

CATHOLIC CITIZENSHIP ESSAY CONTEST

A Higher Purpose

Encourage youth to become citizens grounded in their faith through creative writing. Open to all Catholic students (public, private, home, or parochial schools) in grades 8 to 12 during the current school year.

Overview

This contest encourages today's youth to be more connected to their community and their faith. The goal of this program is to involve young Catholics in 8th through 12th grade (public, private, parochial or home schools) in civic discourse and instill in them religious and life-affirming values. The essay should be approximately 500-750 words on a specific subject, changing every other year. Entrants will be judged on grammar, style, and how clearly they present the theme – which should showcase creativity, imagination and overall development of the topic.

Chairman Role and Responsibilities

- Set a date to collect all essays.
- Ensure that relevant Catholic organizations are aware, promoting, and participating in the contest (Catholic Youth Organizations, religious education groups, Catholic Schools, etc.).
- Assemble a team of three or more judges.
- Submit *Citizenship Essay Participant Forms* (#4216) to the next level of competition.
- Complete and submit all associated reporting forms to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Mission.

Action Steps

1. Order the *Catholic Citizenship Essay Kit* (#EA-KIT) through Supplies Online, the supply ordering portal available on Officers Online.
2. Use the sample press release as a model to create and distribute a tailored release to local media.
3. Build public interest for the event! Promote the Catholic Citizenship Essay in your parish and larger community through a variety of efforts:
 - Advertise at Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) meetings, in parish halls, and especially in local Catholic schools. Prominently display promotional posters (found in the *Catholic Citizenship Essay Kit* (#EA-KIT)).
 - Reach out and encourage Catholic School English teachers to use this as a class assignment.
 - Bulletin announcements
 - Pulpit announcements
 - Posting on your council and parish website / social media pages
4. Ensure that all essays are collected by the pre-determined date.
5. Assemble a team of three or more judges (consisting of clergy, teachers, and other respected members of the Catholic community) to select winning submissions.



6. Make a formal presentation of winners and invite the media to attend! On the day of the presentation, be sure to wear Knights of Columbus-branded apparel and enlist a fellow Knight or community member to photograph the event.
7. Send winning essays to the next highest level for judging. Contact your district deputy to learn where the winning essays should be mailed. If there are no higher levels in your area or jurisdiction, send the essays to the Supreme Office Department of Fraternal Mission for the final round of judging.
8. Following the Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest, update the community on the success of your program by amending the Catholic Citizenship Essay sample announcement and distributing it to local media, along with energizing photographs from the event.
9. To gain credit for your program, complete the associated reporting forms and submit them to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Mission. Remember to retain copies for your council records.