

ARCHDIOCESE RULES AND GUIDELINES ORATORICAL FESTIVAL (Revised in 2013 for 2014)

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.

8. Time limits for orations are as follows:

Division	Minimum	Maximum	Leeway
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.

JUNIOR DIVISION		SENIOR DIVISION	
Time of Oration	Penalty	Time of Oration	Penalty
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	Disqualification	Under 3:29 or Over 12:31	Disqualification

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 hierarch, 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. 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.
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.

