

THE IMAGINE SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 25, 2021



SPECIAL ISSUE CELEBRATING **Giving Thanks**
KIDS NOVEMBER EDITION VOLUME 27!



"The most fulfilled people are the ones
who get up every morning and stand for
something larger than themselves."

- *Wilma Mankiller*

Learning to Be Thankful For My Name

by Marre Gaffigan

I am thankful for my name. My name is Marre. It's pronounced Mar-ree, like sorry. Falling in love with my given name was the blueprint for falling in love with the rest of the person I am. At the start of every single school year, every single summer camp or program, and every single time my name is read aloud, I have to clarify how to pronounce it. By the time I was just six years old, I got the impression that my name was an inconvenience to people. I would think to myself, "everyone knows how to say names like "Sarah" correctly! Why not Marre?" Eventually, I grew envious of my little brother Jack, whose name is simple, and shared by at least 678,106 people in



So Grateful for this incredible artwork by
Imagine Teen Audrey (13)!

...continued from page 1

the United States. Even the Georgetown mascot is named JACK the Bulldog. I have not to this day met another Marre, or even a Mari for that matter. My name made me feel like a burden, and one day after kindergarten I announced to my parents that from then on, they should address me by my middle name, Elizabeth. Their response to the news seemed very supportive, but not even a week later they handed me the book *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes. In short, the story is about a young mouse girl, Chrysanthemum, who adored her beautiful name until she was teased at school about its length and how difficult it is to pronounce. By the end of the story, Chrysanthemum realizes that her name is hers alone and that it makes her all the more special. Needless to say, I didn't want to go by Elizabeth after reading the book.

Through becoming grateful for my name, I was able to embrace the other "strange" or "atypical" aspects of myself. If prompted, I could talk for hours about the undeniable mastery of my favorite film of all time, *Labyrinth*, starring David Bowie and directed by Jim Henson. In the movie, Bowie plays the King of Goblin City, and the majority of the characters aren't even humans, but intricately-designed, hand-operated Muppets. *Labyrinth* is considered a "cult classic," seeing as it did not do particularly well when it was first released in 1986 and the bizarre storyline was not popular with mainstream audiences. Nonetheless, when my babysitter sat me down to first watch the movie when I was about seven years old, I was instantly beguiled by the absolute obscurity of every aspect of this film. My school friends of course had never even heard of *Labyrinth*, and most of them still couldn't care less about a movie with goblin puppets and talking worms, a reaction which initially made me feel insecure. However, I soon realized that it was the fact that *Labyrinth* is such a peculiar and aberrant interest of mine is exactly what made it so significant to me.

I should note that not all of the defining attributes of my person are as straightforward as my name or film preferences. Coming out and existing as a member of the LGBTQ community at my Catholic all-girls high school was an incredibly labyrinthine, but ultimately quite valuable, part of my life. I've always known that I wasn't straight, but it wasn't until sixth grade that any romantic feelings came to fruition. Now, any person who has been through middle school before knows that it is arguably one of the more terrible parts of one's formative years; I should know. Not only was I awkwardly shoving my way through puberty, but I had to confront emotions completely foreign to me. At the time, I seriously thought that I was the only LGBTQ person in my school or for miles around. Of course, that wasn't actually the case, but no other students even spoke about being gay or straight; if they did, it was not in the best context. Because of this, I believed that my feelings were wrong and abnormal. My anxiety about being queer did not completely disperse until my freshman year, when I found out about and joined *Prism*, my high school's gay-straight alliance club. Participating in the weekly meetings and forming connections with other LGBTQ students at my Catholic high school was an incredibly validating experience for me. Three years after first joining, I am now Prism's president, and I hope that through my leadership and commitment, queer teenagers who felt as lost as I did just a few years ago will feel seen, loved, and heard.



Dear Marre, Thank **YOU** for your profound essay. We are so thankful that you are a part of The Imagine Society!

Marre Gaffigan (17) is a Senior at Marymount. She is also on the Editorial Staff for The Imagine Newsletter!

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Wilma Mankiller: *A Strong Indigenous Woman*

by Shelby Fenton

Wilma Mankiller (November's Cover Quote) was an inspiring activist who fought for Native American rights during her life. Wilma is now recognized as the first female chief of the Cherokee nation! Mankiller was born on November 18th, 1945, in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Her parents were Charley Mankiller and Clara Irene Sitton.

