

Winner of The Good Oil 2025 Writers' Award

More than 40 entries were received in The Good Oil 2025 Writers' Award. The award is an initiative of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan in partnership with Garratt Publishing.

The theme of this year's award is **Pilgrims of Hope**. Now in its fourth year, the award aims to support and encourage the development of emerging and published writers.

Congratulations to Lauren Thomasse for her winning entry, *Pilgrims of hope*. Lauren holds a PhD in resilience and is an experienced teacher of more than 20 years. She delights in discovering new places and listening to the stories of others, weaving insight and curiosity into both her professional and personal life.

The judging panel of Monica Dutton, Karen Tayleur, Ann Rennie and Michael McGirr brought their considerable experience in publishing to the task. In basing their decisions on the entries that best explored the theme, **Pilgrims of Hope**, they were impressed by the quality of the writing.

What the judges said about Lauren Thomasse's winning entry:

"This is a luminous story which introduces us to Amina, a new arrival to Australia. Through Amina, the writer takes us to meet the wider community and the people she helps on the streets of Melbourne. From there, we are challenged to see the whole world through the lens of hope."

"This profile piece is the epitome of good clear writing that connects emotionally with the reader. Behind Amina's story is the theme of hope, not simply as feeling but as persistent and daily practice."

The judges awarded first prize (\$600), second prize (\$400), third prize (\$200) and one highly commended (\$100).

In addition, Garratt Publishing is providing mentoring to the winner of the Writers' Award and is the sponsor of a new Encouragement Award (\$250).

The CEO of **Garratt Publishing**, David Hughan, said the publishing house was proud to partner with the Sisters of the Good Samaritan in The Good Oil 2025 Writers' Award.

"We believe this award will inspire and encourage a new generation of writers," David said. "Publishing has always been a powerful agent of change – words can shape our world, and we hope these words help lead us to a better one."

"For the Australian Church to grow and flourish, it must continue to hear from new and diverse voices. We extend our sincere thanks to the Sisters for their vision, commitment and continued support of Catholic voices in Australia and beyond."

Helen Bachmann received the Encouragement Award for her entry, *Holding on to hope*.

Second prize was awarded to Si Paros for *Voice to the Voiceless – a pilgrimage of hope and justice across continents*.

Third prize was awarded to Sonia Elizabeth Gomez Lopez for *God Has Brought Me Here: A Pilgrim of Hope*.

Bill Farrelly was highly commended for *The beggar who loved to sing*.

Pilgrims of hope by Lauren Thomasse and *Holding on to hope* by Helen Bachmann were published in this month's edition of **The Good Oil**. The second and third prize-winning entries and the highly commended entry will be published in future editions.

Further information is in the news story: **Winner of The Good Oil 2025 Writers' Award announced**

The Good Oil's editorial vision is to nourish the spirit, stimulate thinking, promote social justice, and encourage reflection and dialogue about issues of the day from a Christian, Catholic, Good Samaritan perspective. Subscription is free:

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