News
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Phoenix Bishop John Dolan speaks at Arizona State University June 24, 2025, during the Catholic Media Conference in Phoenix. Journalists for the National Catholic Reporter Publishing Co. won more than 70 prizes in the annual Catholic Media Awards contest. (OSV News/Bob Roller)

by NCR staff

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Journalists for the National Catholic Reporter Publishing Co. won more than 70 prizes in the annual Catholic Media Awards contest, and NCR's news editor, Carol Zimmermann, took the Catholic Media Association's highest honor at the conclusion of the group's annual meeting on June 27 in Phoenix.

NCR's Global Sisters Report and EarthBeat won prizes across a wide range of categories, including investigations and environmental reporting, political analysis and design. NCR staff and contributors were recognized.

Zimmermann, a veteran journalist who joined NCR in August 2024 after more than three decades in Catholic media, was named winner of the 2025 St. Francis de Sales Award — often called the "Franny" — at the closing luncheon of the Catholic Media Conference on June 24-27 in Phoenix.



Carol Zimmermann, news editor of the National Catholic Reporter, is embraced by Chaz Muth, professor of journalism and newsroom director at Trinity Washington University, after Zimmermann was announced as the winner of the 2025 St. Francis de Sales Award June 27. (OSV News/Bob Roller)

Zimmerman served a two-year term as secretary of the Catholic Media Association and now is its East Coast representative. Board members play no role in the awards process.

CMA members nominated 11 people for the St. Francis de Sales Award. A committee of the five most recent recipients selected three finalists. The CMA membership then cast votes to select the winner.

Reflecting on her career in Catholic journalism, Zimmermann highlighted the breadth of the Catholic beat and the impact of faith in everyday life. "On any given day you can be talking to someone who clung to their rosary in a bathtub during a tornado, a chaplain on death row, a senator speaking out for immigrants, or a cloistered sister making Communion wafers," she said. "I've done all those — though not in the same day."

James V. Grimaldi, executive editor of NCR, who nominated Zimmermann for the award, praised Zimmermann for the breadth and depth of her work. "Carol so richly deserved this award after dedicating her life to a vocation of journalism in Catholic media and upholding the highest standards of our profession," he said.

The awards honored stories published in 2024.

NCR reporter Camillo Barone captured 10 awards, including five first place honors. Barone's coverage on global and domestic issues such as surrogacy, LGBTQ+ ministry, Catholics and pro-Palestinian protests was celebrated for its depth and sensitivity among social justice entries.

Katie Collins Scott earned 10 awards, including four first place wins. She also nabbed third place for Writer of the Year. Her reporting explored conservative networks within the church, the politicization of Eucharist access, and justice for immigrants and workers.




This photo of anti-abortion demonstrators in Panama City, Fla., accompanied the NCR story "Catholic dioceses, organizations bankroll state anti-abortion initiatives," published Oct. 31, 2024. The story, a collaboration with Mother Jones, won first place in the pro-life category of the Catholic Media Awards. (Tyler Orsburn for Our Sunday Visitor News)

Heidi Schlumpf, NCR's former national correspondent, won seven awards, including first place honors in the pro-life issues (with Russ Choma of Mother Jones) and reporting on young adults categories. Investigative reporter Brian Fraga brought home five awards, honored for his coverage of church politics and conservative Catholic influence in the U.S. electorate.

Global Sisters Report journalist Doreen Ajiambo, reporting from Africa, garnered seven awards for her coverage of environmental crises, sisters' advocacy and feature profiles. Her reporting highlighted African Catholic voices, and bridged ecological and human justice issues.

Environmental correspondent Brian Roewe earned seven awards, including an honorable mention for Writer of the Year. His coverage of the Catholic Church's environmental engagement led the field. EarthBeat, NCR's faith and climate project, also won second place for Best National Electronic Newsletter, EarthBeat Weekly.

NCR designer Angie Von Slaughter won first place for Graphic Artist/Designer of the Year, a top recognition of the creative visual storytelling that accompanies NCR's journalism. She was also part of the team behind EarthBeat's "Coping with Climate Anxiety," which received an honorable mention for Best Use of Video on Social Media — Ongoing Series.



This photo of Sr. Clara Malo Castrillón looking at tombstones where remains include those of anonymous migrants, accompanied "At burial ground for unidentified migrants, sisters pray for the dead," published April 15, 2024. GSR's Rhina Guido won first place in the social justice-Solidarity category for the story. (GSR photo/Rhina Guidos)

GSR's Rhina Guidos earned seven awards, with storytelling on immigration and faith in action — including an account of a border pilgrimage and profiles on people working for justice for migrants.

GSR received an honorable mention for Spanish Publication of the Year and won four additional awards in the Spanish-language Division , including two first-place honors.

GSR was also recognized for excellence in reporting on immigration, vocations to religious life and interviews with religious figures working on the ground around the world.

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GSR staff reporter Chris Herlinger was individually honored with two awards for his book *Solidarity and Mercy: The Power of Christian Humanitarian Efforts in Ukraine*, which won second place in the Religion in the Public Square category and received an honorable mention in Catholic social teaching.

"Global Sisters Report holds a unique place in journalism, reporting on the quiet but immensely important work and service of Catholic sisters, often in remote parts of the world," said GSR editor Soli Salgado. "For CMA to recognize GSR's contributions to Catholic media motivates us to continue to produce excellent journalism as part of NCR."

Among other awards won by NCR (including GSR, a project of NCR):

- Toni-Ann Ortiz, second place for best election graphic design;
- Jose Solís, second place for arts and culture columns;
- Sr. Mary M. McGlone, second place for Scripture reflections;
- Michael Leach and Pierre Eau Claire, second place for spiritual life commentary;
- Stephen G. Adubato, third place for headline writing;
- Aleja Hertzler-McCain and Alessandra Harris, first place for racial justice reporting (shared with Fraga);
- Joanna Kozakiewicz, third place for feature writing about cloistered nuns;
- Céire Kealty, honorable mention for environmental and tech reporting;
- Rebecca Randall, honorable mention for solidarity coverage;
- Dan Stockman, second place for general news photography.

In total, NCR's accolades included 25 first place, 16 second place, 15 third place, and numerous honorable mentions.