

**NORTH AMERICAN COUNCIL  
FELLOWSHIP OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE  
ORATORICAL FESTIVAL  
NAC FSJD COORDINATOR'S MANUAL**

***REVISED: JANUARY 2010***

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## **I. JOB DESCRIPTION:**

The responsibility of the FSJD ORATORICAL FESTIVAL COORDINATOR is to motivate and facilitate the individual FSJD dioceses, to participate in the yearly Oratorical Festival at their individual Parish Life Conferences; also at the Off-Year Oratorical Festival or at the Archdiocese Convention (held in odd-numbered years).

- (1) Provide topic, rules and guidelines to each diocesan coordinator.
- (2) Report to NAC FSJD (written reports) twice a year (February, July) at their meetings concerning program progress, problems, etc.
- (3) Serve as Master/Mistress of Ceremonies at all Oratorical Festivals.
- (4) Contact host parish to secure three judges (one clergy not of our Archdiocese, but Orthodox; and two professionals, preferably Orthodox, in the field of speech, oratory, English, journalism, etc.)
- (5) Contact judges. Inform them of their responsibilities. Greet them on the day of the Festival. Show them where they are to sit, etc.
- (6) Provide copies of each regional winner's oration and judging sheet for each judge. Each oration is to be identified by number only. No name of the orator or his/her region is to be visible.
- (7) Provide copies of each diocesan contestant's oration and photo along with the NAC Judge's Choice for publication in *The Word* magazine.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:**

The NAC FSJD REGIONAL ORATORICAL FESTIVALS were designed to serve as an avenue for our youth to learn, enhance and share the knowledge of their faith based on a given topic. The sharing is done through these orations. This topic is based on the yearly theme of the Parish Life Conferences/Archdiocese Convention and is determined in conjunction with the Department of Youth.

## **II. SCHEDULE FOR THE YEAR:**

The following is an outline of time and line of events leading up to these Oratorical Festivals.

- (1) Summer meeting: Receive notification of the upcoming Conference/Oratorical theme.
- (2) September-October: Send a letter of introduction to each of the seven (7) diocesan Oratorical Festival Coordinators, seven (7) diocesan Presidents and Vice Presidents, seven (7) Regional Spiritual Advisors, and Archdiocese Youth Director. You may want to include the NAC Teen SOYO President and Spiritual Advisor. Send copies of all correspondence to the NAC FSJD President, Vice President and Spiritual Advisor.
- (3) Continue communications through January, either written or by phone if necessary.
- (4) Present first report to NAC FSJD at February Winter Meeting.
- (5) Encourage status reports updating progress, problems, etc. at least three times a year from your diocesan coordinators (November or December, May and Final after their Regional Parish Life Conference). This can be done by phone, mail or E-Mail.
- (6) About April contact the host of the Off-Year/Archdiocese Convention to secure judges for the Festival. Keep in contact with judges. Introduce yourself to them in a letter or by phone. Send copies of rules, guidelines and a sample copy of the judging forms to be used. Fill them in on the date, time and place of the Festival. Doing this in plenty of time before the date of presentations leaves little chance for mix-ups or unanswered questions, etc.
- (7) Publicize in *The Word* magazine prior to the individual Festivals to encourage participation. This needs to reach the Editor two (2) months prior to publication. The Archdiocese Youth Director usually promotes the Festival for us.
- (8) Require Coordinators to do the following immediately after their Parish Life Conferences:
  - a- Provide a final report to you;
  - b- Send four (4) typewritten copies of the Senior Division Judge's choice and along with their resume and phone number.
  - c- Send a copy of recent photo (preferably black and white, but a color school photo will suffice) that will be published in *The Word* magazine at a later date along with the oration. If you don't get a photo, make sure *The Word* Magazine editor takes the photos at the Archdiocese festival.

