



Written by Michele Elena Bondi ✝ Illustrated by Kristina Marie Pope



OUR TREASURE

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First Edition

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For all of God's children, including my own,
Andre, Nicholas, and Alyssa.
God is at work in you!

-Michele



To my mom and dad for their unwavering love and support throughout my life.

-Kristina



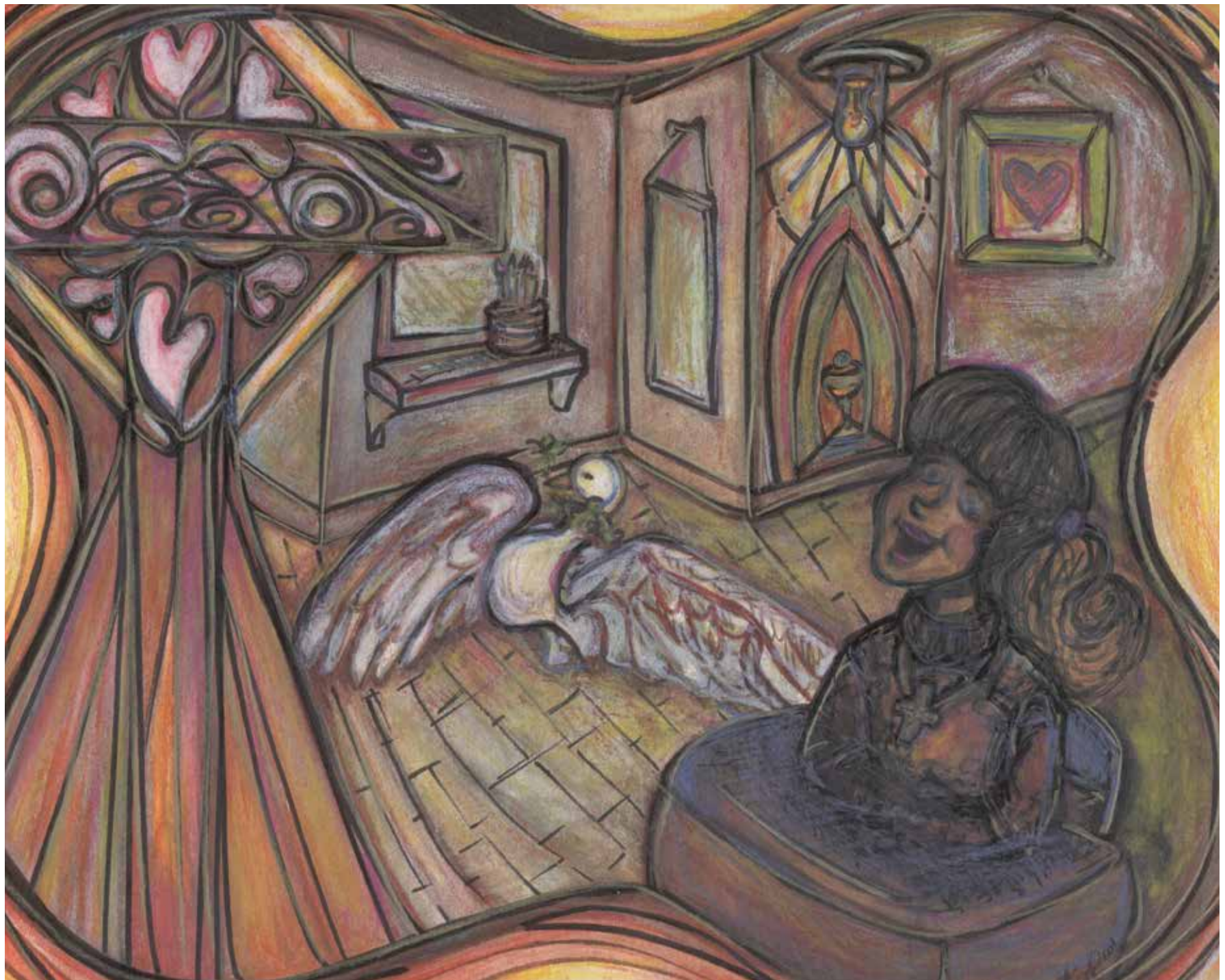
One day Mrs. Browne visited her daughter Belinda's second-grade classroom for story time.