When a life-changing event occurred, **Wilma Mankiller** had developed her first form of social activism. In 1968, a group of Native Americans had taken over a federal penitentiary on Alcatraz Island. They had laid claim to it by 'right of discovery' to expose the suffering of American Indians. Wilma has stated the following about the event: **"When Alcatraz occurred, I became aware of what needed to be done to let the rest of the world know that Indians had rights, too."** Mankiller had been moved by this event and had decided to work on empowering the surrounding Indigenous communities. She wanted to uplift Indigenous youth and give them pride and hoped that would help slow the growing homelessness rates among Indigenous youth. She decided to work as the local director of Oakland's Native Youth Center.

Mankiller and her two daughters moved back to Oklahoma in 1977. She founded the Community Development Department for the Cherokee Nation. Mankiller wanted to improve access to water and housing for Indigenous populations. Her first project was in Bell, Oklahoma. She was helping a small Cherokee community of 200 families with no running water, high unemployment, with disempowerment. Mankiller was able to help the Bell residents to construct a 16-mile waterline within a 14-month period.

Wilma Mankiller was elected to serve as the Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation in 1985. She led the nation for 10 years. During Mankiller's time as Principal Chief, the population of the nation more than doubled. Her leadership caused her to help revitalize the Nation's tribal government and advocated relentlessly for improved education, healthcare, and housing services. Mankiller worked with the federal government to pilot a self-government agreement for the Cherokee Nation and with the Environmental Protection Agency.

Mankiller was an inspirational woman and an example of a strong Indigenous woman. She was inducted into the Woman's Hall of Fame in 1993. In 1998, she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom and has been recognized as the Ms. Magazine Woman in 1987.

Wilma Mankiller won many, many awards for her hard work and dedication to help her people.



Wilma Mankiller served as director of the Native American Youth Center in Oakland, California!



The Wilma Mankiller Quarter is the third coin in the [American Women Quarters™ Program](#) starting in 2022!

Shelby Fenton is (14) and a Sophomore at St. Timothy's in Alberta, Canada. She is also on the Editorial Staff for The Imagine Newsletter!

Introducing New Youth Member of Imagine Newsletter Editorial Staff!

**"I'm a kid with a lot of dreams,
plans, and hope to give to the world."
- Nicole Santos-Peña**

Let's all give a big Imagine Society welcome to our newest member of **The Imagine Newsletter** Editorial Staff - the incredibly talented young poet **Nicole Santos-Peña** (14)! We first connected with Nicole in June of 2020 through Dr. Alyson Moadel-Robblee and our friends at the BOLD Living's Mentor/Mentee Program at Montefiore Einstein in The Bronx. From the start we knew that Nicole was a very special young writer with her first contribution: **"Were You Jealous"** about the tragic toll cancer has taken on her family. But Nicole turns the tragedies into tales of survival, empowerment, and love.

Since then Nicole has consistently contributed passionate and meaningful poetry that the reader can feel coming straight from her heart. When describing her writing style, Nicole eloquently tells us: "I write to inspire and to open eyes. To speak the words that flow through my mind that can sometimes be ignored. I'm a kid but my mind is older." Her poems have greatly inspired our Imagine Youth Community and we thank Nicole for sharing her talent and artistry with us!

Welcome to the The editorial team Nicole! We can't wait to have you on board, so we can continue to build the newsletter together, and share your gift of poetry to the world!



Welcome
Nicole!

"I feel great love towards the newsletter. I feel like I'm a part of a community, a community of **Love**. The newsletter to me is a safe place, where voices can be heard."
- Nicole Santos-Peña

Two of Nicole's favorite quotes both from Sophia Loren :)

"There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of people you love. When you learn to tap this source, you will truly have defeated age."

"I've never tried to block out the memories of the past, even though some are painful. I don't understand people who hide from their past. Everything you live through helps to make you the person you are now."



A Letter

by Olympia Hall

What am I thankful for?
I am thankful for my family,
my friends,
and the home I have to live in.

I am thankful for my school,
Because I get to do drama, make art and sing in choir.

I am excited for the New Year.

I am thankful for my family's health
and for the people that don't have Covid.

I am thankful, very thankful, for The Imagine Society.

I can't wait for everybody to be vaccinated so that Covid is smaller and not on top of us.

:)(: Love, Olympia



Olympia Hall (8) is in the 3rd grade at Convent of the Sacred Heart

Giving Thanks

By Louis A. Craco III

I was in bed on Christmas morning and my sister, Maggie, woke me up. We raced downstairs and we saw presents under the tree. When our parents woke up, we had a Christmas Breakfast. We had pancakes and French toast, just like I imagined the night before. My brother, Tristan, came down grumpy and got himself breakfast.

