

Association of Catholic Publishers • News Release

April 2, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ACP Announces Finalists for 2024 “Excellence in Publishing Awards”

BALTIMORE, MD — The Association of Catholic Publishers (ACP) is pleased to announce the finalists for the *Excellence in Publishing Awards*. The goal of these awards is to recognize the best in Catholic publishing.

Awards will be given for books falling into 17 categories: Biography, Children’s Books: Young Readers, Children’s Books: Picture Books, Children’s Books: Teens, Fiction, General Interest, Inspirational, Music: Distinguished Catholic Composer of the Year, Music: Liturgical Music Resource, Music: Song of the Year, Prayer, Resources for Liturgy, Resources for Ministry, Scripture, Spanish, Spirituality, and Theology. A “Resource of the Year” will be named from among the first-place finishers of the 17 categories.

“There are three interesting trends among this year’s finalists,” noted Therese Brown, ACP’s executive director. “First, how many titles across a number of categories are rooted in the Scriptures. Second, the continued growth in popular devotions like the rosary and novenas. Third, how the stories and experiences of contemporary (e.g., born in the twentieth century) men and women are featured, obviously, in the Biography category, but also appear throughout other categories. There is this rich connection between the foundations of faith and contemporary life.”

Here are the ACP finalists “by the numbers.”

- 20 different publishers submitted 96 of the finalists
- 2 publishers submitted 13 of the finalists each (Ascension and OSV)
- 40% of the finalists were from 3 publishers (Ascension, OSV, Word on Fire)

- the 2nd 40% of finalists were from 6 different publishers (Ave Maria Press, GIA Publications, Inc., Liturgical Press, Loyola Press, OCP, and Orbis Books)
- 6 finalists from Loyola Press were from 6 different categories
- 8 finalists from Liturgical Press were from 7 different categories
- 3 of the finalists were from first-time submitting publishers
- 2 of the 3 first-time publisher titles were for Fiction, the newest category

Each category was judged by a three-person panel, which reviewed and evaluated the entries, reducing the number of finalists to 6-9 titles, all of which will move on to the final round of judging. First, second, and third place winners will be announced in June.

The finalists by category are:

Biography

A Grand Slam for God: A Journey from College Baseball Star to Catholic Priest (Fr. Burke Masters, Word on Fire Publishing); *Caryll Houselander: A Biography* (Mary Frances Coady, Orbis Books); *Glorifying Christ: The Life of Cardinal Francis E. George, O.M.I.* (Michael R. Heinlein, OSV); *Katharine Drexel and the Sisters Who Shared Her Vision* (Margaret M. McGuinness, Paulist Press); *Martyred and Blessed Together: The Extraordinary Story of the Ulma Family* (Fr. Pawel Rytel-Andrianik and Manuela Tulli, OSV); *My Son Carlo: Carlo Acutis Through the Eyes of His Mother* (Antonia Salzano Acutis with Paolo Rodari, OSV); *No Guilty Bystander: The Extraordinary Life of Bishop Thomas Gumbleton* (Frank Fromherz and Suzanne Sattler, IHM, Orbis Books); *Pilgrimage of Anastasius: The Autobiography of the First Provincial of the Discalced Carmelites* (Jerome Gracián; Stephen Watson, OCD (translator), ICS Publications); *Tolkien's Faith: A Spiritual Biography* (Holly Ordway, Word on Fire Publishing).

Children's Books: Picture Books

Arthur the Clumsy Altar Server Rings the Bells (Written by Theresa Kiser, Illustrated by Mike Schwalm, OSV); *Bless the Lord* (Illustrated by Eileen Ryan Ewen, Word on Fire Publishing); *Go and Fear Nothing: The Story of Our Lady of Champion* (Written by Patrick O'Hearn, Illustrated by Ann Kissane Engelhart, OSV); *Jesus and the Miracle of the Mass* (Written by Gracie Jagla, Illustrated by Randy Friemel, OSV); *Jesus in Space: A True Story That's Out of This World* (Written by Cecilia Cicone, illustrated by Gabhor Utomo, Pauline Books & Media); *The Book That Changed Everything*

(Written by Allison Regina Gliot, FSP; illustrated by Santiago María López Piuma, Pauline Books & Media).

Children's Books: Young Readers

A Miracle for Micah (Claudia Cangilla McAdam, Ascension); *An Adoration Treasury for Young Catholics* (Written by Sr. Mary Bosco Davis, OSF, and Sr. M. Lissetta Gettinger, OSF, Illustrated by Evie Schwartzbauer, OSV); *Detective Thomas and the Biggest Question* (Caitlin E. Bootsma with illustrations by Evie Schwartzbauer, OSV); *Jesus and Me: Talking with My Greatest Friend* (Melissa Kirking, Ascension); *Loyola Kids Book of Seasons, Feasts, and Celebrations in Children* (Loyola Press); *Saintly Creatures: 14 Tales of Animals and Their Holy Companions* (Alexi Sargeant, Word on Fire Publishing); *The Golden Key and Other Fairy Tales* (George MacDonald, Word on Fire Publishing).

