



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA  
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
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## 2017 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Topics

### Junior Division (Grades 7–9)

1. The opening petition of the Divine Liturgy is “In peace let us pray to the Lord.” What is this peace, and why do we need it to begin our prayers?
2. St. John Chrysostom said, “Our alms are judged not by the measure of our gifts, but by the largeness of our mind” (Homily 52 on the Gospel of Matthew). Discuss how even small acts of kindness and generosity can make a difference.
3. Discuss the role of bread and its symbolism in the Bible and the life of the Church.
4. The Orthodox Church venerates saints and martyrs every day. Talk about a saint whose life inspires you to be a better Orthodox Christian.
5. Explain why the Orthodox Church focuses more on the resurrection than it does on the passion and suffering of Christ.

### Senior Division (Grades 10–12)

1. The gap between the rich and the poor in the United States and worldwide is arguably wider than it has ever been. How should we as Orthodox Christians address such terrible financial inequality?
2. Although many people diet for health or vanity, the discipline of fasting is found in many religious traditions. What is the difference between dieting and fasting, and why is it important?
3. Psalms are an integral part of matins, vespers, and many other Church services. Talk about a psalm that impacts or influences your life.
4. The Lord commanded us not to create idols (Exodus 20:4), yet people continue to do so. Discuss the kinds of idols people make or worship today and the response that an Orthodox Christian should have when confronted by them.
5. Jesus said, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22:21). When no political party represents genuine Christian teaching, how does an Orthodox Christian navigate political conversations and make political judgments?