



DATE: May 31, 2016

PHOTOS / INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE

CONTACT: Karen Walker, media relations

888.610.3354, ext 4 / karen@CatholicTextbookProject.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CATHOLIC TEXTBOOK PROJECT ANNOUNCES HISTORY ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS AND PRIZES

Catholic Textbook Project, the premiere publisher of history and social studies textbooks for Catholic schools, today announced the Catholic student and school winners of the non-profit publishing company's second-annual History Essay Contest.

In Catholic Textbook Project's 2016 History Essay Contest, students were challenged to choose a Catholic historical character and describe how he or she influenced the times in which he or she lived. The contest ran Feb-April and was open to students in Catholic schools—parochial, private or homeschooled—grades 5 through high school. Winners were chosen among 420 entries, and prizes were awarded to both student and school winners.

“We expanded this year's contest categories to include high school and were pleased to see many high school submissions,” says Michael Van Hecke, M.Ed., president of Catholic Textbook Project. “Our judges did not find it an easy task to pick the best essays. Congratulations to student and school winners!”

Winners of the 2016 Catholic Textbook Project History Essay Contest, and their Awards:

- **Grade 5/6 Catholic School Division: Ellen Menke from St. Agnes School in St. Paul, MN**

The subject for this division had to be a historical character from North America. Ellen chose Blessed Jose Luis Sanchez del Rio, the 14 year-old Mexican martyr in the Cristero

Revolution, whose torture and death inspired his countrymen to keep fighting for their Catholic rights against an oppressive government.

Award: Ellen Menke won \$100 and St Agnes School will receive a \$400 gift certificate for the school's choice among Catholic Textbook Project's history textbooks, teacher manuals and workbooks.

- **Grade 7/8 Catholic School Division: Maria Middleton from Regina Academy at St. John the Baptist in Ottsville, PA**

Students in this division were asked chose someone outside of North America. Maria wrote on Pope St. John Paul the Great, whose strong leadership and joyful spirit brought hope to the world, especially those under Communist rule.

Award: Maria Middleton won \$150 and Regina Academy will receive a \$400 gift certificate for the school's choice among Catholic Textbook Project's history textbooks, teacher manuals and workbooks.

- **Catholic High School Division: Paul Burslem from Regina Mater School in Austin, TX**

Students in this new division could chose one of three topics. Paul chose to elaborate on historian Christopher Dawson's quote, "You can give men food and leisure and amusements and conditions of work, and still they will remain unsatisfied. You can deny them all these things, and they will not complain so long as they feel that they have something to die for." Paul used examples from history in his essay entitled, "A Satisfactory Life."

Award: Paul Burslem won \$200 and Regina Mater School will receive a \$400 gift certificate for the school's choice among Catholic Textbook Project's history textbooks, teacher manuals and workbooks.

- **Grade 5/6 Catholic Homeschool Division: James Menges from Wichita, KS**

The North American character James chose was St. John Neumann, who as archbishop of Philadelphia founded the first diocesan school system and established the 40-hour Eucharistic devotion in America.

Award: James Menges will receive \$100 and a free Catholic Textbook Project textbook of his choice.

- **Grade 7/8 Catholic Homeschool Division: Winona Born from West Victoria, Australia**

Winona's non North-American subject was Servant of God Paul Xu Guangqi, a 15th century Chinese convert and scholar who, among his many accomplishments, improved the lives of his countrymen through new agricultural techniques and defended the Jesuit missionaries.

Award: Winona Born will receive \$150 and a free Catholic Textbook Project textbook of her choice.

- **High School Homeschool Division: Kristopher Stickney from Apex, NC**

Kristopher also chose the Dawson quote as the subject for his essay, entitled "The Pleasure of No Pleasure."

Award: Kristopher Stickney will receive \$200 and a free Catholic Textbook Project textbook of his choice.

Catholic Textbook Project's History/Social Studies textbook series for grades 5-12 is now used in Catholic schools in more than 60 dioceses nationwide, and in pockets of English-speaking schools worldwide. Development of four additional volumes, suitable for grades 1-4, has begun.

According to Van Hecke, rigorous historical accuracy, a superior writing style that engages student interest, and inclusion of significant Catholic historical contributions are key reasons given for Catholic Textbook Project's accelerated growth.

To learn more, go to www.CatholicTextbookProject.com or call 1.888.610.3354.

About Catholic Textbook Project. Founded by a headmaster who was unable to find good history/social studies textbooks for his students, Michael Van Hecke, M.Ed., culled a select group of scholars, professors, educators, editors and award-winning book designers and launched Catholic Textbook Project (a 501c3 nonprofit). For more information or to explore the textbooks, or what others say about these textbooks, go to <http://www.CatholicTextbookProject.com>.