

CHANGE SINGS – AMANDA GORMAN



Poetry and Essay Competition

Award 1: \$500 • Award 2: \$300

Award 3: \$200

Amanda Gorman, a spoken-word-artist activist, was born in Los Angeles. She is a member of the St. Brigid Catholic Church in South Central Los Angeles. Her mother, who teaches sixth-grade English, gave Amanda up and-close and a personal view of how education could be used to break the cycle of poverty by pursuing a master's and doctorate in Education while raising Amanda and her two siblings on her own.

When Amanda was growing up, she had a speech impediment and developed a hypersensitivity to sound. She started to shy away from people and doubt herself. To coax her out of her shell, Amanda's mother encouraged her to use her time to read and write poems and essays. She became such a excellent writer that in April 2017, while she was studying at Harvard, she was named the country's youngest poet laureate. Amanda uses her works to focus on oppression, feminism, race, marginalization, and the African diaspora. Her efforts were so well received that it bought her to Joe Biden's attention, and he invited her to speak at his presidential inauguration. She was only 23 years old. This invitation made her the youngest poet to present at an inauguration.

Amanda was not given any direction about what to say at the inauguration except that the inauguration's theme was "America United." She was unsure what to say. Then on January 6th, a mostly White mob attacked the nation's Capital in a violent attempt to overturn and erase the election of the nation's second Catholic president and its first female, Black and Asian American vice president. Two weeks later, Amanda took to the inaugural stage and, in her poem, "The Hill We Climb" reflected on the need for the nation to cleanse and repair itself by confronting the unyielding threat of white supremacy and sexism and fully embrace the promises of a truly equal and inclusive democracy.

Question: We invite you (elementary, middle, and high school students) to read Amanda's powerful call to action poem "The Hill We Climb" and then reflect on the section: **"So let us leave behind a country / better than the one we were left with.** Reflect on this theme and through your own unique experience(s) and observation(s) help America forge a country with purpose.

Through poetry or essay, speak to:

1. What would it look/feel like if your generation were to leave behind a country that is better than the one you are inheriting?
2. What specific step(s) needs to be taken to make this change possible?

Rule and Guidelines

Deadline & Submission: All entries should be delivered by 6pm on Sunday, April 25, 2021.

There will be no exceptions.

1. Entry Form must be submitted with the entry.
2. A child can submit only one ITEM, and it must be the child's original work and not copied from any books, articles, or from the internet.
3. The submission should be written in English and no more than 1500 words, excluding references.
4. The submission must be on one side only.
5. On the entry form that accompanies the submission, all of the following must be submitted:
 - a. Author's name.
 - b. Parent's/Guardian's/Caregiver's name, home address, phone number, and email address.
6. Do not place the author's name or any other identifying information on the submission so the essay or poem can be judged anonymously. Of course, the child's name should be provided on the entry form.
7. Please note that while clarity of expression, organization, spelling, and grammar are not a disqualifier they certainly count.
8. Children and grandchildren of St. Therese of Lisieux Church Social Justice Committee Members are not eligible.
9. All productions will be evaluated by the St. Therese of Lisieux Church Social Justice Committee Members. Decisions of the evaluation committee are final.
10. Contest open only to children age 0 – 21 years.

Email Submissions:

To submit essay or poem by email:

- 1) In the subject area of the email write the title of your presentation
- 2) Your registration entry form and your essay or poem submission must be sent as Microsoft Word attachment

Do not include your name or any entry form information (except title) on your essay or poem submission

- 3) Email registration entry form and essay or poem to: stlfjustice@gmail.com

Hand Delivery or Mail in Submission:

- 1) Print and complete the registration form
- 2) Attach the registration form to your essay submission

Do not include your name or any entry form information (except title) on your essay or poem submission

- 3) Mail registration form and submissions to:

St Therese of Lisieux, RCC
Social Justice Ministry
1281 Troy Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11203

Or

Hand deliver it to a Social Justice Representative in the St. Therese of Lisieux, RCC vestibule.

A confirmation email will be sent to the email address on your registration form within 3 business days

Notification of Winners

Winners will be notified by email and or telephone

Special Note

No responsibility will be assumed for lost or late mail or email. Entries will not be returned.

Prizes will be awarded to:

First Place - \$500

Second Place - \$300

Third Place - \$200

Entries will only be considered when this
Registration Entry Form is completed and
attached to your ESSAY or POEM
production.

Author's First and Last Names:

Parent's/Guardian's/Caregiver's First and Last Names:

Parent's/Guardian's/Caregiver's Home Address:

Parent's/Guardian's/Caregiver's Phone Number:

Parent's/Guardian's/Caregiver's Email Address:

Submission Title:
