

AUSTRALASIAN CATHOLIC PRESS ASSOCIATION 2026 AWARDS

Encouraging and rewarding excellence, experience, knowledge, and skill.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

- The eligibility period for 2025 is for work published between **1 January 2025 - 31 December 2025** inclusive.
- Each category, from 1 to 19 will include a **Winner** and **Highly Commended** (runner up).
- Requirements for each entry are found in the **2026 Awards Categories and Criteria**, below, which form part of the Conditions of Entry.
- Each Member Publication may submit up to **12 entries**. **One category is one entry. Only one entry per category is permitted per Member Organisation or Associate Member.**
- The final category is **open to all** ACPA Member publications and is not included in the limit of 12 entries.
- In a separate application to Member Publications, an Associate Member may submit up to **4 entries**. One entry per category only is permitted.
- Entries are subject to review by the ACPA executive to ensure they adhere to criteria and category guidelines, before being forwarded to judges for selection.

Submissions

- Entries **must** be submitted through the JotForm link:
<https://form.jotform.com/252209013223846>
- If you want to supply multiple URL links, please copy and paste the URLs into a Word document and submit the single word document.
- Entries submitted as electronic files (PDF, MP4 or MP3) **must** be named appropriately. Include: Category # and Publication Name.
- Entries must be received **no later than 11.59pm (AEST) on Friday 24 July 2026**. Entries received after this date, and which do not adhere to the Criteria and Category requirements, will not be accepted.
- The winners will be announced, and awards will be presented at the 2026 ACPA Annual Awards night on Thursday 27 August 2026.

For more information, please contact Jamie O'Brien
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AUSTRALASIAN CATHOLIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

2026 AWARDS CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA

Category 1: Best News Content

This refers to the value of the submission as 'news' content—Judges will consider topicality, quality, and clarity in how the story was told, timeliness and relevance as news, the task required in developing the content, initiative shown and impact on readers, and overall presentation.

If printed, please submit a PDF version of the article.

If online, please supply the URL to the article.

If audio or video, please supply a 3-minute sample in either MP3 or MP4 format.

Entries in this category must be a **single item of content**, written by a single author or multiple authors.

Category 2: Best Feature Content

This entry can include an interview(s), first-person commentary, in-depth coverage of a major event or issue. Judges will consider issue relevance, originality, initiative, creativity in issue selection, storytelling quality and overall presentation of the featured content.

If printed, please submit a PDF version of the article.

If online, please supply the URL to the article.

If audio or video, please supply a 3-minute sample in either MP3 or MP4 format.

Entries in this category must be a **single item of content**, written by a single author or multiple authors.

Category 3: Best Editorial, Column or Blog content

This category is open to a single editor, author or contributor who provides a regular, consistent, and ongoing contribution to their publication. Three entries will be provided, with judges considering Christian perspective, topicality, clarity, quality of writing and presentation of ideas and arguments, and overall creativity across the three examples. One entry must include **three samples** of the editorial, column, or blog content.

If printed, please submit three PDFs of the articles.

If online, please supply three URLs to the articles.

Category 4: Best Headline

This category seeks to award the best headline (**singular**) associated with an article for a member publication or associate member. Judges will consider whether the headline is appropriate for the content, that it has some outstanding qualities such as humour, literary cleverness, an unusual quote, or a striking combination of ideas or images.

Please submit a PDF or URL of the article and featured headline.

Please include the date of the article and headline (if not clear on the PDF or URL).

Category 5: Best Content – Climate and Environment

This category reflects the commitment of ACPA publications to report on the work of the Church relating to the environment and/or climate. Entries in this category may be a single item of content, or up to three items of content (printed article, online article, podcast, or video) in the same series, written by a single author, or multiple authors.

Judges will consider topicality, initiative, quality, breadth of coverage and presentation.

If printed, please submit a PDF version of the article/s.

If online, please supply the URL to the article/s.

If audio or video, please supply a 3-minute sample in either MP3 or MP4 format.

