**SISTER ROSE THERING FUND LITERARY, DIGITAL AND FINE ARTS COMPETITION 2025**

**Competition Instructions and Guidelines for Student Artists**

**Competition Theme***: Transitioning Apathy into Empathy*Through her words and actions, Sister Rose Thering fought against anti-Jewish prejudice not merely to create understanding within her immediate circle, but to advocate for educational reform that would have a positive, lasting impact, enabling future generations to avoid the pitfall and misperceptions of the past. This year’s competition calls upon students to explore the transition from Apathy into Empathy and to express the meaning/feeing/impact of this from their own experience and understanding.

**Your role as a student artist**  
Student/artists craft pieces of literary, digital and fine arts that reflect the legacy of Sister Rose Thering and what that work means to the student. Students submit their work to their teacher or to the school administrator who has made them aware of the competition. It is the teacher or school administrator who then formally enters the student’s work into the competition. Competition deadline is Feb. 1, so submission of your work to your teacher or school administrator should be somewhat before that deadline (you should ask your teacher or school administrator to know their deadline for your submission to them).

**Step by Step Submission Procedures Student Artists**

1. View the short film *Sister Rose’s Passion (viewable online at* [*https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LfSyWVscHDN17kgJ26zh1VMbQ-ZVv6nL/view*](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LfSyWVscHDN17kgJ26zh1VMbQ-ZVv6nL/view)
2. Create a piece of work in response to your experience of Sister Rose based on what you understand about her from viewing the film (and from any additional research you may choose to do). Your work should reflect the competition theme of *Transition from Apathy to Empathy*. Your work should follow the guidelines for its particular category as outlined in the Specific Guidelines for Various Categories (see pages 2-6 of these guidelines).
3. Complete the Submission & Release Form (see page 7 of these guidelines). Make sure to sign it and to have a parent of legal guardian also sign.
4. Submit your work and your completed Submission & Release Form to your teacher or school administrator for formal entry into the competition.

Students who are chosen as competition winners, their teachers and their parents will be invited to attend The Celebration of Education on April 19, 2026. As much as possible, it is our hope that all invited students and their teachers will attend this fun celebration at which competition winners will be recognized and small gifts will be given.

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**SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR VARIOUS CATEGORIES**

The categories for this year’s competition are essays, poetry, digital (videos) and fine arts (drawing, painting, sculpture). Regardless of the category, the submitted pieces should reflect the theme of *Transition from Apathy to Empathy*. Each submitted piece should connect in some meaningful way to the student’s sense of Sister Rose – the impact of her ideas and her work, the degree to which the work continues (or could continue) to this day.

Apathy and empathy represent opposite ends of an emotional spectrum. In order to explore the theme of apathy transitioning into empathy, it may be helpful to think about:

* a situation possibly involving particular person (historic or literary figures, people in your own life) in which apathy has been turned into empathy.
* key similarities and differences between this situation and the situations Sr. Rose dealt with?
* how you might express the reasons why you find this particular situation is noteworthy
* any connections you can draw to Sister Rose and what she was all about?
* what actions taken by individuals and what sorts of situations can turn apathy into empathy
* any lessons you have learned from Sr. Rose, from other persons and/or from situations and how these lessons can be applied to your own life (your inner life and your life within the world around you).

When crafting their pieces, student artists should bear in mind-- first and foremost-- the competition theme and the need to draw some meaningful connection to Sister Rose. They should also be mindful of the specific requirements of the category for which they are submitting.

* Specifics requirements for Essays – see page 3 of these guidelines
* Specifics requirements for Poetry – see page 4 of these guidelines
* Specifics requirements for Digital Art (Videos) – see page 5 of these guidelines
* Specifics requirements for Fine Art (Drawing, Painting, Sculpture) – see page 6 of these guidelines

**SISTER ROSE THERING FUND LITERARY, DIGITAL AND FINE ARTS COMPETITION 2025**

**Specific Requirements for Essays**

The essay should be completely original; it should be typewritten in 12 pt font.

Maximum word count is 500.

The writer’s name and school should appear at the top right-hand corner of each page.

* The essay should demonstrate good writing skills (to a level of proficiency at or above expectations for the student’s grade level as outlined in the NJ curriculum standards)
* be well-structured and coherent
* demonstrate a good mastery of grammar and spelling
* explore the theme of Transition from Apathy to Empathy
* connect in some way to the writer’s sense of Sister Rose and her work

The essay itself should be submitted to the writer’s teacher or school administrator along with a submission & release form (page 7 of these guidelines) signed by the writer and a parent/legal guardian

**SISTER ROSE THERING FUND LITERARY, DIGITAL AND FINE ARTS COMPETITION 2025**

**Specific Requirements for Poetry**

The poem should be completely original; it should be typewritten in 12 pt font.

The student’s name and school should appear at the top right-hand corner of each page

The poem should:

* be well-structured
* demonstrate good understanding of poetic language, poetic forms and poetic devices (to a level of proficiency at or above expectations for the student’s grade level as outlined in the NJ curriculum standards)
* explore the theme of Transition from Apathy to Empathy
* connect in some way to the writer’s sense of Sister Rose and her work

Very short forms (haiku and cinquain, for instance) may not be well-suited because for the competition because of the expectation that the poem should explore a theme that might require more words. A really skilled poet might be able to manage it, but it might be advisable to consider longer forms.

Generally speaking, poems should be of moderate length -- between about 20 and 50 lines (obviously, a sonnet would be a bit shorter at 14 lines). Poems longer than 50 lines should be carefully examined prior to submission to be sure that each line is utterly essential. A length of longer than 50 lines will tend to result in a lesser score by the judges, so poets should bear this in mind and edit accordingly.

