

Activity Ideas for Grades 3-6 for Catholics in New York 1808-1946



Catholics in New York 1808 to 1946 at the Museum of the City of New York explores the social and political history of the diverse group of people who established the formidable Catholic presence in New York. This exhibition, the first of its kind, traces their growth from a tiny religious minority to a powerful force in the city and shows how, by organizing to build their own communities, institutions, and political organizations, Catholics reshaped the fabric of life in all five boroughs.

We encourage you to schedule your students for an educator-led school program; however self-guided visits are also available. This sheet contains ideas for activities that can take place before, during, or after your self-guided visit to the exhibition. Teresa Sopot, Principal of St. Thomas Aquinas in the Bronx, was tremendously helpful in providing us with these ideas. Self-guided activity worksheets are also available upon request.

To schedule an educator-led or self-guided visit, please call 212-534-1672, ext 3334.

Pre-visit activities for students

1. Create a list of outstanding Catholics in NY. List them in chronological order and categorize them (men, women, religious, political). Choose one person from each of category and describe their importance and contributions to life in NY.
2. Utilize the same idea above, but create an oral presentation/speech about one famous person from the list.
3. Compare and contrast the economic problems/situation of NY in the 1800's or 1900's to today. Create a chart or graphic organizer (Venn).

Activities for students to do while at the Museum

1. Compare and contrast your life and that of a child in the Robert Burghart mural.
2. List three of the Catholic organizations that existed in New York since 1808. Give details about the function and contributions of each organization.
3. Create a timeline of Catholic politicians in New York.
4. Create a timeline outlining the establishment of the parishes of New York.

Post-visit activities for students

1. Design a museum brochure describing some of the important artifacts on display. Include some main ideas from the exhibits and statements that would make people want to visit the museum. You may take pictures, export pictures from the web, or draw. Create captions for the pictures.
2. Create an advertisement to get people to come to the *Catholics in New York 1808-1946* exhibit. Your ad can be a magazine/newspaper ad, a skit, or power point presentation. Include why it is important to see this exhibit.
3. Design a mural of your life as a New Yorker today. Recall the mural seen at the beginning of the exhibit, "Growing Up in NY" by Robert Burghardt.
4. Contrast the immigration patterns of today with those of NY in the 1800's and 1900's. Create a graph of the results.
5. Discuss the role of women in the history of Catholics in NY. Create a chart or poster board presentation about the women you have chosen.
6. Write a persuasive essay to convince a friend to attend this exhibit.
7. Create a biography or autobiography of a famous figure from the exhibit.