Children's Books: Teens

Gift and Grit: How Heroic Virtue Can Change Your Life and Relationships (Andrew and Sarah Swafford, Ascension); *Murder at Penwood Manor* (Antony Barone Kolenc, Loyola Press); *Virtue Field Guide* (Sr. John Dominic Rasmussen, OP, Sr. Miriam Holtz, OP, and the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, Openlight Media).

Fiction

Ashes (Anthony Mancini, Tolmitch Press); *I, Julian* (Claire Gilbert, Hodder Faith); *Murder at Penwood Manor* (Antony Barone Kolenc, Loyola Press).

General Interest

Catholics and Contempt: How Catholic Media Fuel Today's Fights and What to Do About It (John Allen, Jr., Word on Fire Publishing); *Finding God in Suffering* (Fr. Christopher M. Mahar, Pauline Books & Media); *Socrates' Children* (Peter Kreeft, Word on Fire Publishing); *Start Talking to Your Kids about Sex* (Julia Sadusky, Ave Maria Press); *The Church's Mission in a Polarized World* (Fr. Robert Aaron Wessman, New City Press); *The Confessions of St. Augustine (Catholic Classics)* (St. Augustine, new translation by Matthew K. Miner, Ascension).

Inspirational

8 Steps to Energize Your Faith (Joe Paprocki, Loyola Press); *A Retreat with Thomas Merton: A Seven-Day Spiritual Journey* (Esther de Waal, Liturgical Press); *Christmas at the Nativity* (Pope Francis, New City Press); *Holy Grit* (Paul George, Ave Maria Press); *Holy Habits from the Sacred Heart* (Emily Jaminet, Ave Maria Press); *Simply Love: Catholic Marriage Day by Day* (Troy and Kathleen Billings, OSV).

Music: Distinguished Catholic Composer of the Year

Iván Díaz (OCP); Ed Bolduc (GIA Publications, Inc.); J. Michael Joncas (Liturgical Press); Peter Kolar (GIA Publications, Inc.); Josh Blakesley (OCP).

Music: Liturgical Music Resource

Flor Y Canto 4 (Various, OCP); *Sanctus: Psalter + Salterio* (Various, GIA Publications, Inc.); *The Divine Office Hymnal* (ICEL, USCCB, GIA Publications, Inc.); *We R the Church Music Collection* (M. Roger Holland II, GIA Publications, Inc.).

Music: Song of the Year

Corpus Christi Sequence (Ed Bolduc, GIA Publications, Inc.); *In the Breaking of the Bread* (Liam Lawton, Arranged by Ed Bolduc, GIA Publications, Inc.); *Offertory* (Phillip Adafarn, Richard Hall, OCP); *Table of the Lord* (Dana Catherine and Sarah Hart, OCP); *The Chaplet of Divine Mercy* (Steve Angrisano and Sarah Hart, OCP).

Prayer

Caring for a Loved One with Mary: A Seven Sorrows Prayer Companion (Theresa Kiser, OSV); *Come to Me, All of You: Stations of the Cross in the Voice of Christ* (Amy Ekeh; Art by Gabrielle Rowell, Liturgical Press); *Come to Me: Living the Nine First Fridays* (Sr. Anne Flanagan, FSP, Pauline Books & Media); *Every Day with Jesus* (Dr. Mary Amore, OSV); *Pocket Guide to Novenas* (Annie and John-Paul Deddens, Ascension); *The Sign of the Cross* (Bert Ghezzi, Word on Fire Publishing); *When You Pray: A Clear Path to a Deeper Relationship with God* (Edward Sri, Ascension).

Resources for Liturgy

Catholic Women Preach: Raising Voices, Renewing the Church, Cycle B (Elizabeth Donnelly and Russ Petrus, Orbis Books); *Jesus and Me: Talking with My Greatest Friend* (Melissa Kirking, Ascension); *Liturgy and Life Study Bible* (Edited by Paul Turner and John W. Martens, Liturgical Press); *Received: Your Journey to First Communion* (Ascension); *Renewed: Your Journey to First Reconciliation* (Ascension); *Sanctus: Bilingual Missal/Misal Bilingüe 2023 Year B* (Various, GIA Publications, Inc.).

Resources for Ministry

An Introduction to Bereavement Ministry: Caring for Those Who Mourn (Corinna Laughlin, Liturgy Training Publications); *Awaken* (Dr. Jo Ann Paradise, Pflaum Publishing Group); *Becoming the Good News: A New Approach to Parish Evangelization* (Michael J. Sanem, Liturgical Press); *Building a Firm Foundation: An Invitation to Parents of Children Preparing for Sacraments* (Marylynn D. Wesson, D.Min., OSV); *New Ways and Next Steps: Developing Parish LGBTQ+ Ministry* (Francis DeBernardo, Liturgical Press); *Received: Your Journey to First Communion* (Ascension); *Renewed: Your Journey to First Reconciliation* (Ascension).