- (9) July Archdiocese Festival: Serve as Master/Mistress of Ceremonies. Prior to Festival date, meet with all orators (usually the day before the Festival). Talk to them about the procedures you will follow; an overall “Pep Talk.” Determine order of presentations. On the day of the Festival, greet the judges. Show them to their places. Present each judge with a folder containing copies of the seven (7) diocesan orations with attached judging sheets.
- (10) Send copies of the NAC ORATORICAL Judge’s Choice oration along with the other six (6) runner-up orations and their photos to *The Word* magazine for publication as soon after the Festival as possible.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (1) Work with the Youth Department Director in any way he can help in spreading information out to individual dioceses. **Ask for help if you need it.**
- (2) Set aside 2-4 hours a month for planning and dissemination of publicity, etc.
- (3) Prepare a budget. Keep records of expenses.
- (4) Send thank you notes to the host pastor and judges for their cooperation. Notes to your coordinators, spiritual advisors and diocesan Presidents and/or Vice Presidents would be a nice gesture.

**ARCHDIOCESE RULES AND GUIDELINES  
ORATORICAL FESTIVAL**

*REVISED: July 2013*

## **ARCHDIOCESE RULES AND GUIDELINES ORATORICAL FESTIVAL (Revised July 2013)**

1. All orators must be communicants in a parish or mission of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.
2. The topic will be generated by the Department of Youth and will be sent to the parishes by October 1st of that year.
3. Each contestant must meet the following age requirements:
  - A. Junior Division: for persons who have reached their 13th birthday but not their 16th birthday on or before June 1 of the Conference year. In other words, junior contestants must be ages 13-15.
  - B. Senior Division: for persons who have reached their 16th birthday but not their 20th birthday on or before June 1 of the Conference year. In other words, senior contestants must be ages 16-19.
4. Anyone who has been selected as the Judge's Choice at an Archdiocese Oratorical Festival (Archdiocese Convention or off-year festivals) is ineligible to participate again in a Diocesan Oratorical Festival.
  - A. A Senior Division Diocesan Judge's Choice may not compete in the next conference year, but can return the year after that if he/she meets the age requirements (See Rule 3).
  - B. A Junior Division Diocesan Judge's Choice may not compete in the next conference year, but can return the year after that if he/she meets the age requirements (See Rule 3), unless he/she was the sole competitor in that division.
  - C. However, the junior division winner (if age allows) may compete in the senior division the next conference year.
5. The Diocesan Oratorical Festival will take place during your Diocesan Parish Life Conference.
6. A Judge's Choice will be selected in each of the two Diocesan Divisions and awards will be presented by the Diocese, not NAC. There will not be any certificates or awards presented by NAC, but you may choose to do so in your Diocese.
7. In years when there is an Archdiocese Convention, the Judge's Choice in your Diocesan Senior Division will represent his/her Diocese at the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival. His/her travel expenses and two nights lodging will be covered by your Diocesan Fellowship of St. John the Divine. In non-Archdiocese Convention years, all Diocesan oratorical winners in the Senior Division will compete in the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival to be held in conjunction with the summer meeting at the Antiochian Village. Transportation and two nights lodging will be paid by the respective Diocese.

In the instance when the Judges' Choice of the Senior Oratorical division is unable to attend either the Archdiocese Convention or the Antiochian Village Summer

Meetings (during non-Archdiocese Convention years), the runner-up for the Senior Division will represent their Diocese at the Archdiocese level and will receive any Archdiocese rewards or stipends given and will also have his/her oration appear in The Word Magazine.

8. Time limits for orations are as follows:

<b>Division</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Leeway</b>
Junior	3 minutes	5 minutes	15 seconds
Senior	6 minutes	10 minutes	30 seconds

If the orator speaks BEYOND the leeway time, points will be deducted from his/her final score. THESE POINTS ARE DIVIDED AMONGST THE THREE JUDGES. Consult the following table for these deductions.

<b>JUNIOR DIVISION</b>		<b>SENIOR DIVISION</b>	
<b>Time of Oration</b>	<b>Penalty</b>	<b>Time of Oration</b>	<b>Penalty</b>
2:45-2:59 or 5:00-5:15	None	5:30-5:59 or 10:00-10:30	None
2:30-2:44 or 5:16-5:30	9 points	5:00-5:29 or 10:31-11:00	9 points
2:15-2:29 or 5:31-5:45	15 points	4:30-4:59 or 11:01-11:30	15 points
2:00-2:14 or 5:46-6:00	21 points	4:00-4:29 or 11:31-12:00	21 points
1:45-1:59 or 6:01-6:15	27 points	3:30-3:59 or 12:01-12:30	27 points
Under 1:44 or Over 6:16	<b>Disqualification</b>	Under 3:29 or Over 12:31	<b>Disqualification</b>