The children welcomed her.



Mrs. Browne congratulated the children because they had recently made their First Holy Communion.
“What was it like to receive Jesus for the first time?” she asked them.



Ashley raised her hand. She said, "I felt warm and happy."



Ben said, "At first you do not understand it, but once you receive Him it makes sense. It's like imagining a place you have never been to, and then you go there and know what it is like."



Josh responded, "I felt very loved."



“Those are wonderful answers,” said Mrs. Browne. “You felt loved and happy because Jesus loves you very much.”



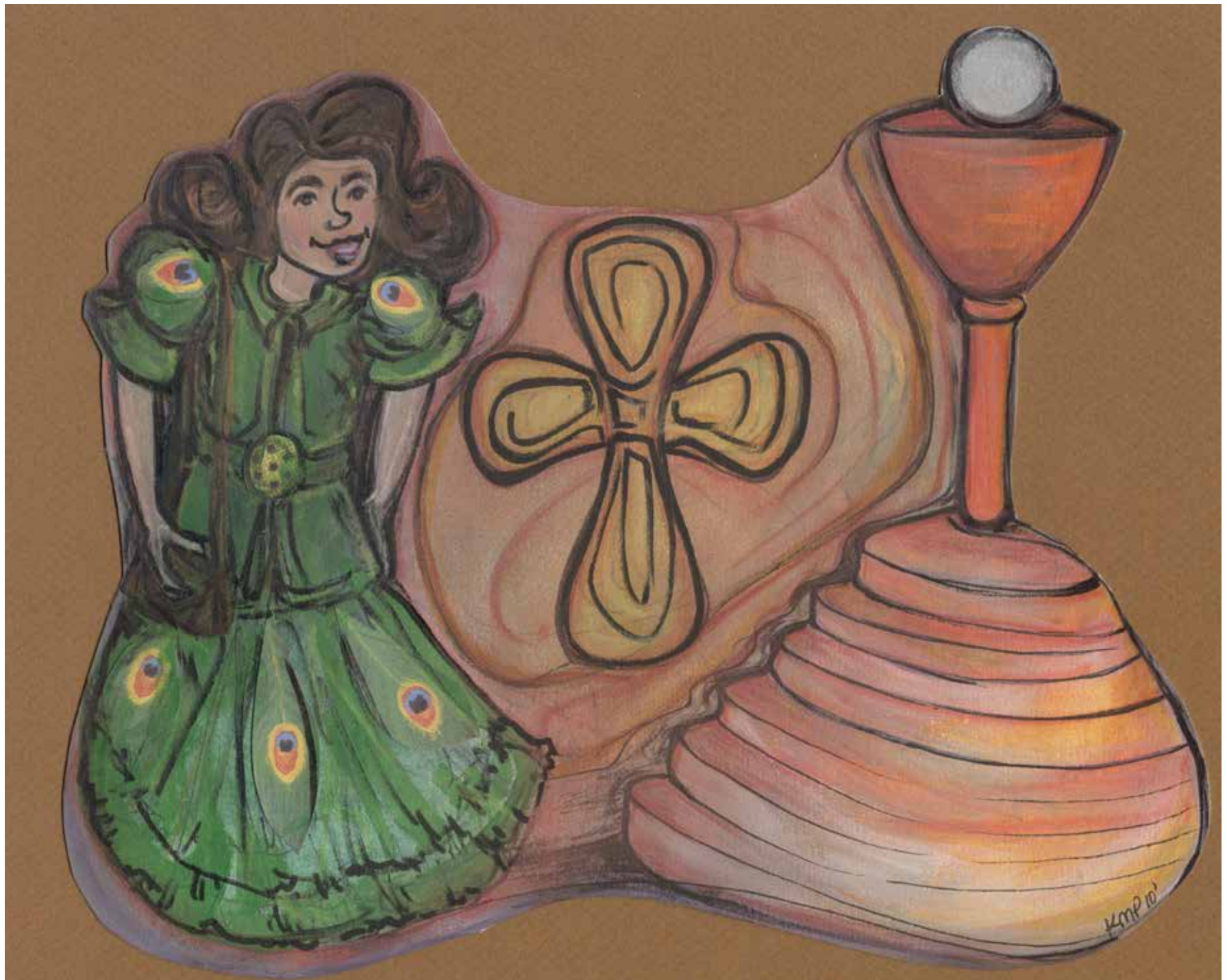
“Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them,
for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 19:14



