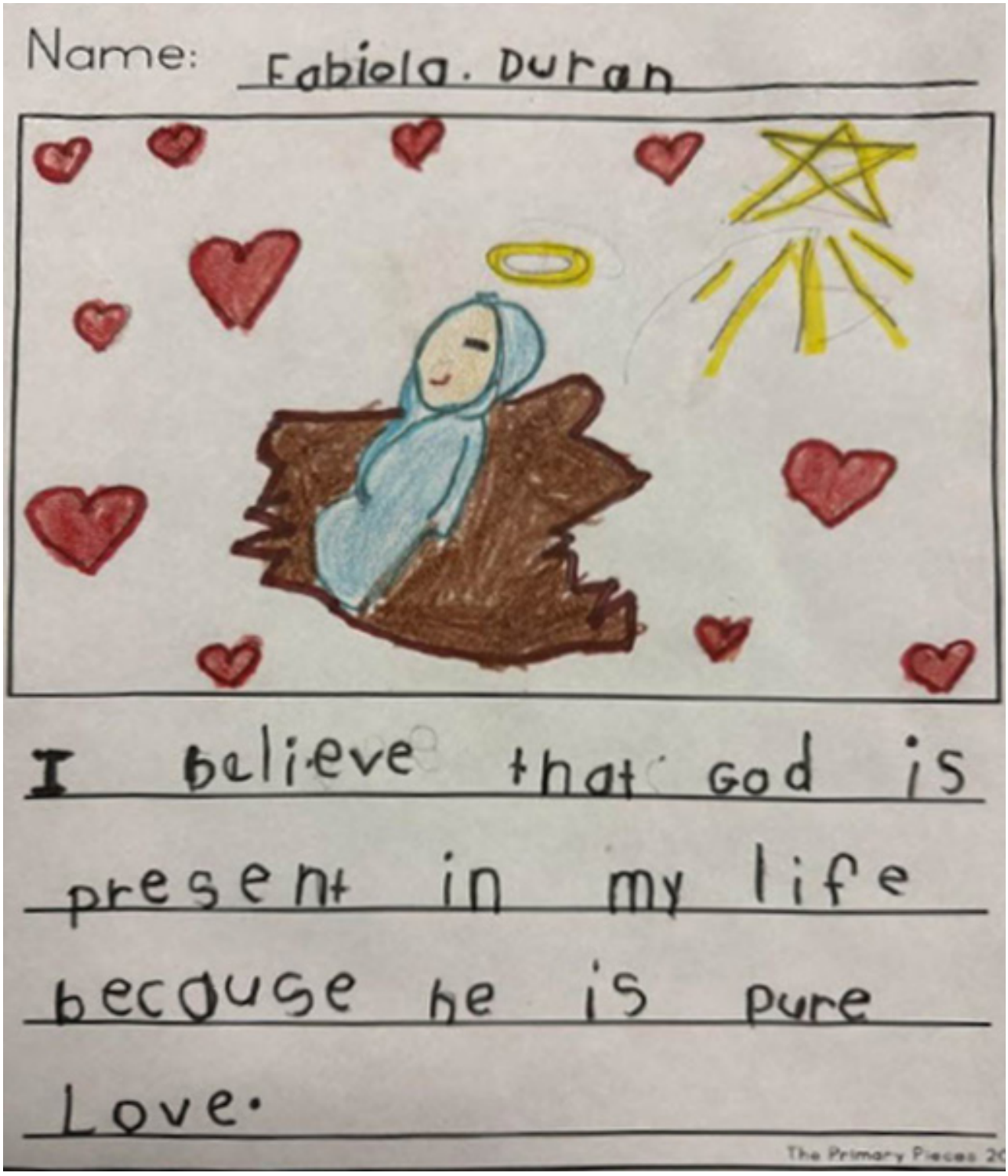
God is present forever in our family and our friends and in us. God helps us when bad things happen to us. I believe God is present in my life and that makes me feel joyful.