9. The speech is an oration, not a sermon or dramatic presentation; therefore, the following guidelines will apply:
  - A. Only gestures, intonation, eye contact, and other methods of physical communication can be utilized. Props and costumes are not allowed.
  - B. Contestants are not to use the opening: “In the name of the Father...etc.” They will be given a standard greeting to recite from the coordinator, commemorating the hierarchy, the clergy and the laity; timing will begin at the first word of the oration, whether or not it is part of the “greeting.”
10. The orator may use 8 ½” x 11” pages, or 3” x 5” note cards to present the oration.
11. Prior to the Diocesan Oratorical Festival, the orator must provide the Diocesan Oratorical Coordinator with the following at least two (2) weeks before the conference:
  - A. Four (4) double-spaced, 8-1/2 x 11” typewritten copies of his/her oration; please make sure that contestants do not include their names and information on these, as the judges will be provided with these copies.
  - B. A brief personal résumé (including full name, age, address, phone number, email address, parish and city, grade in school, church school and civic activities, awards, future vocational goals or plans, etc.) using the form at the end of this section.
  - C. In years when there is an Archdiocese Convention, each Senior Division entrant must submit written authorization from his/her parents stating that he/she will be permitted

to attend the Archdiocese Convention for the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival in the event he/she is selected as the Diocesan Judge's Choice.

- D. In the off-year, the contestant must also submit written permission to attend the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival at the Antiochian Village during the Mid-Summer Meetings. These forms appear at the end of this section.
12. The Oratorical topic may not be altered by any Diocese. We will ask for input; however, topics will be formed around the conference/convention theme.
  13. The Archdiocese Oratorical Festivals, both convention and off-years, will fall under the direction of the NAC Oratorical Coordinator. All questions and requirements should be submitted to the NAC Coordinator.
  14. The orator is not to make references by name to themselves, family members, city or parish. The orators must remain completely anonymous to the Judges.
  15. Each orator must write his/her own oration. They may seek guidance and advice from their parish priest, parent, advisor, etc., but must be the author of their oration.
  16. Collectively, judges may only select one choice (winner) per division, according to the rules set forth above. Judges must also use the guideline set forth on the "Oratorical Rating Sheet", which reads: The lowest total score (of the three added ratings) determines first place. Please enter the "rating" number from the bottom of each judges score sheet for each contestant. If there is a tie for judges' choice (first place) after this procedure, please consult the Tiebreaker Procedures.
  17. **Senior division diocesan winners must present in large part the same oration that was delivered at their Diocesan Festival.** Corrections/amendments are permitted only when grammatical or theological inaccuracies were noted by the Diocesan judges and or the contestants Pastor. Minor polishing of the grammar and delivery style of one's oration may be done by the orator to fix delivery problems they experienced on the diocesan level. The updated Oration must be presented, in writing, by e-mail or in person, to the NAC Oratorical Coordinator at least seven days prior to the Archdiocese Oratorical event.

#### TIEBREAKER PROCEDURES

- A. Should a tie occur after the three judges ratings are added up, add the total points awarded by the three judges.
- B. Should a tie still occur, add the two lower ratings of the three judges.
- C. Should a tie still occur, the choice will be determined by secret ballot amongst the judges. Abstentions are not allowed, and each judge can only vote for one contestant.

In addition, in the instance when an individual judge incidentally marks the same score for two or more contestants, he/she is required to make a judgment to reflect which oration was better by ranking them with a "rating" number of 1, 2, 3 and so forth. No two contestants should receive the same rating.

17. Once the contestants have arrived at the Festival, whether it is the hotel chapel, ballroom, and so forth, they are to be undisturbed. Parents, clergy, coaches, friends and especially judges cannot talk to the contestants, as it may lead to bias for the Festival.

