



Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America

SAINT NIKOLAI OF ZICHA



2015

ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

The 2015 Oratorical Festival theme is:

“As Orthodox Christians, what does the Cross mean to us?”

PARTICIPANT’S GUIDE

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the 2015 St. Nikolai of Zicha Oratorical Festival. We are happy to provide you with the information that will guide you in this spiritual journey that will enrich your life as an Orthodox Christian teen. Please read all instructions carefully. If after reading everything you happen to have any questions, we suggest that you contact your local parish priest or our Youth Ministry Committee at becky.kesic@verizon.net.

May our Lord bless you and guide you in this blessed endeavor!

What is the St. Nikolai of Zicha Oratorical Festival?

St. Nikolai of Zicha Oratorical Festival is a yearly oratorical contest in which the youth of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America, ages 14-18, are given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of the Orthodox faith, writing and oratorical skills in the English language.

Is this the first Oratorical Festival?

St. Nikolai of Zicha Oratorical Festival 2015 is the seventh one. Festivals have taken place at the Diocesan level and nationally. The National Festival takes place in conjunction with the National Youth Conference which is held at the end of June each year.

So then, the competition starts first within each diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church?

Yes. Your diocese (this is either your diocesan office/coordinator or director of Christian education) will announce the time, place, and other pertinent information about submitting your written paper and place of competition on your diocesan/regional level. We have listed all coordinators for each diocese to make it easier for you to contact them:

1. Diocese of MidWest America – Fr. Dragan Petrovich, ph. 317-471-8006, fr.dragan@st-nicholas-indy.org
2. Eastern Diocese – Rebecca Kesic, ph 920-809-7123, becky.kesic@verizon.net
3. Western Diocese – Fr. George Gligich, ph (559) 227-5565, stpeter@me.com

Please, give me more information about the text itself, e.g. length, how to organize it.

- First, you should know that your written text of oration will be judged on the following criteria:
 - how the theme was developed,
 - subject adherence,
 - overall organization of the text, usage and grammar, and
 - creativity.
- Second, the length of your written text should not be more than 1100 words or 10 minutes of oration. The text can be anywhere from 600 – 1100 words or 6 to 10 minutes of oration.
- Third, we suggest that you memorize a great portion of your oration. This will help you to look at your audience during the presentation. You will be expected to present your oration at a regional meeting, which will be announced by your diocesan coordinator.
- Fourth, the body of your text has to be well developed, i.e. your opening statement has to

be very strong; the main body of your text has to have the theme well developed, and the conclusion also has to be strong and clear to your audience that you have finished your oration.

Here is more information for written text:

1. All orators must be Communicants in a parish or mission of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America.
2. Each contestant must currently be a freshman, sophomore, junior or senior in High School.
3. Text must be typewritten - double-spaced, using 8 ½ x 11 paper. Participants must submit their entry via e-mail as well as mail a paper copy to the regional diocese coordinator.
4. A brief personal résumé (including full name, age, 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 must be submitted with your written text.
5. The “Permission to Travel” form must also be submitted with the written text. If chosen to be a **finalist**, the entrant must participate in the second phase of the competition which is the oral presentation phase. A written authorization from his/her parents gives the finalist permission to attend the National Youth Conference for the National Oratorical Festival. This form appears at the end of this section.

For Finalists (each diocese will be represented with one finalist):

In addition to rules 1-5 above, written orations which are selected for the oral presentation competition phase of the festival (finalists), must follow these additional rules:

1. **Important to keep in mind if your written oration is selected for oral presentation:**
As you write your oration, please keep in mind that if your written text is selected and you will deliver your oration, there are time limits to which you must adhere. Time limits for orations when delivered are as follows:

Minimum	Maximum	Leeway
6 minutes	10 minutes	30 seconds

If the orator speaks **BEYOND** the leeway time, nine (9) points, divided amongst the three judges, will be deducted from his/her final score. An additional nine (9) points will be deducted each time that leeway is exceeded.