Afterwards we went to the living room where we opened presents. The first thing my brother got was a Dead Apple comic book from Ria (she is our beloved babysitter). Mom passed the next present to me. As I unwrapped it, I saw a box and a card written by Mom. I always wanted a Tony Hawk Pro Skater 1+2 Gameplay set!



After we finished the presents, it was time to go through the stockings. Maggie came closer to her stocking and reached inside. She felt a curly round thing in the very bottom of the stocking. She knew just what it was! After Maggie, it was my turn. I put my hand into my stocking and felt two things inside of it. I took out a tangerine. Then I got a new tube of toothpaste and a toothbrush. Now Tristan unhooked his stocking from the fireplace and slowly put his hand through. He had the same things that Maggie and I had! Mom, too! Before we headed to Dad's stocking, Mom felt something more in my stocking. I put my hand in and felt something. I pulled it out and turned it into its proper form and saw a Brooklyn Nets Ticket so I can go watch it! That was amazing!

On Christmas Night we all went to the car to go to Mimi's place. When we got there, other cars were there, too. I unbuckled myself and came out with a deep breath and smelled the Fresh Night Air. As Maggie and I ran to the front door I took the first knock. Mimi opened the door and gasped with excitement and Maggie and I took a huge hug as she wrapped her arms around us. When we stepped into the house, it was filled with family members. Pa, Dad and I share the same name. Louis Aloysius Craco. In the kitchen there was a huge group. After it got a little quiet, I spoke out and they started hugging each of us. They arrived hours ago. Cousin Sophie was there. Normally she lives in college called Skid-more. The first hug she took was Maggie then me.



... continued from page 6

Mimi pulled out the popcorn and poured it in a humungous bowl. I took wild handfuls and stuffed it in my mouth like a pig. It was a mountain of it. I ran out of the kitchen and into the living room. There I saw Aunt Barb and Uncle Loren! I heard a noise at the door and opened it. Tom was standing right there and Tom wrapped his arms around me. He gave me a compliment that it was his first hug of Christmas.

Tom stepped into the house and went to the living room and saw Grandma and Poppy. I ran and said, Nice to see your beautiful faces again. Grandma stood up and wrapped her arms around me. Poppy was sitting and I crouched down and hugged him. Mom came with exciting news. Mom put her hands on my shoulders and said that Louis will spend the rest of Christmas at Grandma's and Poppy's place, and I didn't know that I was going to their place!

After two more full hours, it was time for dinner. There were 4 tables covered with Christmas tablecloths. Each table was set with names. I was with Grandma, Poppy, and Tom. Maggie was with Aunt Barb, Loren, and Mom. Dad was with Pa, Uncle Bill and Pete. Tristan was with cousin Sophie, Bill, Dan, Mimi, Paul and Terry at the big table. We had a special drink called Sparkling Cider! After dinner, Grandma stood up and said, Are you ready to go to Connecticut? I said that I was more than ready. Of course, I am!



This family is something I give thanks for. Giving Thanks in this family is really important and it can be fun when we celebrate. And helping each other is giving thanks, too. Poppy does many things for me. So, when he was at the hospital, I was there to help him. I helped him walk around the hospital. That way I give thanks for all the things he does for me. At home the way I give thanks is like, preparing dinner with Ria. I Love Bruschetta, Guacamole and Chips, Lasagna, and more. Ria makes everything delicious. I am thankful.

My Birthday is on September 25 and I love celebrating it when I go with my family to my favorite diner in Brooklyn, NY. The diner is gluten free and is called "Wild". It's a way of saying thank you to my family. My life is full of goodness.

Remember, Readers, giving thanks is not just for us, it is giving thanks to the whole world.



Louis A. Craco III
Cooke School, Grade 8
I am a self-advocate for Down syndrome.
I am 13 years old.

Dear Louis, We are so thankful that you are a part of **The Imagine Society** and an integral member of the Newsletter team!

THE IMAGINE SOCIETY GRATITUDE QUILT



What are you grateful for in 2021?