Mrs. Browne then said with a smile, "I want to ask you something else.
Raise your hand if you would like to come to school on Saturday."



The classroom became very quiet. Andrew tried not to laugh. No one raised their hand.



Mrs. Browne said, "Ah, but what if I told you there would be treasure waiting for you there, and you could take it home with you?"



Right away, everyone raised their hands in excitement.
Paul said with a huge grin, "I'll ask my dad to bring his truck so we can take it all home."



Mrs. Browne explained to the children that there is such a place where treasure waits for them.
“The best part is, the treasure is always there, and you can keep going back for more!”



Mrs. Browne asked the children if any of them knew where this treasure can be found.
Elliot put his head down, as if to help him think.
Sammy twirled her hair. The children thought and thought.



Alyssa imagined finding a diamond and ruby crown, rings with precious gemstones, a flamingo pink dress with puffy sleeves, gold bracelets, and a pearl necklace at her favorite stores.



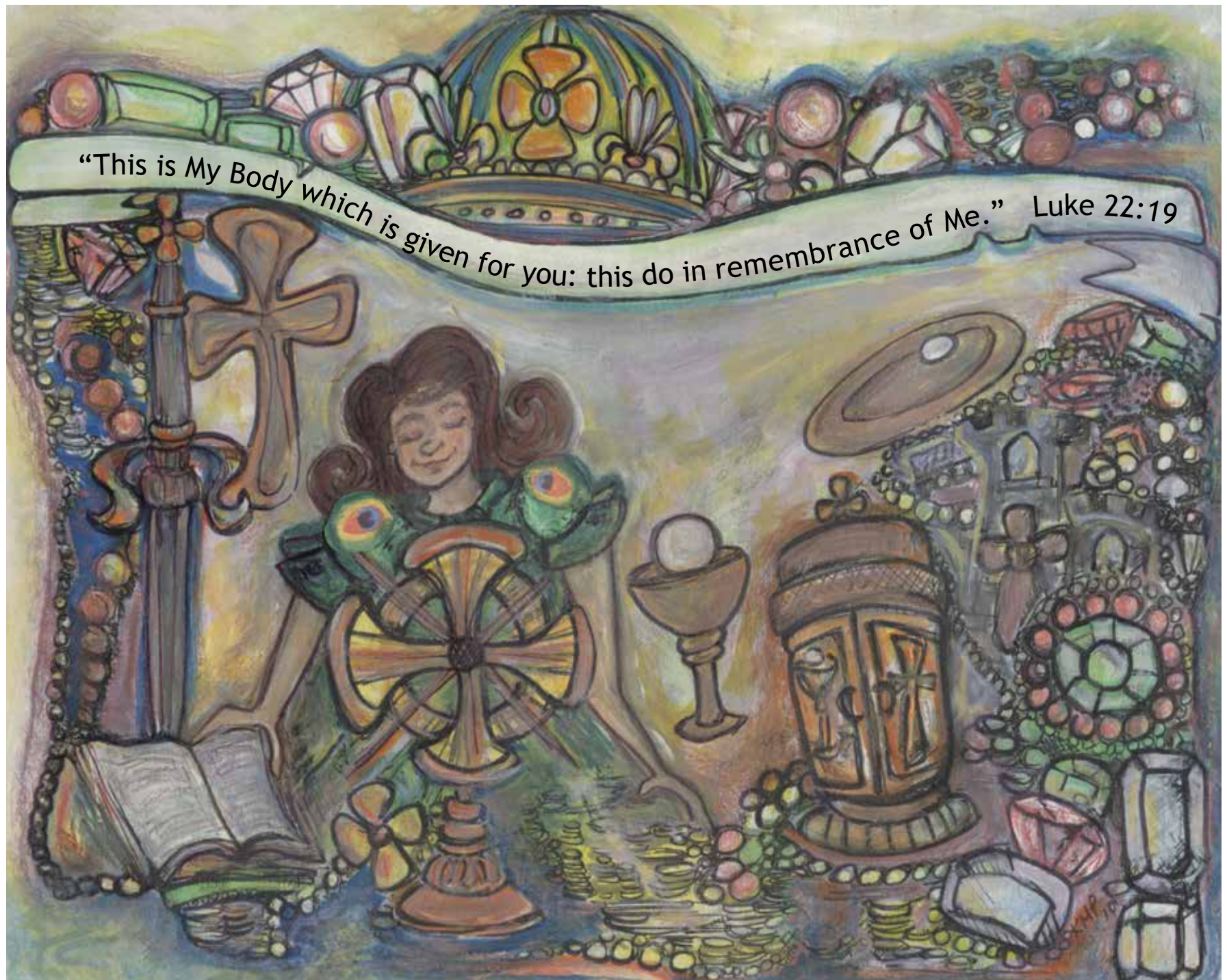
Tom imagined gold and silver bars, cups, and coins taken from a very large, wooden treasure chest that had been dug out of the sand on a deserted island.



