Tips for entering our video contest

What's a PSA?

A Public Service Announcement is a media message designed to raise public awareness and change behavior. There are numerous approaches to PSAs. Consider searching "best public service announcement videos" online to view examples.

Sometimes shorter is better

Don't feel like you have to use all 90 seconds. Some of the best PSAs are much shorter. The key is to have a very clear message and to make your delivery compelling.

Be original

Resist the temptation to use images, video clips and music created by others (especially if it is not fair-use or you have not purchased a license). Show us what you can do with original images and original video.

The 2027 contest theme is: Imagine a better world for immigrants. In a world where immigrants are often scapegoated and portrayed as dangerous outsiders, your video should reflect the Mercy Critical Concern for Immigration and the Gospel call to love our neighbor. Videos could focus on:

- A challenge that immigrants face and a way to make their situation better
- Celebrating a gift that immigrants bring to their new community
- How we should treat immigrants

Your message could be informational, emotional, inspirational, hopeful, thought provoking, etc. What would a better world for immigrants look like? As you Imagine a Better World for Immigrants, consider the challenges that immigrants may face:

- Violence, persecution or lack of resources in their home country
- Danger and hardship as they move from one place to another
- Navigating the laws and customs of a new country
- Being unwelcome in a place they hoped would be a safe haven.

Your video will be short, so consider choosing one topic to focus on rather than trying to cover every issue. Your video does not need to reference the Sisters of Mercy, or the Mercy Critical Concerns, but it should reflect the spirit of the Mercy Community.

Tips for producing a great video

Planning

What is the story you want to tell? Brainstorm ideas, then storyboard or script your plan. Good storytelling keeps viewers interested in your video.

Image Quality

Focus, lighting, frame composition and image stability all contribute to image quality. Careful attention to these details will help you produce a video that people want to watch.

Sound Quality

Not all messages are conveyed visually. Sound is an important component, and not all video cameras are good at recording audio. Paying attention to volume and background noise can help improve sound quality. Subtitles can assist when in places when speech is not clear. If you use them, make sure subtitles are clear and easy to read.

Orientation

Consider producing you video in portrait mode. Since we are interested in videos that can be posted on social media, and will likely be viewed on phones, portrait mode can be a better choice than landscape, which looks better on a computer screen.

Editing and Transitions

Choose essential scenes. Editing to hold the viewers interest while keeping under 90 seconds and selecting appropriate transitions to move from one scene to the next will keep your video flowing.

Online Resources

Search out online resources that explain the video production process. Watching videos that others have created, and that you like, is another way to get ideas for your video.