I am thankful for the COVID vaccine.
- Caden (12)

I am thankful for my supportive community and environment that helps me be my best self. - Alessia Turner (16)

I am grateful for my health and well being. I'm very lucky that I'm not sick and can see my family this Thanksgiving. - Nick Hastings (16)

This Thanksgiving, I am grateful for doing better in school.
- Finnian (12)

I am thankful that I got into Med School so I can be a doctor and help people get compassionate health care! - Alison Blumstein (22)

I am grateful for everything I have learned (the good and the mistakes). - Jackriell Pina BOLD Intern (23)

I am grateful for a warm bed. - Nellie Fitzpatrick (16)

I am grateful that COVID didn't affect my family and friends in a bad way. - Samo (13)

I am thankful for the privilege of education given to me. - Ezekiel R. Salazar (15)

I am grateful for waking up every day and being able to smile. - Nicole Santos Peña (14)

I am grateful for being able to help those in need at the pantry and having enough food and a roof over my head. - Noah Franklin (12)

I am grateful for my family and being able to help out with The Imagine Society. - Nicholas Rolan (18)

I am thankful for the tutoring opportunity to give back to the community through BOLD in these hard times. - Tri Dinh (17)

I am thankful for my teachers. - Zuzu Hall (7)

I am grateful for The Ascension Community, Spirit Squad, and most importantly Ms. Robin. - Avery Smith (17)

I am grateful for my health and the fact that the world is at last healing after this past, difficult year. - Steven D Zeldin, BOLD Doula Captain (20)

I am grateful that my parents work so hard to help me and my brother have a good childhood and life. - Kalil Nasrani (12)

I am thankful for my education and for a roof over my head. - Zahra (12)

I'm thankful to have an incredible support system myself, so I can help lift others up! - Emily Blumstein (22)

My parents, my home and my pets. - Hannah Fenton (13)

I'm thankful for Mrs. Dawn. - Reese Moras (3)

I am thankful for all the new and interesting people I have met this year. - Nicholas Khan BOLD Intern (24)

I'm grateful for all the teachers that made me love school. - Michael Gaffigan (10)

I am thankful for having food on the table everyday and the love and support of my friends and family. - JT Sheeler (15)

I am grateful for my health and the health of my loved ones. - Christina A Martinez, BOLD Intern (21)

I am grateful for the privilege of pursuing my dreams, supported by my friends, family, and amazing teachers! - Maya Kilburn (18)

Watching Saturday morning cartoons. Joseph Iwinski (3)

My family because they provide for me, they are loving and caring towards me and they never make me feel unwelcome. - Dashiell Hall (10)

I am grateful for my Grandparents and Aunt that live in Mexico. I am grateful because they support me no matter what I do. - Jessica Sarmiento (15)

I'm grateful for the experiences I've had this year, & the people who've helped me along the way. - Sebastian Huerta (17)

I am thankful for the people that are guiding me to become the best version of myself. - Rlanne Alshoaibi (16)

I am thankful for the COVID vaccine. - Quinn (12)

I am grateful for my twin brother! He's my best friend. ...He has the biggest heart and I genuinely couldn't imagine a world without him. - Sofia Corsico-Sanchez (17)

I am thankful for my education. - Zaylen Palacios 14

I am grateful for my education and my teachers. - Joel Casas, BOLD Brothers/Sisters (16)

I am grateful for all the love and generosity from my family. - Harley McGinnity (14)

I'm thankful for my family and for God. They both give me lots of comfort and support in dark times. - Audrey (13)

I am thankful for the vaccines developed to help combat Covid. - Ezekiel R. Salazar (15)

I am thankful that we have food and a nice house to live in. - Aiden McCready (8)

I am grateful for my family because they do so much for me & are always loving. They care for me and would do anything for me. - Nick Hastings (16)

For loving my Mom, my horses and my room. - Darroch Fenton (8)

Grateful that the schools are teaching the true history of the US so we can make the future better. - Anonymous Teen

I'm grateful for my family's health and opportunity for education. - Jayden (12)

I am grateful for all the different kinds of love I receive in my life; from my friends, partner, and family. - Marre Gaffigan (17)

I am thankful for the health and love of my family who inspire me everyday; and the opportunity to see my family grow. - Nadia, BOLD (20)

For Mom and Pa taking care of me and for teaching me new things. - Layla Vyas (4)

I am grateful to have a roof over my head and food at my table. - Jackriel Pina BOLD Intern (23)

I am grateful for the money and resources my family is blessed with. - Mariana Turpin (13)

I am thankful for my friends who always stick with me no matter what. - Ezekiel R. Salazar (15)

I am grateful for my family, my school as they helped me grow as the person I am. - Jonathan Cruz (15)

I am grateful for my family, my friends, opportunities, education, my friends and my family's health. - Amanda Kee (16)

