

Respect Life Coloring, Poster & Essay Contest

Hosting a contest engages youth (in a parish school or religious education classes) in respect life issues. It encourages young people at your parish/school to consider the theme designated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Pro-life Secretariat. These are simply suggestions. Feel free to run your contest however works best for your parish or school. Thank you to Marci Towle at Immaculate Conception for this model program.

The Basics

Who: K-8 parishioners and students in parish school or religious education program
What: Grades K-4 color a picture based on the USCCB Respect Life Program theme
Grades 5-8 create a poster or write an essay based on the theme
When: Respect Life Sunday (1st Sunday in October) through mid-November

Materials

- Black and white coloring page based on USCCB Respect Life Program theme (<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/programs/rlp/>)
- Letter to school and/or school of religion teachers (sample attached)
- Contest Rules (sample attached)
- Awards (ie. \$50 savings bonds, ribbons, gift certificates to local businesses, etc)
- Pamphlets from Respect Life Program
- Holy Cards or bookmarks available at bookstores (Our Lady's Center /Catholic Corner), Heritage House (www.hh76.com), or from USCCB Respect Life Program Packet (<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/programs/rlp/>)

Expenses

(based on enrollment at Immaculate Conception and 13 winners; will vary depending on awards)

Xeroxing (coloring page and letters)	\$200
Ribbons	\$30-40
Savings Bonds	\$325
Pamphlets from Respect Life Program	\$50
Holy Cards	\$50

Action Steps

- 1) Meet with pastor, principal of school, and chair of religious education program to describe the program and ask for permission to promote it
- 2) Order literature from Respect Life Program for each teacher and holy cards for each child (optional).
- 3) Send letter to each teacher in the parish elementary school and/or the school of religion. Include a letter for each child and a picture to color in each teacher's package in grades K-4. Include only have a letter for each child in each teacher's package in grades 5-8. Include literature for each teacher and holy card for each child (optional).

- 4) Put copies of the rules and the coloring page in the pews on Respect Life Sunday for parishioners to pick up. Ask your priest to make a pulpit announcement.
- 5) Place information about the contest and contact information in the bulletin for other children in the parish. Invite parishioners to contact the Respect Life Committee to get the picture or copy the list of rules.
- 6) Post the contest information, a downloadable version of the coloring page, and the rules on the parish website if possible.
- 7) Place boxes in Narthex for entries to be dropped off.
- 8) Purchase or solicit awards (savings bonds, gifts from local businesses, etc).
- 9) Recruit volunteers to judge the entries.
- 10) Notify winners. There is one winner in each grade level through grade 4 and two winners in 5-8 - one for the poster and one for the essay.
- 11) Put names of winners and runners-up in the church bulletin the week before and week of the award presentation.
- 12) Present awards at Mass on the Sunday in January before the March for Life. Ask ushers to reserve seats for families of winners at the Mass.

SAMPLE RULES

- 1. Children in grades K – 4 may use crayons or markers to color the supplied picture which can be obtained through the Immaculate Conception School, the School of Religion or from the Respect Life Committee.**
- 2. Children in grades 5 – 8 may chose to write a one or two page essay on the theme, (neatly typed or handwritten - spelling and grammar are important), OR they may choose to do a poster (flat art/no 3-D) using crayons, markers, paints, collage, etc.**
- 3. Student’s name, school, teacher and grade should appear on the BACK of the art.**
- 4. The contest will run from Monday, October ____ through Friday, November ____.**
- 5. Entries can be turned in to teachers or dropped off in boxes in the Narthex. The Respect Life Committee will pick up all entries from the schools and Narthex on Monday, November ____.**
- 6. Winners will be notified and will receive their awards on January ____ at the ____ am Mass.**
- 7. \$50 Savings Bonds will be awarded to the first place winners. Ribbons will be awarded to the winners and the runners-up.**

SAMPLE LETTER TO TEACHERS

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH
RESPECT LIFE COMMITTEE
9th ANNUAL COLORING, POSTER & ESSAY CONTEST 2009

THEME: "EVERY CHILD BRINGS US GOD'S SMILE"
Pope Benedict XVI

October, 2009

Dear Teachers and Parents,

The 9th Annual Respect Life Coloring, Poster & Essay Contest is underway. The Coloring Contest is open to students in grades K through 4 and involves coloring the supplied picture. The Poster & Essay Contest is open to students in grades 5 through 8 and involves applying pro-life reasoning to the theme. The theme is "Every Child Brings Us God's Smile." We are hoping you will encourage your children to participate. The students always seem to be enthusiastic about the contest, and the Parish enjoys the presentation of awards at Mass in January. Below you will find some helpful information concerning the contest:

1. Children in grades K – 4 may use crayons or markers to color the supplied picture which can be obtained through the Immaculate Conception School, the School of Religion or from the Respect Life Committee.
2. Children in grades 5 – 8 may chose to write a one or two page essay on the theme, (neatly typed or handwritten - spelling and grammar are important), OR they may choose to do a poster (flat art/no 3-D) using crayons, markers, paints, collage, etc.
3. Student's name, school, teacher and grade should appear on the BACK of the art.
4. The contest will run from Monday, October 5 through Friday, November 13.
5. The Respect Life Committee will pick up all entries from the schools on Monday, November 16.
6. Winners will be notified and will receive their awards on January 17 at the 10 am Mass.
7. \$50 Savings Bonds will be awarded to the first place winners, and ribbons will be awarded to the winners and the runners-up.

Thank you for all your support in helping to raise pro-life awareness with your students and for promoting a culture of life. Contact Beth Ryan at 410-308-4698 or Marci Towle at 410-337-2692 for additional information.

God bless you,

Marci Towle
Respect Life Committee