

**Achievement Course: Public Speaking**  
**Recommended Ages: 10-18 years of age**  
**Approximate Completion Time Frame: 3-6 months**



Saints Peter and Paul, pray for us!

The Public Speaking Achievement Course will challenge you to step outside of your comfort zone by getting up in front of your community and peers and making oral presentations. If you work to overcome your fear of public speaking and really embrace the principles set forth in this Achievement Course, you will have the beginnings of a skill that will serve you well in every aspect of your life as a Catholic gentleman. Our dear Lord was a very good speaker and because of this, He was able to hold the attention of His listeners and teach them the saving truths of the Gospel. We as Catholics have been sent into the world to follow our dear Lord's example and to not only be sanctified through obedience to our Lord, but to bring others to Him. One of the most effective ways to do this is by having a knowledge of the faith, a love for our Lord and His Mother, and the ability to share this knowledge and love with others through the spoken word. "Faith comes through hearing" says Saint Paul (Romans 10:17) and Saint Peter tells us "always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." (1 Peter 3:15)

**Objective:** To demonstrate public speaking skills confidently.

1. Requirements (All of the following must be done in front of your troop or church)
  - a. Speak publically, in one or more of the following ways, a total of five times
    - i. As a lector at your parish.
    - ii. Present and tell the story of a Saint (not a skit) at a troop event (e.g. campfire story).
    - iii. Give a speech at a troop event (e.g. troop meeting, campout, etc.) that you have written or some other worthy speech (e.g. Saint Crispin's Days Speech).
    - iv. Read and discuss the upcoming Sunday readings with your troop on a campout or meeting.
  - b. Write and act in a play with no less than two characters about your favorite Saint (it must be a minimum of 5 minutes long).
  - c. Write and present a speech on a topic about the Troops of Saint George, Catholicism, or the Canonization of a new Saint.
    - i. Before you give your speech.
      1. Know your material – Pick a topic you are most interested in and know more about it than you include in your speech (this will help you answer questions at the end). Use humor, personal stories, and conversational language; that way you won't easily forget what to say.
      2. Practice, Practice, and Practice some more – Rehearse out loud with all equipment/props you plan on using. Revise as necessary after some dry runs. Work to control filler words (e.g. um and uh). Practice, pause, and breathe. Practice with a timer and allow time for the unexpected.
      3. Know the audience – Greet some of the audience members as they arrive. It is easier to speak to a group of friends than strangers.
      4. Know the room/area – Arrive early, walk around the speaking area and practice using the microphone and visual aids (as applicable).
      5. Relax – Begin by addressing the audience. It buys you time and calms your nerves. "Good evening..." pause, smile, count to three in your head before you say anything else. Transform nervous energy into enthusiasm.
      6. Visualize yourself giving your speech – Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear, and confident. Visualize the audience clapping; it will boost your confidence.
      7. Realize that people want you to succeed – Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative, and entertaining. They are rooting for you.
      8. DO NOT APOLOGIZE – for any nervousness or problem. The audience probably never even noticed it.
      9. Concentrate on the message, not the medium – Focus your attention away from your anxieties and concentrate on your message and your audience.
      10. Gain experience – Your speech should represent you as an authority and as a person. Experience builds confidence, which is key to effective speaking.
  - d. Prepare and make a toast to your Captain (at the campout closest to his birthday) and remember these tips.

- i. Do not make it about yourself – say nice things about your subject, not you.
- ii. Keep it short – The audience is not here to listen to you speak, they are here for the guest of honor.
- iii. Embarrassing stories are not always funny – “I remember the time when John wet his pants in front of everyone! That was so funny.” Not to John. Do not use a “you had to be there moment”. The audience was not there, so it is not funny, just embarrassing all over again.
- iv. Pick one story, maybe two, do not ramble on with 27 different stories – Pick one or two that shows the type of person the honoree is.
- v. WRITE IT DOWN and rehearse it – Do not wing it! Take the time and write it down. This not only gives you time to remember more stories to choose from, but you can get them right.

#### Reference

[www.Toastmasters.org](http://www.Toastmasters.org)