I am grateful for my life, friendship and my job. - Taiza Sierra (21)

I am thankful for the vaccine. - Jack Gaffigan (15)

I am grateful for my house and my family. - Olympia Hall (8)

I am grateful for school, friends, sports, family, food. - Quincy Shbilo (15)

I'm grateful that I have a roof over my head and food to eat. Also for my dog! - Teddy (10)

I am so grateful for all of my family because they are always there for me. - Tayel Nasrani (9)

I am grateful for having food to eat everyday. - Nellie Fitzpatrick (16)

I am grateful for my school. - Jesse Farina-Mosca (12)

I am grateful for my family's love and support. - Emma (17)

I am grateful for family. - Matilde Winter (14)

I am grateful for my home and my family. - Jason (10)

I am grateful for family, Ms. Robin, school, a life. - Roger Batista (15)

I am grateful for friends and family. - Andoni Albertell (17)

I am thankful for my family. - Dashiell Hall (10)

I am grateful for my loving family. My amazing family. - Meghan Teeter (14)

I'm thankful for Mrs. Galvin. - Parker Moras (6)

I am grateful for my family and the people around me. - Daniel Garcia (16)

I am very grateful for having a great, caring family who supports me. - Nicholas Rolan (18)

I am grateful for God's love. - Ran Liu (22)

I'm grateful for my family. They have been there for me in the bad times and good times. - Jessica Sarmiento (15)

I'm grateful for Hide-n-seek! - Casey Fenton (4)

I am grateful for my family, friends, school, Ms. Robin. - Matthew (15)

I'm grateful for the friends I have. - Patrick Gaffigan (9)

Remember, Readers, giving thanks is not just for us, it is giving thanks to the whole world. - Louis A. Craco III (13)

I am grateful for God! My Family! My friends! And all of humanity! - Gabby (17)

The Imagine Gallery of Gratitude!



by Emery Brown (17)



by Zuzu Hall (7)



By Dashiell Hall (10)

NOVEMBER AT THE IMAGINE SOCIETY MEANS...



Thankful for Youth-led Service!



As the Thanksgiving holiday approached, **The Imagine Society's** Youth Leaders sprang into action organizing two major service events this month. First **The Warriors** hosted a home-cooked dinner for the unhoused men at **The Ascension Shelter** on November 14th and then volunteered at **The Ascension Food Pantry** on November 20th successfully providing over 440 families with access to healthy food! Thank you [WoolCo Foods](#) for your generous pantry donation that helped so many of our food insecure neighbors in NYC. Thank you [Aoommie](#) for taking some amazing photos at the Ascension Pantry service! **The Imagine Society** is so **THANKFUL** for our incredible Youth Leaders and our generous community of compassionate donors!

With your hard work and your support we can help make these inspirational service opportunities a reality!



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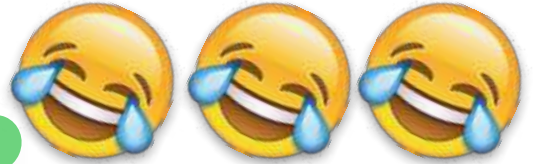
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EET!



Send in your "Spotted on the Street" photos to: outreach@theimagesociety.org

FUN PAGES



Edited by
Junior Member
Katie Gaffigan
(12)

Katie's
Fave
Memes
:)

Lol!



WORD PLAY

Edited
by Junior
Member Katie
Gaffigan
(12)

Giving Thanks Word Search

ZBTRAVEL YAYVXYEZ PHAVRORVO
MXWYEFKWLC SZBLESSINGJZGUG
PMACYXJPKPITTUWQDMCKMSXU
NFUHZUIVWNUQMRELUYAMTBEBJ
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CELNPZTMQGNZFYYUKMBDFKOD
AEA IMOWQJZIBQLTHANKSAVQWK

Acknowledgment	Gratefulness	Gratification	Thankfulness
Celebration	Recognition	Satisfaction	Appreciate
Tribute	Gratitude	Blessing	Holiday
Gathering	Holiday	Thanks	Harvest
Travel	Feast	Reunion	Grace

ANSWER KEY

Giving Thanks Word Search

Acknowledgment Gratitude Feast Travel
 Celebration Holiday Reunion Gathering
 Tribute Blessing Thanks Harvest
 Appreciate Holiday Grace Thankfulness

Z B T R A V E L I Y A V X Y E Z P H A V R O V O
 M X W Y E F K W L C S Z B L E S S I N G J Z G U G
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