2. **In the oral presentation:**
 - a. Only gestures, intonation, eye contact, and other methods of physical communication can be utilized. Props and costumes are not allowed.
 - b. Since the oration is a speech, not a sermon, contestants are NOT to use the opening: *“In the name of the Father...”*

2015 Festival Theme

“As Orthodox Christians, what does the Cross mean to us?”

Essay Questions:

The Third Sunday of Great Lent is dedicated to the Adoration of the Holy Cross. As Orthodox Christians, what does the Cross mean to us?

Speaker Tips

Use any one (or combination of) to formulate your essay response.

The Cross is the universal symbol of the Christian faith. The cross adorns our churches, we wear a cross around our necks, we make the sign of the cross when we pray at home or in Church, and a cross depicting Christ hanging on it is found behind the altar table of every Orthodox church.

1. What does the Cross really symbolize? Is it merely a symbol used to identify us as Christians? Or is it, as St. Paul says, “the power and wisdom of God” (I Cor 1:24)?
2. For the Romans, the Cross was an instrument of torture and death, yet for Christians it is a symbol of victory: not victory in a magical sense, as a good luck charm. Rather, the Cross represents Christ’s victory over suffering and death. This victory comes through Christ’s Resurrection.
3. On the Cross, Christ suffered and died for all of humanity. Read for yourself what St. Paul has to say about the Cross in I Cor 1:10-31. Think about Christ’s suffering on the Cross. Why did He choose to suffer? Why couldn’t we be saved without the Cross? Why do you wear a cross around your neck?

Bibliography: the following resources can be used to assist you in your paper (It would be beneficial for you to counsel with your Spiritual Father/Parish Priest who can assist you with other resources)...

- *A Treasury of Serbian Orthodox Spirituality*, Volume I, by St. Nikolai of Zhica; Translated by Frs. Theodore Micka and Steven Scott, published 1988.
- *A Treasury of Serbian Orthodox Spirituality*, Volume II, The Faith of Chosen People, by St. Nikolai of Zhica, pgs. 39ff; translated by Frs. Theodore Micka and Steven Scott, published 1988.
- *Soul Mending - The Art of Spiritual Direction*, by John Chryssavgis, copyright

2000, Holy Cross Press.

-*The Sign of The Cross: The Gesture, The Mystery, The History*, Andreas Andreopoulos. Paraclete Press.

-*Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*, vol. 1 translated by Robert Charles Hill. Holy Cross Press.

-*The Tools of Spiritual Warfare*, Joy Corey. Light & Life Publishing.

-*Becoming Icons of Christ*, Mother Raphaela.

-*Risen Indeed*, Michael Bordeaux. SVS Press

Vendor Contact Information

St. Vladimir's Seminary Press: 1-800-204-2665 <http://www.svspress.com/>

St. Tikhon's Bookstore: 888-454-6678 <http://www.stspress.com/>

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America – Dep't of Religious Education: (800)566-1088
<http://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com/>

Holy Cross Bookstore: 1-800-245-0599 <http://store.holycrossbookstore.com/>

Light and Life Publishing: 952-925-3888 <http://www.light-n-life.com/>

Ancient Faith Publishing: 1-800-967-7377 <http://store.ancientfaith.com/>

Alexander Press: 866-303-5517 www.alexanderpress.com

New Life Publications: 973-696-6006 <http://newlifepublications.org/>

PARTICIPANT'S RÉSUMÉ

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Age: _____ Email address: _____

Parish/City: _____

School Grade: (Entering upcoming Fall) _____

Awards: _____

Future Vocational Goals/Plans: _____

Activities (Church/School/Civic): _____

PERMISSION TO TRAVEL

(High School Division Entrants Only)

I, _____, give my permission for
(Parent/guardian name)

_____ to attend the National Youth
Conference and Oratorical Festival in 2015 at

(place, date and time to be announced)

_____ in the event he/she is selected as a finalist.

(Parent/guardian signature)