The poem itself should be submitted to the poet’s teacher or school administrator along with a submission & release form (page 7 of these guidelines)form signed by the poet and a parent/legal guardian

**SISTER ROSE THERING FUND LITERARY, DIGITAL AND FINE ARTS COMPETITION 2025**

**Specific Requirements for Digital Arts (Video)**

The work should take the form of a video in the style of a public service announcement (a PSA). The title of the PSA must be included at the opening of the video.

Production teams should consist of no more than 3 students. Additionally, up to 3 actors may contribute. However actors who are not otherwise contributing to the creation of the PSA will not be considered creators for the purposes of the competition and will not be eligible for recognition as prize-winners)

Credits should be included at the end of the PSA to list the students who worked on the video and their responsibilities within the production of the video (e.g. camera, editor, script, director, lighting, etc.). Credits should also include the name of the school and the name of any teachers or school administrators who acted as production advisors. Actors who participated should be listed as well.

The PSA should:

* be well-structured
* demonstrate good understanding of WHAT CURRICULUM CATEGORY OR CATEGORIES MIGHT WE NAME HERE??(to a level of proficiency at or above expectations for the student’s grade level as outlined in the NJ curriculum standards)
* explore the theme of Transition from Apathy to Empathy
* connect in some way to the production team’s sense of Sister Rose and her work

Generally speaking, PSA’s should be 90-120 seconds in length. Videos longer than 120 seconds should be carefully examined prior to submission for possible edits that could bring the length to within 120 seconds. A length of longer than 120 minutes will tend to result in a lesser overall score (production teams should bear this in mind and edit accordingly).

The PSA should be uploaded to YouTube. When uploading look for the option for setting “Visibility” and within that set of options, choose “unlisted.” If there is difficulty uploading to YouTube, the students’ teacher or school administrator should contact Maisie Mountcastle, the competition administrator, to discuss alternative places where the video might reside. Maisie can be reached by telephone at 201-354-8071 or via email at mary.mountcastle@shu.edu.

The PSA should be submitted to the production team’s teacher or school administrator in the form of a URL or QR Code for accessing the video. At the same time, the production team should also submit separate submission & release forms (page 7 of these guidelines). These should be complete with required signatures (one for each member of the production team).

**SISTER ROSE THERING FUND LITERARY, DIGITAL AND FINE ARTS COMPETITION 2025**

**Specific Requirements for Fine Arts (Drawings/Paintings/Sculptures)**

The art piece should be completely original. It should be submitted to the artist’s teacher or school administrator in the form of a jpg file (for 2-dimensional artwork – drawings and paintings) or a 360◦ video (for 3-dimensional artworks -sculptures).

The name of the JPEG file or video file should begin with the artist’s last name and first name with no spaces. For example:

* If Tessa Smith is submitting a JPEG file, it should be called smithtessa.JPG
* If Amir Sanyal is submitting a video file, it should be called sanalamir.mov (or .mp4, .moc, .wmv, etc., depending on the program it was created with).

In addition to providing the teacher or administrator with a JPEG or video file, the student should also submit a brief explanation of the design concept and meaning of the piece (150-200 words should suffice). This should be printed out and provided to the teacher or school administrator along with the other submission materials.   
  
NOTE: Since the artist will submit a 360◦ video, a spoken explanation recorded as part of the video (about 150-200 words) is acceptable in lieu of a printed explanation. The choice of written or spoken explanation is up to the artist. When thinking about how to craft a written explanation, artists may think of the kind of descriptive content that is placed near works of art when they are displayed in a museum. Sculptors who are opting for a spoken rather than written explanation may think of the sort of narrative content that is provided in self-guided museum tours. The brief explanation should include the artist’s name and school.

In addition to the artwork itself and the brief explanation, the artist should submit the signed submission and release form submission & release form (page 7 of these guidelines).

The artwork itself should:

* be well-designed and well executed
* demonstrate good understanding of artistic forms and principles (to a level of proficiency at or above expectations for the student’s grade level as outlined in the NJ curriculum standards)
* explore the theme of Transition from Apathy to Empathy
* connect in some way to the writer’s sense of Sister Rose and her work

**SISTER ROSE THERING FUND LITERARY, DIGITAL AND FINE ARTS COMPETITION 2025  
SUBMISSION AND RELEASE FORM**

***Please complete this form legibly in dark ink. If the work is a video created by a team, each student team member should fill out a separate form and provide the requested signatures.***

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
 First Last

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

School Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
 City County

Student's Grade Level (check one): ☐ 7th, ☐ 8th, ☐ 9th, ☐ 10th, ☐ 11th, ☐ 12th,

Please indicate the nature of the work being submitted by checking one of the boxes below:

☐ Essay ☐ Poem ☐ Video ☐ Fine Art (painting, drawing, sculpture)

Title of the work being submitted: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If this is a video, URL where is can be viewed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Please read the statement below and sign to indicate your agreement. Your parent or legal guardian should also review the statement and sign below to indicate awareness and agreement.***

I hereby submit my work for consideration in the Sister Rose Thering Fund Literary, Digital and Fine Arts Competition sponsored by the Sister Rose Thering Fund at Seton Hall University. I understand that the work I am submitting will not be returned to me. I allow Seton Hall University and The Sister Rose Thering Fund to display and/or distribute this work (in part or in its entirety) in print and/or in digital form via the University website or other digital/interactive transmission. I hereby attest that all materials used in my submission are my own or are materials for which I have obtained all necessary permissions. I also attest that my submission of this work will not infringe on any copyrights.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student Print Name Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Print Name Date