Giselle Castro
Grade 6
Our Lady of Guadalupe School

HOW I FEEL THE PRESENCE OF GOD IN MY LIFE

I feel the presence of God in my life. I feel God with me anytime I am praying, near a church, and receiving the Eucharist. When praying I feel he is always there looking over me. Every morning I pray in school, and home and that makes me feel like God is with me. God is always with me when I am feeling different emotions even when I don't think so. When reading the Bible It makes me feel closer to God and that he is truly with me. Reconciliation also makes me feel that God is with me and that I have his forgiveness. Spending time in prayer helps me feel God's presence too. Doing good things and being helpful to people reminds me that God helps and does a lot for me. Another way I feel God's presence is when something good happens to me and I am grateful for that. God fills my soul with his presence and the joy he gives me with many more things along with that.

Fabiola Duran
Kindergarten
St. Gall School



Isabella Gonzalez
2nd Grade
St. Gall School



Violet Hill
8th Grade
Immaculate Conception St. Joseph School



When drawing this piece, I chose to include the Bible passage, "The Lord is my light and my salvation." This resembles the soft colors and how in fragile times we look to God to lead us to the light. When drawing I decided to use a blending technique that is peaceful and soft. When we attend church, that is when we spend time with God, it is one on one sacred and peaceful time.

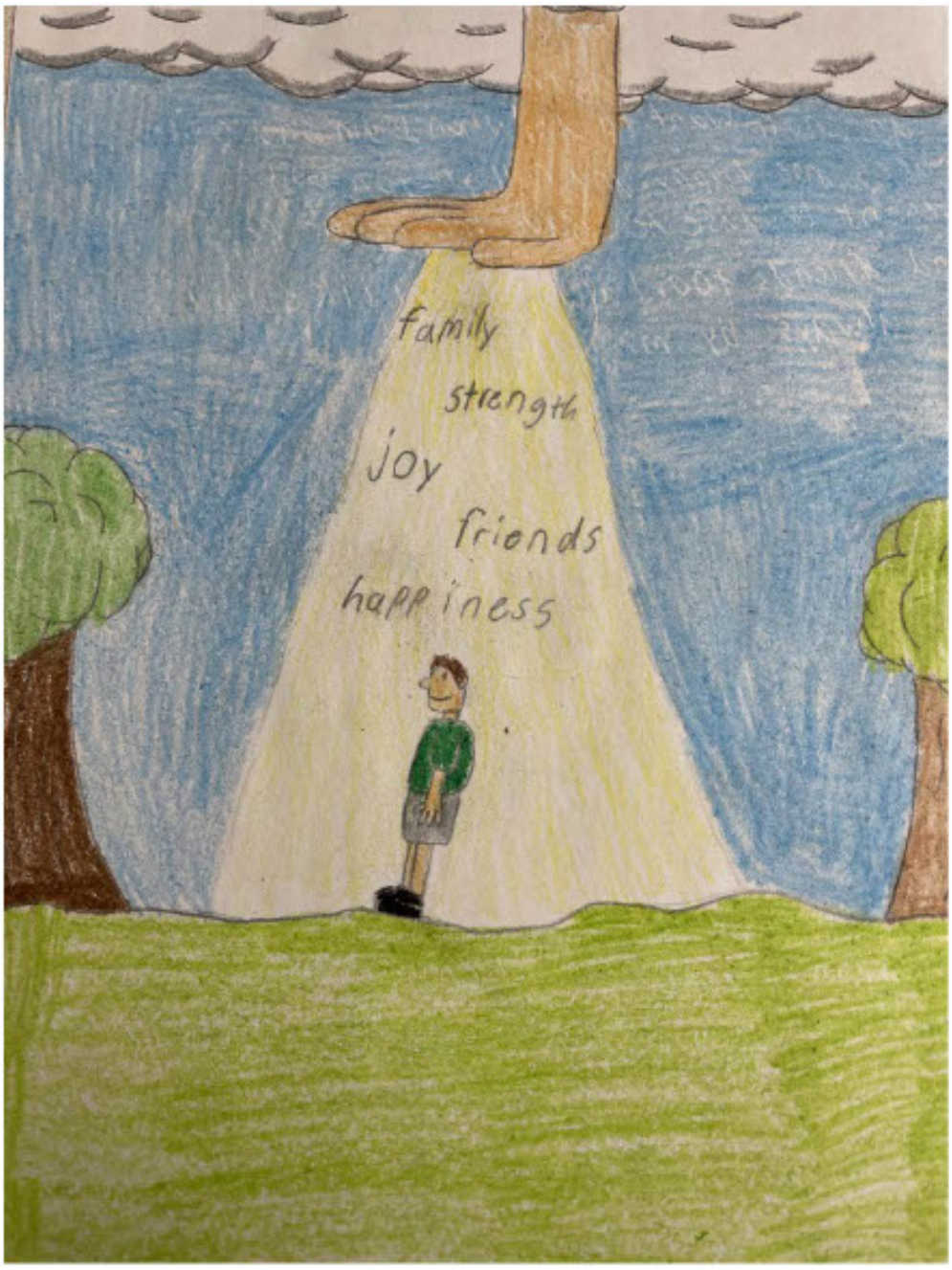
Alisa Konchan
7th grade
Our Lady of Perpetual Help School

