



## Youth Achievement Awards 2024-2025

- *Celebrating the commitment, talent, goodwill, generosity, empathy and achievement of Young Pioneers*

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### Introduction

*The Pioneer Youth Achievement Awards are awarded by the PTAA Clonfert Diocesan Council by way of acknowledging and celebrating both the personal and Pioneer Youth Club related commitments and achievements of Young Pioneers, 10 to 17 years of age inclusive.*

*They are kindly sponsored by St. Grellan's (Ballinasloe & District) Council of The Order of the Knights of St. Columbanus.*

### General Award Criteria

Nominees must be registered as Young Pioneers with the PTAA Clonfert Diocesan Council or with the PTAA diocesan council of another Irish diocese.

Nominations will be accepted from Pioneer Youth Club leaders, parents / guardians of Young Pioneers, and other adults who can testify to the witness and award-related activities and achievements of participating Young Pioneers.

Nominations, must be received by the Chairperson of the PTAA Clonfert Diocesan Council before 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025 and be based on activities etc. undertaken between September 2024 and June 2025 inclusive.

Adults who nominate must provide clear reasons why they are nominating Young Pioneers for a particular award or set of awards.

Official nomination forms must be used, unless an exemption is granted by the PTAA Clonfert Diocesan Council.

The decision of the PTAA Clonfert Diocesan Council regarding each award is final.

## **2024 / 2025 Award (5) Categories**

### **Witness Award**

1. Undertake to wear pioneer pin on a regular basis, e.g. at school, during Pioneer activities, on special occasions.
2. participate in a Pioneer Witness workshop with PTAA president, Mrs Frances Egan.
3. participate in at least three activities where Young Pioneers are in contact with other young people.
4. invite at least two people to become a Young Pioneer.  
*It is not necessary for people who you speak with to join, only that you invite them and help them understand what a Young Pioneer is.*

### **Servant Leadership (reserved to youth club members)**

1. Actively help with the running of your Pioneer Youth Club
2. Undertake a Youth Club role, or serve with a Youth Club committee that undertakes work that benefits all club members
3. Participate as a Young Pioneer in at least two pre-approved community-based activities aimed at contributing toward the happiness and well-being of other people.  
*Examples:* Help with a parish-based activity, e.g. Good Friday Outdoor way of the cross,  
Help with a flag day or other fundraising venture for a recognised charity that you would like to assist,  
Volunteer to assist at an Pioneer event open to other people, e.g. be part of the welcoming group for Pioneer Christmas Mass and party.

### **Performance Award (individual and group activities accepted)**

1. Contribute to the joy, meaningfulness and sense of celebration of two or more Pioneer religious and / or social gatherings, e.g. Pioneer Christmas Mass and Party, Connaught Young Pioneer Retreat Day, by:
  - i. being part of the choir,
  - ii. formally welcoming or thanking people,
  - iii. helping with readings, reflections or prayers of the faithful,
  - iv. reciting a poem or piece or prose,
  - v. singing a song or playing a musical instrument.
  - vi. dramatizing a story / participating in a sketch
2. Participate in at least one workshop that is performance related, e.g. a reading in public workshop, singing workshop etc.

### **Eco-friendly Award (open to Individual and group activity)**

1. Identify a way you and / or others can live in a more eco-friendly way
2. Take steps to live the change you identify
3. Tell others, e.g. Pioneer Youth Club, about the change you identified and your experience of living it
4. Encourage at least one other person to follow your example.

### **Spiritual Empathy Award**

#### Note of Explanation

Empathy is about being aware of and sharing another person's feelings, experiences, and emotions. For example, you see a younger boy or girl having difficulties, and it reminds you of a time you had similar difficulties and you feel kindness toward them and a desire to help them because you know the feelings and emotions they are experiencing.

Spiritual empathy occurs when we identify and seek to be kind towards a person who is hurting in their spirit.

Every person hurts in their spirit at some point. It is part of being human. Sadly some people hurt more than others and for longer periods of time. Life can be more difficult for them and for the people who love them until they overcome their difficulties.

Often we are not able to help them directly, but we can always ask God to help them (pray for them), and if they are close to us, we can seek to be kind and compassionate, without being unkind or uncaring of ourselves.

Sometimes we may also be able to help people avoid things that can make such hurting worse. For example, each time we encourage other young people to refrain from alcohol until they are at least eighteen years of age, we are helping them to avoid further hurting in their spirit and in their relationships with other people.

The five tasks associated with this award are:

1. To pray everyday for people who experience alcoholism and other forms of addiction and for their loved ones
2. To be kind in the way we speak about people who may be spiritually hurting or addicted to alcohol or some other drug
3. To undertake a pilgrim activity as a special prayer for people who are hurting in their spirit, e.g. a visit to Clonfert or to Knock
4. To help organise and run at least one event that will encourage other young people to refrain from alcohol and drugs until they are at least eighteen years of age, and to have healthy interests like being part of a sports club or Pioneer club.
5. To invite at least two other young people to consider becoming Young Pioneers so that they will join us in praying everyday for people who experience alcohol addiction.

### **Additional Information**

The same activity can be used toward more than one award.

The PTAA Clonfert Diocesan Council will also grant a special medal called 'The Matt Talbot Youth Achievement Medal' to any Young Pioneer who completes the activities of all five categories between September 2024 and June 2025.

All awards will be presented at a special awards ceremony in June or July 2025. More details later.

Further Queries and requests for application forms regarding these awards should be directed to: Justin Harkin 087 6171526 / [pioneers@creideamh.ie](mailto:pioneers@creideamh.ie)

***Closing date for applications: Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025.***