# ORATORICAL CONTESTANT RÉSUMÉ

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish/City: \_\_\_\_\_

School Grade (Entering upcoming fall): \_\_\_\_\_

Awards: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Future Vocational Goals/Plans: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Activities (Church/School/Civic): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**PERMISSION TO TRAVEL**  
**For Oratorical Senior Division Entrants Only**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give my permission for  
(Parent/Guardian Name)  
\_\_\_\_\_ to attend the  
(Contestant Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ to compete in the Oratorical Festival  
(Name of PLC/Convention)

in \_\_\_\_\_ during \_\_\_\_\_  
(City, State) (Date of PLC/Convention)

in the event he/she is selected as the Diocesan Judges' Choice.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian Signature) (Date) \_\_\_\_\_

# **ORATORICAL FESTIVAL PROCEDURES**

**FOR DIOCESAN FSJD COORDINATOR**

***REVISED: JULY 2008***

**ORATORICAL FESTIVAL PROCEDURES**  
**FOR DIOCESAN COORDINATORS**

- (1) Contestants shall draw lots for speaking positions within their specific age group. (This is done privately with the contestants only and the coordinator, usually the evening before the Festival)
- (2) After the drawing and during the contest, all contestants will be identified by number only.
- (3) Amplification shall be provided for all contestants.
- (4) A timekeeper will clock all speeches and record the length of speech. He will also be responsible for the accuracy of the judges' addition on score sheets and rating form. (See **item 2a** on checklist items).
- (5) Judging will be tabulated on a standard form that will be provided for each judge. **These forms will be given to you by the NAC Coordinator.**
- (6) The Contestant receiving the highest rating from all Judges will be declared the Judge's Choice. **Each Judge totals the contestant's points and gives the highest point total a rating of '1' and so on. The rating numbers are then totaled on the Score Sheet and the contestant with the lowest total is declared the winner. In the event of a tie, the contestant with the higher point total, between the two, will be declared the winner.**
- (7) The speakers shall be introduced by city and name along with their resumes while the Judges tabulate the scores. The Judges should be excused to a private room while tabulating scores.
- (8) The Judges shall be introduced and recognized when they return to the room and the scores have been tabulated.
- (9) The Judge's Choice shall be announced by the Coordinator at the affair dictated by the host Parish. (i.e. Awards Banquet or Brunch, or immediately following the Festival).
- (10) The Diocesan Coordinator shall serve as Master/Mistress of Ceremonies for the Oratorical Festival.

## CHECKLIST OF ITEMS FOR ORATORICAL FESTIVAL PROCEDURES

- (1) If your regional Conference is not being held in your city, do you have a contact person with the Conference Planning Committee who will be responsible for seeking out local Judges for the Festival?
- (2) Other needs at the Festival shall include:
  - a. A timekeeper - When choosing your timekeeper, keep in mind this person should be an unbiased person (i.e. not related to any contestants) as this person is responsible for the accuracy of the Judges addition on the score sheet and rating form. A good choice maybe a visiting NAC FSJD representative, a Diocesan FSJD officer, etc. **Timing begins with the first word of the speech - after the greeting.**
  - b. A stop watch.
  - c. A podium and a microphone.
  - d. **Door keepers to prevent unnecessary noise and disturbances during the Festival, allowing people to enter and exit between orations only!**
  - e. A table for four (4) with four (4) chairs for the three (3) Judges and the timekeeper. This table should be placed in the center of the room. The Coordinator may choose to sit in the front with the contestants or at the Judge's table.
  - f. A token of appreciation for the judges (optional); a thank you letter should be sent if gifts are not given.
  - g. **Award to be presented:** Awards for diocesan festivals shall be selected by the individual dioceses. No longer will NAC provide certificates. The Archdiocese Oratorical Festival shall award each runner-up a \$500 cash Scholarship from Mr. & Mrs. Robert Laham. The NAC Oratorical Judge's Choice will receive \$1,000 cash Scholarship from Metropolitan PHILIP.