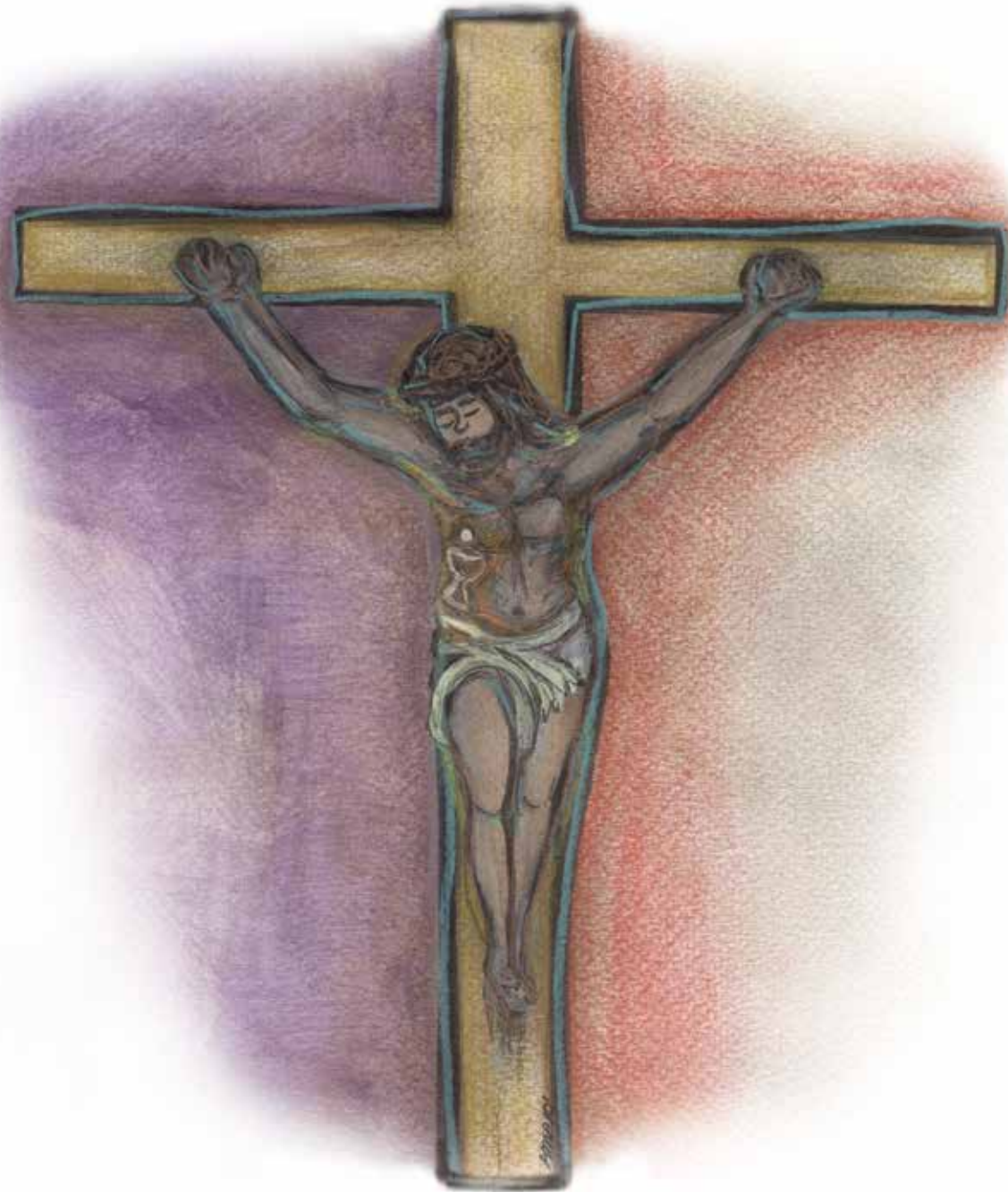
The children were eager to learn where they could find such riches and become incredibly wealthy.
Is the treasure buried in the sand? Would a map lead them to it?
Emily wondered if her dog could help her find it.



