



# MANUAL

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (DRE)  
GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA



In Honor of  
Presvytera Margaret Orfanakos

May Her Memory Be Eternal



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# St. John Chrysostom

St. John Chrysostom was born in the ancient city of Antioch in 347 to a noble and pious family. He studied to be a lawyer and was an exceptional student. He was led to a religious life where he devoted himself to discipline and spiritual growth.

As a priest, St. John had the innate quality of winning the hearts of his audience, even though many times he would chastise them. He loved his people and would hold nothing back in order to inspire them, challenge them and paternally lead them into upright living.

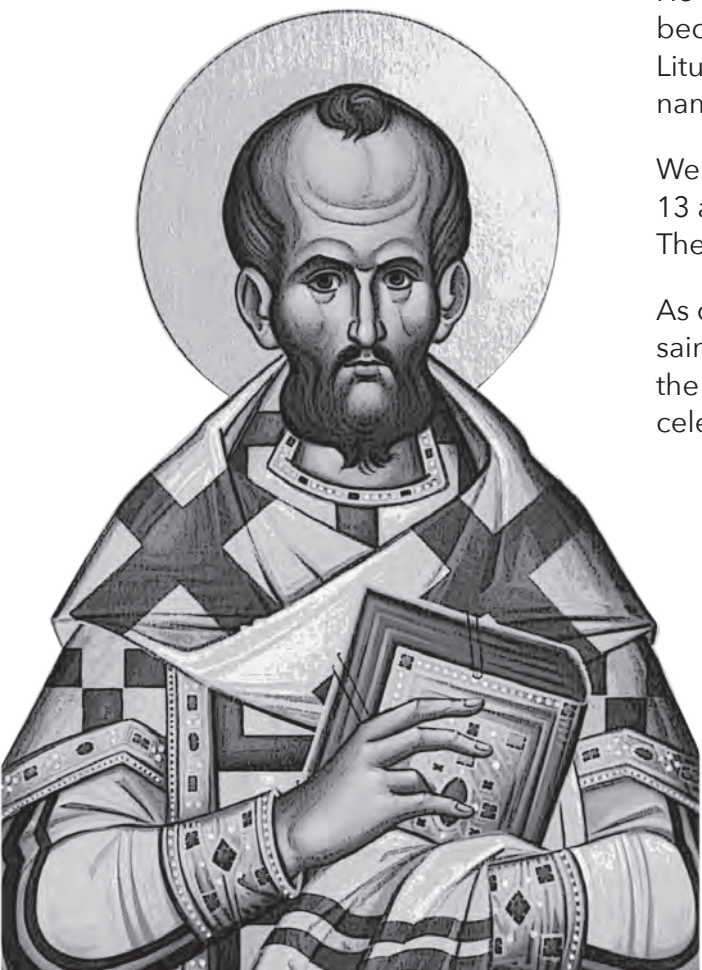
He was also a great advocate of social justice and proclaimed the equality of all people before God. His sermons often spoke of the great disparity between rich and poor, and he blamed extortionists and the greedy rich. He did not camouflage injustice.

At the age of forty-nine he became Patriarch of Constantinople. He was an outspoken critic of the imperial court and frequently denounced Empress Eudoxia. After a series of exiles and returns to Constantinople, St. John was again banished in 403 and died two years later.

He earned the title Chrysostomos, meaning “golden mouth,” because of his dynamic and forthright preaching. The Divine Liturgy most often celebrated in our churches also bears his name, *The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*.

We observe the feast day of St. John Chrysostom on November 13 and also honor him with St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory the Theologian on January 30, the feast day of the Three Hierarchs.

As one of our most honored Church Fathers, patriarchs, and saints, and also because of his bold eloquence, it is fitting that the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival be named after this most celebrated preacher in the history of the Christian Church.



# Basic Information

## ► PURPOSE

The purpose of the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival is to give teenagers an opportunity to learn, write and speak about their Orthodox Faith, Church and heritage. The intent is to help grow their understanding and appreciation of their identity as Greek Orthodox Christians and to cultivate their spiritual growth. The program is called a festival, rather than a competition, to minimize competitiveness and emphasize that this is a learning opportunity—for participants and the audience.

**Annual Topics:** The topics for the Oratorical Festival are developed each year by the Department of Religious Education (DRE) and approved by the archbishop. The DRE also creates a “Topics, Tips and Resources” document which includes a bibliography to help teachers and participants. There are two lists of topics, one for the junior division and one for the senior division. Whether participants choose to prepare a speech, poem or essay, all must choose from the provided topics for their respective division.

## Structure of Festival

There are three primary levels: parish, metropolis and national finals. Some metropolises also have a district level after the parish level (explained below).