GOD'S PRESENCE

Faith is not a feeling. Whether we feel it or not, God is always present in our lives. "Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go"(Joshua 1:9). The choice to either acknowledge God's presence in our lives or to turn a blind eye to God's presence is ours.

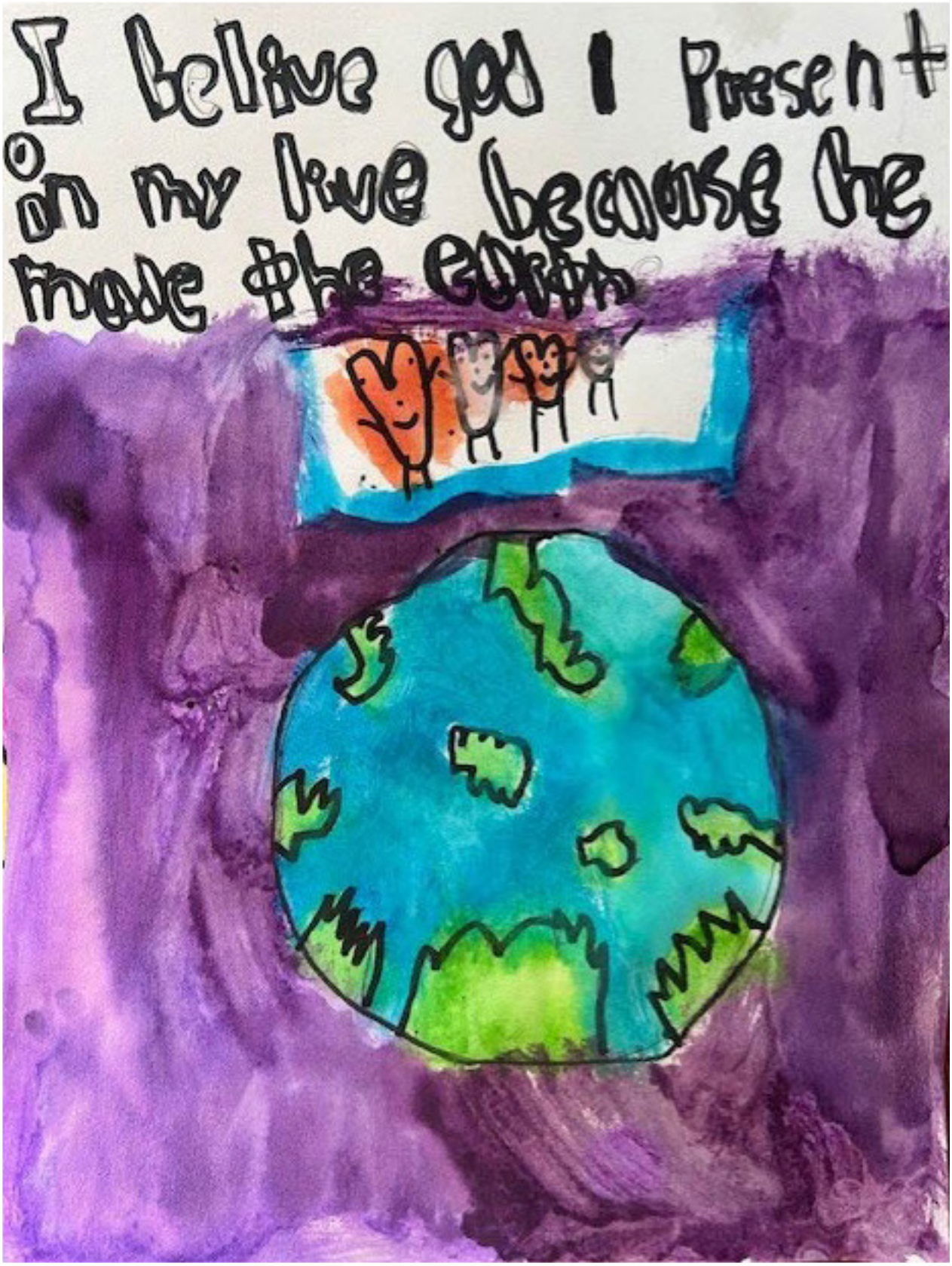
I know God is present in my life because He blesses me with an indescribable feeling of peace and joy, even when it does not make sense. For me, this means having a reassurance of God's presence in the midst of struggles or spiritual warfare. God constantly reminds me that He is with me guiding my steps, whether it be through sacred Scripture, something a person has said, or His creation. When reading the Bible, a certain verse will stand out to me like no other and reassure me that God is present in everything I do. In conversations, someone might compliment me and I am reminded that I am a child of God. Nothing I will ever do will ever change that. If I am outside, enjoying God's beautiful creation, I am struck with awe that the Creator of the Universe is present in my life and loves all His children, willingly, knowing that His children might not even love Him in return. God is even in my thoughts. Often I am abruptly reminded that Jesus died for me even though I stumble in my relationship with Him. There are not enough words in the world for me to list all the ways God is present in my life. He is present with me right now, as I am writing this essay. This is a gift that I will never stop thanking God for.

Quentin Krull
5th Grade
St. Gabriel School

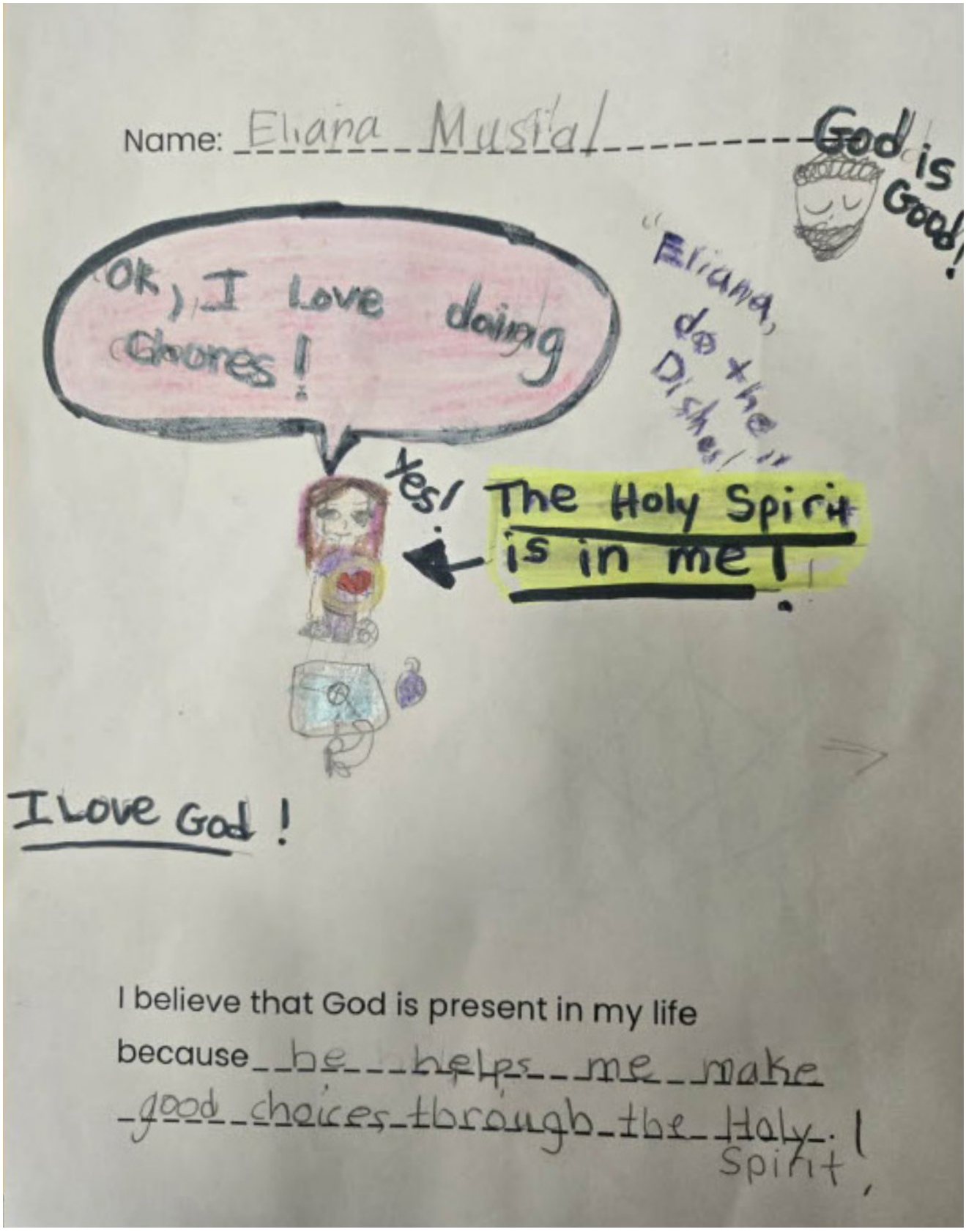


I believe that God is present in my life because he gave me a great family and he gives me strength to do things I do not want to do. When I am sad God makes me happy and full of joy. God is present because he gave me great pets and friends too. I always feel like God is always by my side.

Michael Moody
2nd Grade
St. John Fisher School



Eliana Musial
1st grade
St. Giles School



Abigail Pezdek
7th grade
St. Eugene School

GOD IS PRESENT IN MY LIFE

I believe that God is present in my life. God has blessed me and given me so many wonderful things in my life. God blessed me with magnificent parents. My parents do everything in their power to make sure that I'm safe, healthy, happy, and have everything that I need. God helps me through difficult decisions that might come along my path. He gives me strength to make wise decisions rather than bad decisions. God blessed me with the opportunity to have a wonderful source of education. I am grateful that I am able to learn many things that others may not get the opportunity to learn. I am grateful that God has blessed me with the ability to learn about him and how the world was created at the beginning of time, how he made all living creatures, and how he sent us a savior that would save us from sin and come again at the end of time. By praying, going to mass, and living as his son, Jesus, did – I can become closer to God. If I pray and strengthen my relationship with God, he will answer my prayers. God can help me in times of need or if I ever need someone to talk to through prayer. God has also provided me with enough food to eat. I am fortunate to have enough food to feed my family and me. Many people are less fortunate than I. Many don't have enough food to keep them fed. For this I am forever grateful that I have been blessed with nourishment and that I am able to know when my next meal will be. Overall God has blessed and provided me with many things. Therefore, God is present in my life.