Is the treasure in Mom's purse? Or is it kept in a box underneath someone's bed?
Perhaps it is buried in the ground next to a castle.



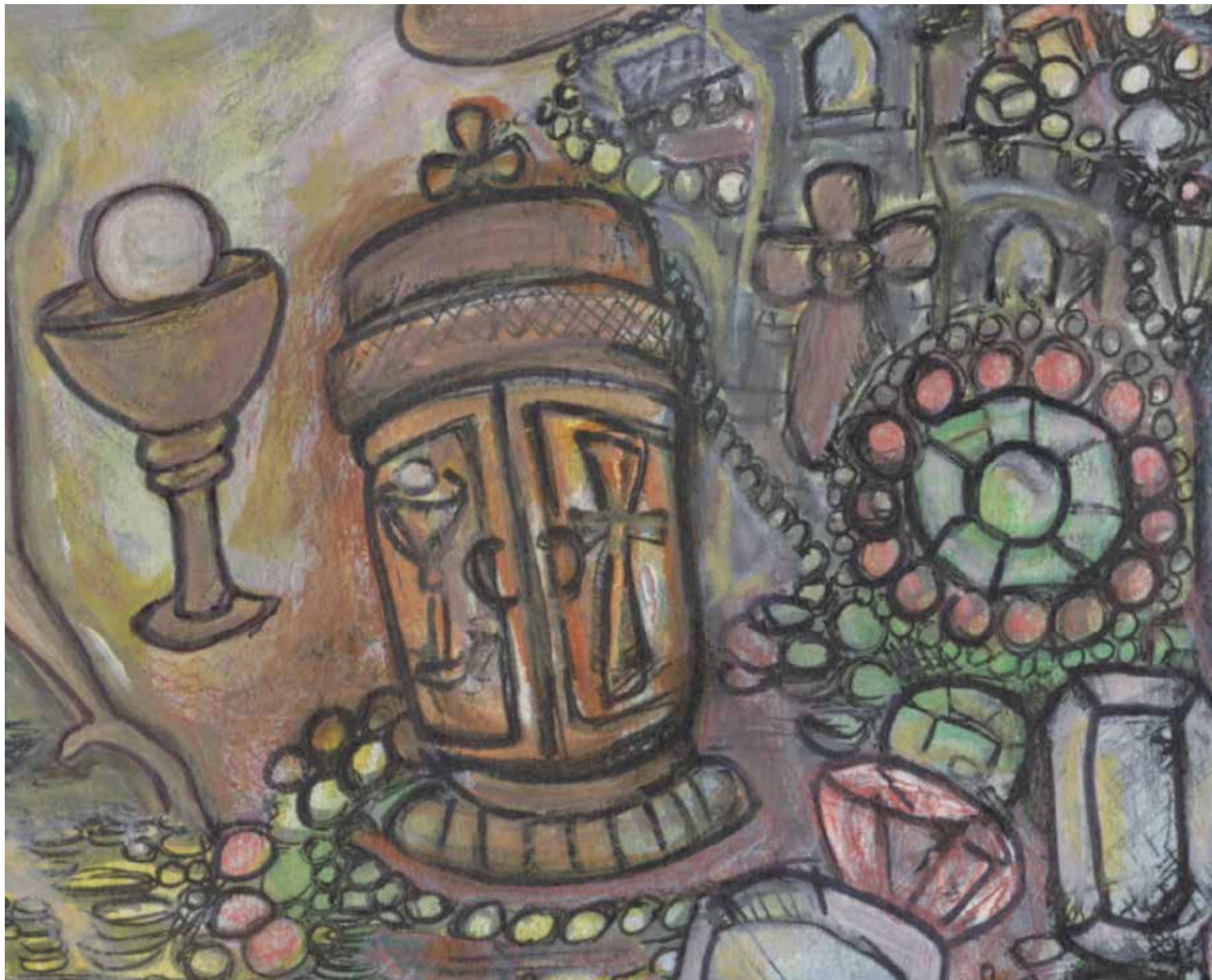
Mrs. Browne took a deep breath and smiled at the children.



