The purpose of this essay contest is to recognize excellence in writing that shares the distinctiveness of Catholic thought.

THEME

Truth, Beauty, & Goodness

AWARDS

First Prize: $2,500 Scholarship
Second Prize: $1,500 Scholarship
Third Prize: $1,000 Scholarship

ELIGIBILITY

High School students in their Sophomore, Junior, or Senior year of studies as of December 31, 2007

TOPIC

Theologians and artists have often spoken of these three words as the connection between our human experience and the reality of the infinite God. Irenaeus, the second century theologian, wrote that “the glory of God is a living human being, and the human being lives for the vision of God.” As humans, we long for the infinite, for seeing God. Beauty, in Irenaeus’s view, is the means by which we come to truly know God.

However, our age tends to see beauty as a tool for pleasure rather than an experience that leads us toward God. The late Swiss Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar felt that the loss of an emphasis on the transcendental values of truth, goodness, and beauty threatened theology, and art. He wrote: “No longer loved or fostered by religion, beauty is lifted from its face as a mask, and its absence exposes features on that face which threaten to become incomprehensible to man. We no longer dare to believe in beauty and we make of it a mere appearance in order to more easily dispose of it…We can be sure that whoever sneers at her name…can no longer pray and soon will no longer be able to love.”

Please explain how beauty and faith are related, or not related, to a true knowledge of God.

RULES

1. Essays should be between 1,500 to 2,000 words in length. They should be written in English, typed in a 12-point font, and double spaced with 1” margins. All pages should be numbered. The essay must include footnotes or endnotes and a bibliography. No names or identifying references should appear on the paper itself. Essays will be coded upon receipt to insure anonymity.
2. In one package, entrants must submit three copies of the essay and a completed Entry Form. Entrants are encouraged to mail entries as certified mail if they would like confirmation of receipt.
3. All entries must be received on or before February 15, 2008.
4. No electronic or faxed entries will be accepted.
5. All essays must be the original, unpublished work of the student.
6. Only one entry per student per contest year may be submitted.
7. Winning entries will become the property of DeSales University, including copyright.
8. Due to the volume of entries, submissions will not be returned.
9. Scholarships are not transferable and may only be used towards tuition charges at DeSales University upon successful matriculation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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