Category 6: Best Content – Social Justice

This category recognises the importance of justice and truth in the Christian story. Entries in this category may be a single item of content, or up to three items of content (printed article, online article, podcast, or video), in the same series, written by a single author, or multiple authors.

Judges will consider topicality, initiative, quality, breadth of coverage and presentation.

If printed, please submit a PDF version/s of the article.

If online, please supply the URL/s to the article.

If audio or video, please supply a 3-minute sample in either MP3 or MP4 format.

Category 7: Best Content – Education

This category recognises the vital place of education in the Catholic story of Australasia. Entries in this category may be a single item of content, or a series of up to three items of content (printed article, online article, podcast, or video) on a related topic, written by a single author, or multiple authors.

Judges will consider topicality, initiative, quality and breadth of coverage and presentation.

If printed, please submit a PDF/s version of the article.

If online, please supply the URL/s to the article.

If audio or video, please supply a 3-minute sample in either MP3 or MP4 format.

Category 8: Best Content – Faith Formation This category seeks to recognise the Church's work in transmitting the Gospel and how the Word of God is lived, understood, and celebrated in our communities and beyond. Judges will consider whether the content provides coverage of a catechetical activity (e.g. RCIA, youth ministry, liturgical event) and/or missionary and evangelisation work, which seeks to increase the reader's understanding of a particular aspect of the Church's work and teaching. Quality of the content and innovation in presenting material will also be considered. Entries in this category may be a single item of content, or a series of up to three items of content (printed article, online article, podcast, or video) on a related topic, written by a single author, or multiple authors.

If printed, please submit a PDF/s version of the article.

If online, please supply the URL/s to the article.

If audio or video, please supply a 3-minute sample in either MP3 or MP4 format.

Category 9: Best Content – Faith and Life

This category calls for content that demonstrates how Christian faith is applied in real life. Judges will consider the way in which the content producer can convey the distinct expression of Christian faith in daily life, along with the quality of writing style and topicality. It may involve interview(s) or credible experiences, with 'people' stories being the preferred feature.

Entries in this category may be a single item of content, or a series of up to three items of content (printed article, online article, podcast, or video) on a related topic, written by a single author, or multiple authors.

If printed, please submit a PDF version of the article.

If online, please supply the URL to the article.

If audio or video, please supply a 3-minute sample in either MP3 or MP4 format.

Category 10: Best Content – Ecumenical and Interfaith

This category recognises the increasing links and dialogue between the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations and other faiths. Judges will consider news or feature content that demonstrates the advances or challenges in ecumenism and/or interfaith relations, topicality, relevance, quality of style and overall presentation.

Entries in this category may be a single item of content, or a series of up to three items of content (printed article, online article, podcast, or video) on a related topic by a single author, or multiple authors.

If printed, please submit a PDF/s version of the article.

If online, please supply the URL/s to the article.

If audio or video, please supply a 3-minute sample in either MP3 or MP4 format.

Category 11: Best Content – Celebrating Cultural Expressions of Catholic Faith

This category recognises the importance of celebrating the rich expressions within the Catholic faith. Judges will consider content that highlights and celebrates the distinct spirituality of different Indigenous, ethnic, and migrant individuals or communities, their culture and connection to faith, life, and spirituality, as well as topicality, creativity, and overall presentation of the content.

Entries in this category may be a single item of content, or a series of up to three items of content (printed article, online article, podcast, or video), on a related topic by a single author, or multiple authors.

If printed, please submit a PDF version/s of the article.

If online, please supply the URL/s to the article.

If audio or video, please supply a 3-minute sample in either MP3 or MP4 format.

Category 12: Best Original Photograph This category is open only to an original photograph that has been taken by the Member or commissioned by the Member Publication. Judges will consider technical excellence, imagination, topicality, humour, impact and connection with the onlooker, relevance to the issue or topic being covered, and overall presentation.

One photograph per Member Publication or Associate Member, to be submitted as a JPG file (around 1MB) and as a PDF (if printed) where the photo appeared, or the URL link, if online.