“Our Treasure is the Precious Body and Blood of Jesus.
You can find Him in church and receive Him during Holy Mass every day.”



The children were surprised and delighted to learn that they had already received the Treasure!



Now you know where to find the Eucharist, our greatest Treasure on earth.



Can you find these items in the picture?

Chalice

The cup used during Holy Mass to hold Jesus' Precious Blood.

Monstrance

Ornate container in which a consecrated Host is placed so that we can see Jesus and adore Him.

Paten

A plate, usually made of gold or silver, that is used to hold the Host during the celebration of the Eucharist.

Pyx

A container used to carry the Eucharist to the sick.

Tabernacle

The dwelling place of God in church.

The Eucharist is reserved there to bring as Communion to the sick and dying, and for private visits to adore our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

Collect the signatures of others who know where our Treasure can be found.

Go through the book and see if you can find the following items:

Crosses, fish, Bibles, chalices, angels, Hosts, a priest, a dove, crowns, hearts, Monstrances.



Point to earthly treasure and to the Eucharist, our true Treasure.



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About the Author

Michele Bondi Bottesi, M.A., is a mother, award-winning Catholic author, and psychologist. She is a publisher at Joseph Karl Publishing, whose mission is to encourage, inspire, and continue the faith formation of the more than one billion Catholics worldwide and to lead souls to Christ.

Visit Michele's blog, "God is at Work in You!" at www.godisatworkinyou.blogspot.com.

About the Illustrator

Kristina Maria Pope grew up in Clarkston, Michigan. Her passion for art started at an early age, and has not stopped yet. She earned a degree in Fine Arts from Saginaw Valley State University, and now teaches her love of art.

Ms. Pope lives in Rochester Hills, Michigan.