Lydia Raji
8th grade
Immaculate Conception School (Exchange)

ALWAYS PRESENT GOD

God is present in many moments in my life whether it's when I'm at home or in school, whether I'm feeling happy or sad, whether I can feel his presence or not. In moments I am feeling happy I pray to God and thank Him for being in my life and bringing me happiness. In moments I am sad I talk to God about my feelings in my prayers and find comfort in Him. Ever since a couple of years ago I found comfort in talking to God whether I felt depressed, or ecstatic, disappointed, or extremely grateful. When I feel emotions like fear, anger, anxiety, confusion, or hate, I pray to God for a peace of mind and of heart. A way for me to recognize God's presence is by going to church and getting advice from religious teachers or from my family. My family has always been religious ever since I was little so I never really questioned my religion. Believing and praying to God always came to me as something natural. I would go to church every Sunday, pray every morning and every night, and everyday when I wake up I would always say Good Morning to God and thank Him for another beautiful day in this world. As I grew I started to question why we did everything we did and what would happen if we didn't. Eventually it ended with a long talk with my parents explaining everything about our religion and the story of Jesus. That day I learned everything I needed to know at that moment and I thought about it the whole day. I finally understood why we prayed to God and thanked Him for every single thing that happened in our lives. After a couple years, I had another talk with a religious advisor. I learned that whether I can feel his presence or not God is always there with me supporting me in whatever I am doing and that I should always trust in Him. I was also advised to find within myself what God's presence felt like. To me, God's presence feels like peace in my heart that blocks out all negative thoughts. It's like watching a sunset on the beach, feeling a cool breeze against your face. God's presence is the ultimate peace. So even if I can't see Him, I know God is always there with me supporting me in every step I take.

Milani Rosales
3rd Grade
St. Anastasia School



I believe God is present in my life because he helps me with rough times in life. He is always with us even if you don't see him. You may not know but the closest to you is when you receive First Communion. God is the Body of Christ. When you pray he is listening and is right next to you. He is with you when you go to Mass on the weekends and weekdays with your family. When people die God is with them in Heaven. When you grab holy water and put it on you he is with you. He is always on your side. God is everywhere! God is with you because he is protecting you from danger. He died for you, that's how much he loves you!!

Alex Scheckel
6th grade
St. Patricia School

WHY GOD IS PRESENT IN MY LIFE

I believe that God is present in my life because...

When I pray God is listening to me because my prayers are answered so that is one way I believe in God. The Bible also teaches us about God.

Psalm 139 tells us that God is present everywhere.

God created heaven and the earth. God is in my mind when I feel peaceful and happy. His presence gives me power to admit to myself when I am wrong and guides me to do what is right. God gives me strength to never give up and not to give into temptation.

I feel that God is present in my family and friends. My family teaches me good values like being honest and respectful and considerate of others. My friends and I support each other in good and bad times. My family and friends make it easier for me to feel good about God's presence. The Bible teaches me to have trust in God. I believe in what the Bible says and it makes it easier for me to feel God present in my life everyday.

Nara Sifuentes
4th Grade
St. Hilary School

I feel God's presence when I pray for my family that passed away on the Day of the Dead. I know when I honor my loved ones in Heaven, I feel they are praying for me so I can one day be with them and also see God.

Nara Sifuentes
St. Hilary School, Chicago
Grade 4



Lily White
2nd Grade
St. James School



Honorable Mention
Ms. Martinez's PreK 3/4 Class
St. Giles School

The following is our St. Giles preschool classroom collaborative class art project, responding to the question "How is God present in our lives?" Some of our class responses were: "He helps me share my toys." "He watches over the animals." "Jesus is my friend." "He loves me!" and the one that inspired our artwork submission: "He's with us when we pray and talk to him." This photo was taken during our Thanksgiving class feast and the artwork background was a group effort using dot markers as our medium. The class agreed that this is a happy piece of art and very peaceful. We have it displayed proudly in our classroom!

