



**Knights of
Columbus®**
**Connecticut
State Council**

CATHOLIC CITIZENSHIP ESSAY CONTEST 2025-2026 GUIDELINES

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 grades 8 to 12 (public, private, parochial or home schools during the current school year) in civic discourse and instill in them religious and life-affirming values. Entrants will be judged on grammar, style, and how clearly they present the theme in a way that showcases creativity, imagination and overall development of the topic.

For Council Planning and Promotional Resources, visit kofc.org/essay

2025/26 Essay Topic

The office of the papacy was established by Jesus Christ nearly 2,000 years ago when He chose St. Peter to lead His Church on earth.

In an essay of 500-750 words, out of the 267 popes that have led the Catholic Church, who are your three favorite popes and why?

Eligibility:

- The Connecticut State Council Contest is open to all Catholic students in grades eight through twelve, in public, private, and parochial schools.
- Essays must reflect the assigned theme/topic and be submitted by the published deadline
- Essays must be formatted for 8 1/2" x 11" paper, double spaced, with 1" margins
- Students name should appear only on the Knights of Columbus Essay contest Form which should be submitted as a cover sheet to the essay

Councils must submit their winning essays by email State Program Director Darryl Barrios

program.director@ctstatecouncil.org
Submission deadline is January 16, 2026

Program Timetable:

June - October: Councils order Knights of Columbus essay contest kits from Fraternal Supply Store; Contact parish religious education directors and catholic school administrators to promote program in their parish and community.

November-December: Councils judge essays submitted and make appropriate awards to the contest winners. Councils submit first place essays in each grade level to State Council for judging.

January 16: DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO STATE COUNCIL

January: State Council Essay team will judge essays in 2 categories - Division 1: 8th and 9th graders, Division 2: 10th through 12th graders. The Supreme Council will be judging all first-place essays at each grade level, 8 through 12. Therefore, councils should make sure they submit first place winners in each grade level. State Council winning essays are submitted to the Supreme Council for International judging.

February-March: State Council will make plans for awards to the first, second, and third winners in each category. Winners are also recorded in the programs report at our State Convention.