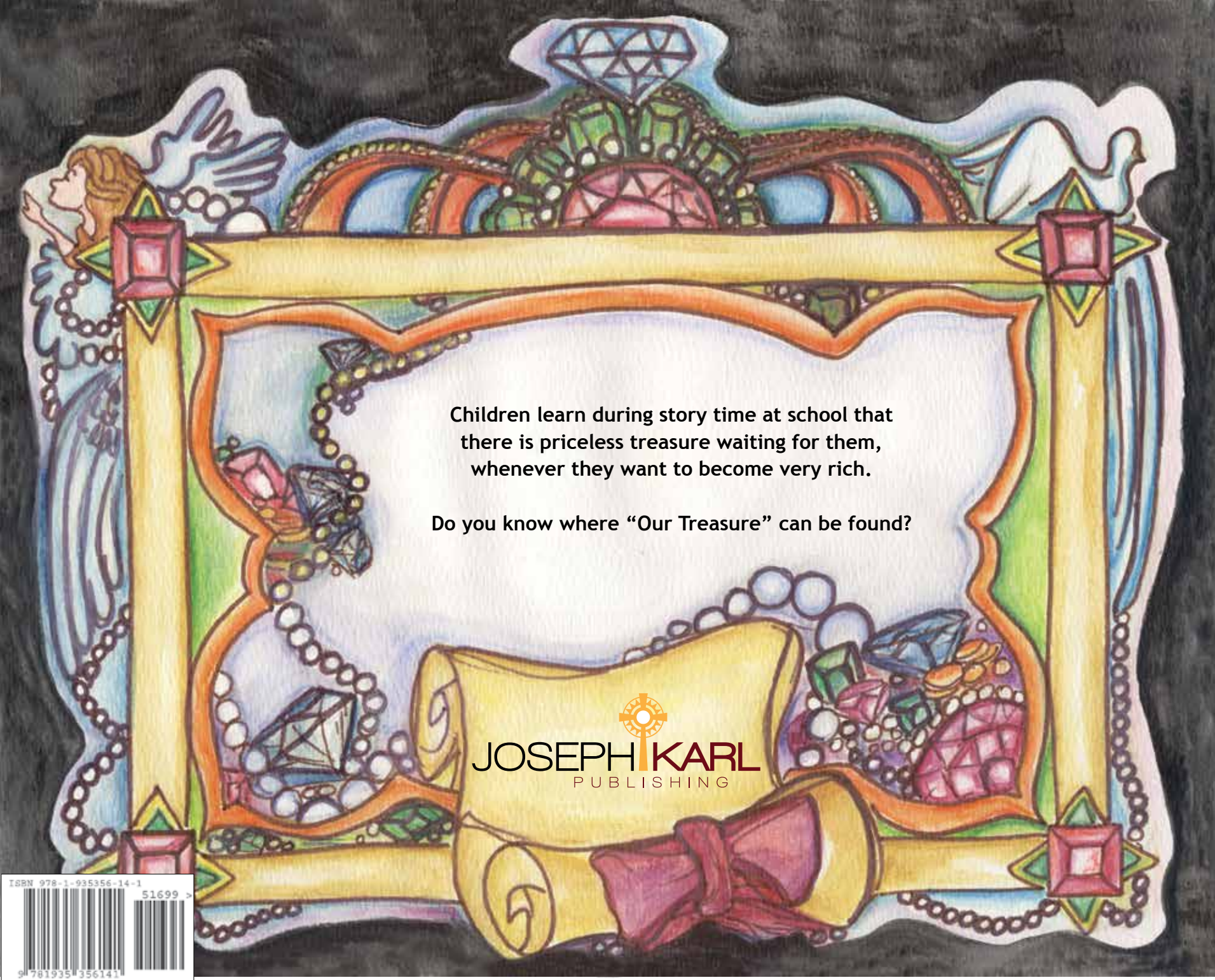
Acknowledgements

The story in this book was first presented almost ten years ago to my son's elementary school class. In 2009, the good Lord gave Joseph Karl Publishing the assignment to turn it into a picture book for children. My friend Alice worked with me to conceptualize the cover design, while we prayed for an illustrator. My son and daughter suggested their gifted art teacher, Kristina M. Pope. Her beautiful illustrations delighted us one by one. My beloved children Andre, Nick, and Alyssa Bottesi spent countless hours working on the storyboard and the story. Their excellent suggestions, together with those of my sister Belinda Bondi, author Nancy Carabio Belanger, and dear friend Susan Schoenstein, truly brought the story to life. The graphic design work of Roseann Nieman at *Niemanart Graphics* expertly combined the illustrations and text. Erin Howarth at *DDM Publications* handled the exceptional book packaging to complete our heavenly assignment.

I extend my sincere thanks to Andre, Nick, and Alyssa, Alice, Kristina, Belinda, Nancy, Susan, Roseann, and Erin for contributing your tremendous talents to this keepsake book for children about the Eucharist, "Our Treasure."

God is at work in you!

-Michele



Children learn during story time at school that
there is priceless treasure waiting for them,
whenever they want to become very rich.

Do you know where “Our Treasure” can be found?


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