

Writer Guidelines

for Submissions to the Anselm Society

Who Writes for the Anselm Society?

The writers, essayists, thinkers, and commentators featured on AnselmSociety.org are experienced communicators well versed in the mission and culture of the Anselm Society and skilled in their craft. While many of our bylines are those of Anselm Society leaders and members, we invite submissions from anyone interested in ***equipping others to live with a Christian imagination***.

The Starting Place

If you're considering writing for AnselmSociety.org, the obvious best place to begin is with the [Anselm Society](#) itself: our history, the reason we exist, and the community that is both our heart and our audience. The next step is to become familiar with the rich array of articles, lectures, blog posts, video presentations, etc., on the website.

The Focus

We're open to fresh perspectives that help enable Christians to ***encounter heaven in the things of earth and eternity in the things of time***—in other words, to reenchant their vision of the material world with the playing out of God's story in our moments.

For the 2023-2024 season, we've created a **Writing Topic Framework** for thinking (and writing) about these questions, which can be found [here](#). We invite you to become familiar with this document. Here's a snapshot of its three primary approaches:

- **“Enjoy”** category: Articles exploring how beauty reveals truth through the arts (e.g., *all the ways feasting can make life wonderful*).
- **“Understand”** category: Articles illuminating concepts and connections between beauty to truth (e.g., *why feasting matters spiritually*).
- **“Embody”** category: Articles exhorting how one can live with a flourishing Christian imagination (e.g., *here's a story of how I hosted a feast!*).

The Types of Writings

Reading on the web can be taxing. That plus the fact that in general, people are busy and skim more than read makes it imperative that material we publish must be as short as possible while being as long as needed.

In the Writing Topic Framework, we lay out three subject areas to explore (things of heaven on earth; eternity in time; and how we respond to those two areas) and three categories of approaches (to Enjoy, Embody, or Understand). The actual genre is a third component in the equation: is it a blog post, a poem, a personal essay, a theological examination, a video talk, a song, a review?

Note: We are looking primarily for Embody and Enjoy pieces, but are not closed to Understand pieces.

Some examples:

- An “Enjoy” [article](#) (400-600 words)
- An “Educate” (Understand) [article](#) (800-2,000 words, although could be shorter if you’re efficient in making a small, manageable point)
- An “Embody” [article](#) (400-600 words)
- A [song](#)
- A [review](#)
- A [blog post](#)
- An [essay](#)
- A [poem](#)
- An [interview](#)

The Tone of the Writing

The Anselm Society is known for its warm hospitality. We seek to live out goodness, truth, and beauty incarnationally.

Out of that orientation, then, flows a publishing philosophy we call hospitable writing. It involves rigorous truth-telling, yes, but also a focus on what is good and beautiful. Our aim is not to win a culture war but to help create a culture within the Church that is a shadow of heaven; not to point out cracks in the Church but to strengthen the brethren; not to pontificate on politics or apply apologetics but to “lead with delight”—and let the truth and beauty of what we publish cast contrasting alternatives in their own light by inference.

Therefore: “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things” (Philippians 4:8 CSB).

A Word about Word Count

A prominent op-ed columnist once told me everything between 600 and 1,200 words is a waste of time and (in his opinion) you'll see most of the worst published writing in that range.

Below 600, you're short and sweet making a point that does not require extensive analysis or evidence to make. You're not trying to change the world in one go—you're planting a seed.

Above 1,200, you're really writing a series of shorter pieces stringing together a train of arguments or bits of evidence. You're introducing a bigger idea bit by bit.

But in between, within that 600 to 1,200 range, it's often too long to hold attention with something simple but too short to do justice to something complex.

— Brian Brown

Three Rules to Follow

We request that as a contributing writer you *think of your readers* in shaping your idea or draft article. Specifically, we are seeking material that is

- **Approachable:** That's not to say we don't value material that's smart and unique. But in this arena the most powerful writing is reader-friendly and conversational.
- **Particular:** Submissions that are concrete and descriptive (as opposed to abstract) allow readers to come away with memorable images that help them recall what they've read.
- **Simple:** By this we don't mean simplistic, of course. We're looking for submissions that focus on a single topic and can be grasped in a single reading. (Second and third readers are encouraged, though!)

Remember, also, that although there is much to be sober about in this fallen world, the Anselm Society community loves to laugh. A dose of wit and humor can lift any idea and make it memorable.

To Query

Only digital submissions will be considered. Pitches for us to consider may be made [here](#).

Editing and Publishing Rights

While we can't pay for the material published on AnselmSociety.org, we offer close editing and feedback on submissions, which can be valuable to writers. Plans for writing coaching are being developed.

In regard to publication rights: We prefer first rights rather than one-time rights. We request that the accepted material not be reprinted in a competing market without written permission from the Anselm Society.

Basic Assumptions

Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. We also assume that writers will do their due diligence in fact-checking and proofing of quoted material and scripture citations, and the like.

We assume that writers will be *receptive to suggestions and requests made by our editors*, who are trained and experienced. The ensuing give-and-take will be genial, courteous, and transparent.

And writers for AnselmSociety.org must be *comfortable with our ecumenical [Statement of Faith](#)*.