Category 13: Best Original Artwork

In this category, 'artwork' refers to any image other than a photograph and includes cartoons, pen/pencil sketches, air-brushed artwork, paintings, etc. Judges will consider creativity, imagination, technical excellence, presentation and relevance to the story or purpose.

If printed, supply a PDF of the page where the artwork featured.

If online, provide the URL to where the artwork is featured.

Category 14: Best Front Page (Print only)

This category recognises the importance of a strong front cover in print publications to draw in the reader. It is 'the gateway' to the rest of the publication. Judges will consider whether this is an 'eye-catching', impactful front cover, that attracts attention and induces the reader to pick up the publication and read on. Design, flair, topicality, originality, layout, and design will be considered.

Please submit one PDF of the whole front cover.

Category 15: Best Layout and Design – Online

This category recognises that many of our publications also have an online presence, in their various formats. Judges will consider all layout and design elements including the placement of articles, consistency of layout, ease and functionality of navigation tabs, links, photographs and artwork, and integration of other media. Note: This category refers to the overall platform, whether a website or flipbook. Please supply the URL to your online platform for consideration.

Category 16: Best Layout and Design – Print

This category recognises the distinct role and purpose of print publications. Judges will consider all layout and design elements of the publication edition, including the placement of articles, consistency of layout, use of photographs, artwork and headings, the use of the design to make the publication easier and more attractive to read.

Supply PDF versions of three of your complete publications.

Category 17: Most Improved Publication – Print

This category recognises the improvement made by a publication over the course of a 24-month period. Up to three separate editions from 1 January 2022 to 31 Dec 2022, and a further three separate editions from the current judging period, 1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023, must be provided in PDF format for judges to see the progression and improvement over time. This speaks to the publication having ‘most improved’ over this timeframe.

Judges will consider improvements in areas such as content, quality of writing, creativity, photographs, graphics, layout, and design. Refocusing a publication to suit a new or better-defined readership will be considered, if relevant. Improvements undertaken to better enable the publication to fulfill its role and identity can also be factors for consideration.

As part of this submission, Editors are invited to submit a PDF that contains the six different publication samples over the 24-month period **as well as** a 250-word summary (in a Word doc or as PDF) to explain the improvements.

Category 18: Best Use of Digital Media

This category specifically aims to recognise innovation and creativity in the use of digital media to communicate the Catholic message. Entries include web platforms, social media pages, Apps, podcasts, and videos. Judges will consider innovation, creativity, originality of strategy, accessibility, understanding target audience(s), budget, and use of available resources, plans to evaluate the content and results, all of which should be spoken to in a 250-word summary to support the entry.

Please supply URL to the relevant digital media platform.

If an App, please supply the App name and platform link for downloading. Include the 250-word summary in Word or PDF format.

Category 19: Best Advertising Feature or Supplement – Print

This category recognises that our publications sometimes produce special advertising features or supplements to complement the editorial content. Judges will consider the entry’s ability to grab the reader’s attention and to effectively promote the product or service as well as creativity, technical excellence, and presentation.

Submit the entire advertising feature or supplement as a PDF.

BEST CATHOLIC PUBLICATION—BISHOP PHILIP KENNEDY MEMORIAL AWARD FOR OVERALL EXCELLENCE

ALL MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ENTER THIS CATEGORY

The Philip Kennedy Memorial Award recognises overall editorial excellence and outstanding contribution of a Catholic publication, in either print or online format. The recipient of the Bishop Kennedy Memorial Award will be selected by a panel of three judges.

The award will be given to the publication or platform that is deemed to best serve the needs of its target audience through content, design, layout, functionality, relevance, topicality, and overall presentation and professionalism.

We strongly encourage all members of ACPA to enter this category. Please include a 250-word summary in support of your submission, which speaks to the award criteria above. Editors should include information about the size of operation (e.g. staff and resources) as it relates to quality of the publication, quality of writing, photography, printing, layout and design.

For print publications, submit **four copies** of your publication in PDF format (printed within the award time frame).

If online, submit **four editions as a URL**.

If online and print, please **provide the URL and four copies** of the print publication (within the award time frame).

A trophy is awarded for this category.