## **ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION RELATED TO JUDGING AND DIOCESAN COORDINATORS DUTIES**

### **(1) Judges:**

- a. Orations shall be judged by two (2) professionals, not a member of the Antiochian Archdiocese, in the field of teaching and/or coaching of oratory or forensics. This judge shall consider personal qualities, which shall include appearance, poise, attitude, delivery, presentation, voice, annunciation, impression, effect, organization, theme, subject adherence, and logic.
  - b. Orations shall be judged by one (1) Orthodox clergyman not a member of the Antiochian Archdiocese, on Orthodox viewpoint, creativity, content, and theological doctrinal accuracy.
  - c. Judges shall be found according to the rules listed above. However, in case of emergency (i.e. one or more judges do not arrive), the Oratorical coordinator will consult with the conference / convention presiding hierarch, the host pastor, the Archdiocese Youth Director (if present) and the diocesan festival coordinator to determine a replacement. The Oratorical coordinator will have the final decision on the matter. Preference must be given in this order:
    - 1- A non affiliate of the Antiochian Archdiocese.
    - 2- If one cannot be found, a non affiliate of the diocese.
    - 3- If one cannot be found, a cleric or a layperson of the Archdiocese or Diocese with as little bias of the contestants as possible (i.e. they do not know any of the contestants).
- (2) The score sheets will be sent to you by the NAC Oratorical Coordinator and **must** be used. This provides uniformity amongst the diocesan judge's choices at the NAC festivals.
  - (3) The ratings will be taken from the Judges score sheets and tabulated on the rating form. **The rating form should be destroyed after your Parish Life Conference.**
  - (4) The score sheets should be returned to contestants before the end of your diocesan conference or mailed to them immediately after your conference.
  - (5) Judges must be selected and obtained by the diocesan host chapter and/or NAC convention host chapter.
  - (6) The Judges shall be provided with a copy of each oration.

- (7) All diocesan coordinators will file a report with the NAC Coordinator immediately following your Parish Life Conference. This report should include the following:
- a. The number of participants in each group
  - b. The type of awards made to the winners
  - c. Names and ages of the Judge's Choices in the Senior and Junior Divisions.
  - d. Four (4) typewritten copies of the senior oration and a glossy photo (black and white) of the Judge's Choice (a color school photo will suffice).
  - e. A copy of the Senior Division judge's Choice resume and phone number.
  - f. Recommendations for rule changes and suggestions for more successful festivals.
- (8) Judges are to make sure that they award points according to the criteria listed on their Judging Forms. This includes adherence to the Conference/Convention theme and each divisional focus/questions. The print versions of the contestants' orations are to be used only as a reference and a guide, and not in the criteria for judging.

### **CHECKLIST OF NOTES FOR ORATORICAL FESTIVAL COORDINATORS**

- (1) Progress reports should be mailed to or communicated by telephone or E-Mail to the NAC Oratorical Coordinator before your regional conference (before May 1st), and no more than one (1) week following your conference.
- (2) Make sure you secure three (3) judges with the host chapter of your conference. Call the conference secretary or chairman for help. Remind him/her that two (2) must be professionals outside our Archdiocese, and the other an Orthodox clergyman outside our Archdiocese (**this is very important and must be stressed!**).
- (3) Keep in contact with someone from the host parish in case you have any needs. Who will order the awards? Will the room be set up properly?
- (4) Talk to your participants throughout your conference week. Make sure they are fully aware of all the rules. Meet with them formally at least once the day before the festival. Keep them at ease!!!
- (5) The judging forms are provided to you by the NAC Coordinator. Remember, each judge has a different designated form.
- (6) Be organized, and your festival will run smoothly!

**SENIOR DIVISION WINNER**  
**ATTENDING THE ARCHDIOCESE ORATORICAL FESTIVAL**

If, by any chance, your Senior Division Oratorical winner cannot attend the National Oratorical Festival, the participant with the NEXT HIGHEST RATING will represent your diocese.

Please remind all Senior participants before your diocesan conference that the winner will represent your diocese (with travel expenses paid by the diocese) at the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival, either at the Archdiocese Convention or at the NAC FSJD Summer Meeting at the Antiochian Village.

**ORATORICAL PRESENTATION NEEDS**

- (1) Room large enough to seat approximately Three Hundred (300) people.
- (2) Podium with microphone.
- (3) Table and chairs for contestants.
- (4) Table and chairs to accommodate three (3) judges, one (1) timekeeper and the diocesan coordinator. This table should be placed in the middle, toward the back of the room. No one else should be seated at this table.
- (5) Three (3) judges outside of our Archdiocese - 1 priest and 2 laymen.
- (6) Two (2) 1st place trophies - 1 for Junior Division and 1 for Senior Division.
- (7) Participation trophies (optional).
- (8) Water for judges and contestants.
- (9) Pencils and note paper for judges/timekeeper.
- (10) Door monitors
- (11) Appropriate seating for the presiding hierarch, making him easily assessable for the contestants to approach, (prior to going to the podium) for a blessing.