



Writing an Advocacy Letter

Pax Christi Youth Action

There are many ways to advocate for a cause. People join groups that try to bring about change, demonstrate in the streets, give speeches, contact friends and associates in person or on social media, and write letters or articles. Many don't realize how effective writing an advocacy letter can be. A physical letter almost always gets more attention than an email or pre-printed message. In this activity you will be writing a multi-paragraph letter to advocate for a cause.

Estimated Time: 2 hrs

PRAYER

*"Blessed are they who
hunger and thirst for justice,
for they shall be satisfied." (Matt. 5:6)*

In Jesus' time there were many injustices and inequalities just as there are in today's society. Jesus asked us to show mercy and compassion to others and to work for peace and justice.

Think about situations or policies in your community or in our nation that you feel are unjust. Pray about them and ask God to give you a clear vision of what changes can be made to bring about more just outcomes. Ask God to guide you as to what you can do to be most effective in helping to bring about change.

STUDY

1. Decide on the specific issue on which you would like to advocate. Make sure it is not too broad a topic.
2. Read facts about your issue so that you will be able to make informed statements in your letter.
3. Find out who would be the best person to write to on this issue. Make sure you know their full name and title as well as their address.

ACTION

Follow the proper form for a business letter. Your letter should be no more than one page, and neatly typed or hand-written.

In your first paragraph: Introduce yourself and state the reason you are writing the letter. In one sentence, what action would you like the addressee to take? How do they have the ability to do what you're asking?

In your body paragraphs: Share **why** the addressee should take this action. Is there a moral imperative? Does the action solve a conflict? Who will be helped? How many will benefit? If anyone will likely oppose the action, is there a way of addressing their fears or legitimate concerns with compassion? Be honest and courteous, and use facts from your research to support your statements. Remember to organize each paragraph logically, using transition words to move from one paragraph to the next.

In your concluding paragraph: Restate the action for which you are advocating. Express gratitude for the addressee's past attention to this issue, or to the community they serve. Express your desire to work together on shared goals, and your confidence in their ability and desire to make good things happen. Sign your name.

Proofread carefully for mistakes in spelling, punctuation, capitalization and grammar. Be sure to put a return address on the envelope so that the recipient can write back to you!