

**BULGARIAN EASTERN ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF THE USA  
CANADA AND AUSTRALIA**

**2008 Youth Essay Contest**

THE TOPIC FOR THIS YEAR'S CONTEST IS ~

***The Forgotten Medicine: Freedom to Change***

*From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say:  
"Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17)*

**Questions you may wish to consider:** Have you ever wished you could have a "do over" with life?  
How has your life changed through an encounter with God?  
How have you seen this change in another, either the life of a Saint or a friend or family member?  
What is the Mystery or Sacrament of Repentance?  
How is this sacrament a positive help in living the Orthodox Christian life?  
Why do you think Confession is sometimes a "forgotten" sacrament?  
Why is it so hard to change your life or find freedom from bad habits without God's help?

**RULES AND GUIDELINES**

The 2008 Youth Essay Contest is open to youth between the ages of 13 and 22. Each participant must be a communicant in a parish or mission of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the USA, Canada and Australia. Contest winners will be announced at the Saturday night dinner dance during the Diocesan Convention in Indianapolis on July 19, 2008. While it is not necessary to attend in order to participate, winning authors in attendance should be prepared to read their essays at the dinner.

***Cash prizes of \$100 for first place and \$50 for second place will be awarded in each division.***

**Please note:** While there is no charge to enter, all essays must be received no later than July 15, 2008, to qualify and to allow time for the judges to read and evaluate your submission.

Your essay must be your own original writing. You may seek guidance and advice from your parish priest, parent or teacher, but you must be the sole author. Guidance and advice from adults must not include editing, rewriting or proofreading. Your essay must not have been submitted to any other contest. All contestants are cautioned to avoid plagiarizing, or copying, the work of other authors. Individual quotations from the works of other authors should not exceed five lines and must be accompanied by complete bibliographic information in proper footnote form.

## Contestants will compete in one of two categories defined by these age limits:

**Junior Division:** for persons who have reached their 13th birthday but not their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday on or before July 10, 2008.

**Senior Division:** for persons who have reached their 18th birthday but not their 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday on or before July 10, 2008.

### Required minimum/maximum length of essay is:

**Junior Division:** 400 to 700 words

**Senior Division:** 700 to 1200 words

Please provide the judges with three typewritten copies of your essay, on white 8½ x 11" paper, in 12 pt. font, double-spaced; *or* with a MS Word or WordPerfect document file, in this format, on disk or as attachment to email. *Please be sure to include your name and address, date of birth, the name of your home parish/city and the date of your composition on a separate page and include that with your submission.*

**To qualify, your essay must be received by the judges no later than July 15, 2008.**

#### Here are some resources to assist you in preparing your essay:

**Selections from Holy Scripture:** St. John 3:1-10, Nicodemus' nighttime visit with Christ; St. John 4:1-22, Christ's conversation with the Samaritan woman; Psalm 50 (51 KJV), King David's prayer of repentance; St. Matthew 9:9-13, the calling of the Apostle Matthew; Acts 9:1-20, the conversion of St. Paul.

**Books:** *The Forgotten Medicine: the Mystery of Repentance*, by Archimandrite Seraphim Aleksiev.

Available at your local bookstore or order from St. Xenia Skete Press, POB 260, Wildwood, CA 96076

**Internet:** *Repentance and Confession - Introduction*, by John Chryssavgis.

<http://www.goarch.org/en/ourfaith/articles/article8493.asp>

*What Is Necessary for a Saving Confession?* by St. Innocent of Moscow (and Alaska)

<http://www.orthodoxinfo.com/praxis/confession.aspx>

Confession and Repentance, A Talk Given by Fr. Josiah Trenham

<http://www.orthodoxinfo.com/praxis/frjosiah-trenham-talks-to-clergy-about-confession-and-repentance.aspx>

### Mail or email your essay to:

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