



Region 11 Athletic Ministry
Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Board of Athletic Directors
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The 2025 Region 11 Meredith Merlini Catholic Youth Scholarship Program

The Region 11 CYO Board of Athletic Directors is pleased to continue our Scholarship Program for graduating 8th graders from its member parishes who are continuing their education next Fall at an Archdiocesan or private Catholic high school. The Scholarship is named in honor of Meredith Merlini, the long-time Region 11 coach, athletic director, commissioner, and now-retired Chair of our CYO Board.

In the program last year we received 44 essays for scholarship consideration. We asked the students to write about past or present Olympians who would make worthy role models for the youth of Region 11 CYO. An independent panel of ten former but long-time CYO coaches and administrators who no longer coached CYO nor had children attending elementary school was formed to review the essays anonymously to ensure an unbiased evaluation. The committee initially evaluated all 44 essays and chose 10 essays as finalists. Those 10 finalist essays were then re-evaluated and the judges ultimately chose five students to each be awarded a \$1,000 Region 11 CYO Scholarship.

The 2024 Region 11 CYO Scholarship Award recipients were:

Delaney Holwick – Saint Genevieve parish and school.

Delaney wrote about Abbey D'Agostino and Katie Ledecy, and now attends Archbishop Wood.

Brigid Hopkins – Our Lady Help of Christians parish and Queen of Angels school.

Brigid wrote about Grace McCallum and Rebecca Dissault, and now attends Archbishop Wood.

Catharine Hopkins – Our Lady Help of Christians parish and Queen of Angel school.

Catharine wrote about Allyson Felix and Kerri Walsh, and now attends Villa Joseph Marie.

Rachel Vozniak – Saint Alphonsus parish.

Rachel wrote about Loretta Claiborne and Kerri Strug, and now attends Mount Saint Joseph.

Francesca Welty – Nativity of Our Lord parish and school.

Francesca wrote about Simone Biles and Grace McCallum, and now attends Mount Saint Joseph.

This year we will again award five scholarships of \$1,000 each. The eligibility criteria have not changed. The graduating 8th grader must have been a CYO participant during grade school and must be continuing his or her education at an Archdiocesan or private Catholic high school.

Interested 8th graders are invited to submit a **ONE-PAGE** essay in **word .doc or .pdf format only** – no “Google Docs” – on the topic below by Monday night, May 12, 2025 to be considered for one of the \$1,000 scholarships. Use of ChatGPT or similar essay-writing tool is prohibited. **Because the essays will be evaluated anonymously, students should not identify their names or specific parishes in the essay itself. Include the following information ONLY in the email:**

NAME - PARISH - SCHOOL - CYO ACTIVITIES - HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDING FALL OF 2025:

Please return to: 2025scholarship@region11cyo.org by **Monday night, May 12, 2025**

(You will receive an email confirming receipt – if you don't receive one, contact the Coordinator.)

2025 CYO Scholarship Question:

There are many inspirational heroes of the Catholic faith. St. John Bosco is known as the patron of youth, St. Sebastian is the patron of athletes, and Bl. Carlo Acutis is the patron of computer programmers and youth. This year we want you to think about Saints, Venerable, and Blessed Catholic icons: your topic is to write about two individuals -- other than St. John Bosco, St. Sebastian, and Bl. Carlo Acutis -- and explain why you think either of them would make an excellent patron saint of Region 11 CYO.