Scripture

Considering Jesus: The Human Experience of the Redeemer (Loyola Press); *The Gospel of Peace: A Commentary on Matthew, Mark, and Luke from the Perspective of Nonviolence* (John Dear, Orbis Books); *The Most Important Words of Jesus* (Gerhard Lohfink, Liturgical Press); *The Word on Fire Bible, Volume III: The Pentateuch* (Word on Fire Publishing); *Threshold Bible Study: Parables of Jesus* (Stephen J. Binz, Twenty-Third Publications); *Words of Faith: A Vocabulary of Paul the Apostle* (Brendan Byrne, SJ, Paulist Press).

Spanish

Despiertos (Dr. Jo Ann Paradis, Pflaum Publishing Group); *El duelo por la muerte de un ser querido* (RENEW International, RENEW International); *Los Misterios Music Collection* (Rafael Moreno, GIA Publications, Inc.); *My Daily Visitor: Rosario* (Fr. Patrick Mary Briscoe, OP, OSV).

Spirituality

Prepare Your Heart: A Guided Advent Journal for Prayer and Meditation (Fr. Agustino Torres, CFR, Ave Maria Press); *Return: A Guided Lent Journal for Prayer and Meditation* (Fr. John Burns, Ave Maria Press); *Seeing with the Heart* (Kevin O'Brien, SJ, Loyola Press); *The Ascension Lenten Companion: A Personal Encounter with the Power of the Gospel, Year A* (Fr. Mark Toups, Ascension); *The Sunday Homilies with Fr. Mike Schmitz Collection: Ordinary Time + What's Next?* (Fr. Mike Schmitz, Ascension); *This is My Body: A Call to Eucharistic Revival* (Bishop Robert Barron, Word on Fire Publishing).

Theology

Ecomartyrdom in the Americas: Living and Dying for our Common Home (Elizabeth O'Donnell Gandolfo, Orbis Books); *Mary and the Liturgical Year: A Pastoral Resource* (Katharine E. Harmon, Liturgy Training Publications); *No Lasting City: Essays on Theology, Politics, and Culture* (Frederick Bauerschmidt, Word on Fire Publishing); *Reforming the Church: Global Perspectives* (Edited by Declan Marmion and Salvador Ryan, Liturgical Press); *The Theology of Bishop Barron* (Matthew Levering, Word on Fire Publishing); *When Science Goes Wrong: The Desire and Search for Truth* (Guy Consolmagno, SJ Christopher M. Graney, Paulist Press).

A brief explanation of each category follows: Books in the “Biography” category must be about Catholics whose work has made a valuable contribution to the Church and the world on a local level or a universal level. “Children’s Books” are divided into three categories focusing on picture books for young children who are learning to read, young readers up to age 11, and teens.

Fiction books nominated in this category are novels or a collection of short stories that include characters and action that reflect the Catholic faith, tradition, or practice. Books in the “General Interest” category include Church history, collections of essays by theologians or important Catholic thinkers. The “Inspirational” book category focuses on devotional, spiritual, and meditation books and books on saints, holy people, and stories related to people living their faith.

Submissions in the music categories highlight specifically Catholic aspects of music in faith. The “Song of the Year” honors liturgical compositions that address a specified theme; this year it is the Eucharist. “Liturgical Music Resource” recognizes the best Catholic liturgical music resources for the Liturgies of the Church. “Distinguished Catholic Music Composer of the Year” honors outstanding artistic achievement in composition for liturgy, worship, or personal prayer.

“Prayer” is books centered on formal or informal prayer. “Resources for Liturgy” covers any book that serves as a formation and preparation tools in parish or school ministry for sacrament preparation, liturgy, and worship. Examples include liturgical ministry guidebooks, lector training resources, and sacramental preparation. “Resources for Ministry” includes any book that is not part of a ministry program that serves as a faith formation tool in parish ministry for sacrament preparation, catechesis (other than basal programs), adult faith formation, and for use in enrichment programs.

The category of “Scripture” includes books about Scripture, whether scholarly treatments of particular books or collections of books of the Bible. Bibles are excluded from this category. “Spanish” includes books from any awards category (inspiration, biography, prayer, and spirituality, etc.) originally published in Spanish for the U.S. market.

“Spirituality” books are largely narrative in form and structured along a specific theme. “Theology” includes books on the topic of Catholic theology, whether scholarly monographs or more popular treatments of theological aspects of Catholic teaching on, for example, the sacraments, the nature of the Church.

The Association of Catholic Publishers (ACP) is a membership organization of Catholic publishers, those who provide services to Catholic publishers, and individuals who work with Catholic publishers. The ACP provides opportunities for members to further the Catholic publishing industry, promote Catholic publishing and reading, and engage those they interact with, including retailers, pastoral leaders, individual customers, and staff.

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