- **PARISH ORATORICAL FESTIVAL**

The parish level is organized by an Oratorical Festival chairperson who is a member of the parish and approved by the parish priest. In some metropolises, the parish finalists proceed to the district level. In others, where there are no district festivals held, the parish finalists go straight to the metropolis. Most often just one finalist moves on to the next level. The exception is that a few metropolises who have district festivals allow two representatives, per division, if there are fewer than five parishes participating. This is determined by the metropolis committee.

- **DISTRICT ORATORICAL FESTIVAL**

(does not apply to all of the metropolises): This level is composed of parishes within a specified area of a metropolis. Each district chairperson is approved by the metropolis hierarch. Two finalists per division (two

juniors and two seniors) proceed to the metropolis level.

- **METROPOLIS ORATORICAL FESTIVAL**

Participants are the finalists (two juniors and two seniors) from each district festival. The first-place speakers (one junior and one senior) advance to the National Finals festival. The metropolis chairperson is appointed annually by the metropolis hierarch or is the youth director, religious education coordinator or Oratorical Festival coordinator for the metropolis.

- **NATIONAL FINALS ORATORICAL FESTIVAL**

Participants are the finalists (one junior and one senior) from each metropolis festival. It is coordinated by the DRE, the archdiocese chairperson of the Oratorical Festival and the host metropolis and parishes.

As the ecclesiastical year begins in September, each metropolis festival coordinator, in consultation with the presiding hierarchy, decides where the metropolis and district festivals will be held. Once the information is received by the DRE, it is posted online at [www.goarch.org/oratorical](http://www.goarch.org/oratorical). The guidelines below are for parish, district and metropolis chairpersons and must be adhered to for a successful festival.

The timeline below can help you select and schedule the dates for your Oratorical Festival. Parish festivals tend to be held between January and March, followed by district festivals in April. Metropolis festivals should be held by the second week of May so the finalists have time to make travel arrangements for the national finals festival, which is typically held the first or second weekend in June.

January	February	March	April	May	June
PARISH FESTIVAL			DISTRICT FESTIVAL	METROPOLIS FESTIVAL	NATIONAL FESTIVAL
<p>Typically, one finalist per division (one junior and one senior) advances.</p> <p>In districts with five or fewer participating parishes, the district chairperson may decide to allow two finalists per division (two juniors and two seniors) to advance.</p>			<p>Two finalists per division (two juniors and two seniors) advance to the metropolis festival.</p>	<p>One finalist per division (one junior and one senior) advances to the national finals festival.</p>	

# Participant Information

*Please reproduce this page for the participants.*

1. You must be of the Greek Orthodox Faith. To participate in the Junior Division you must be in grades 7-9. To participate in the Senior Division you must be in grades 10-12. **Your topic must be selected from the list of topics in the corresponding division.**
2. The speech must be original and delivered in English. Previously used material is not eligible. Quotations must be used effectively as supportive material, and sources must be identified.
3. No audio-visual material (slides, charts, etc.) may be used. The speech must be delivered from the lectern. The contents and/or delivery of the speech should not be dramatically presented.
4. A parent or teacher may serve as a "coach" in preparation and delivery, but the speech must reflect your own writing and speaking style.
5. A speaker can present his/her speech at only one parish oratorical festival.
6. Topics must be chosen from the official list compiled by the Department of Religious Education. The speech delivered at the parish level must be the same one given at the district, metropolis and national finals levels with only minor revisions (i.e., grammatical corrections, deleting a paragraph if speech is over time limit, correcting syntax).
7. Speech time limits for each division are:  
  
    JUNIOR- minimum 3 minutes, maximum 4  
  
    SENIOR - minimum 4 minutes, maximum 5

A 15-second grace period will be given to speakers whose talks run over or under time. Speeches that run over or under the 15-second grace period will lose 1 point for each additional five seconds.

8. A copy of the speech must be given to the chairperson before or during the orientation session. Your name, full address, phone number, email, and division (junior or senior) should appear in the upper right-hand corner, along with the name and location of your church. Place the title of your speech (taken from the official list of topics) right above the opening statement. Speakers who advance to the district, metropolis and national finals festivals must also present a copy to the chairperson at these events.
9. Speakers should dress in clothing that is professional and appropriate for Sunday church services.

# Suggestions for Writing Your Speech

*Please reproduce this page for the participants.*

## Writing Your Speech

As you begin to write, keep in mind that you are writing a speech and not a research paper. Your goal is to persuade your audience that your response to the question or topic is of high quality.

### Introduction

1. Consider using one of the following rhetorical devices to begin your speech:  
(a) restate the topic, (b) ask a question, or  
(c) begin with an anecdote.
2. The goal of the introduction is to alert your audience to the point that you would like to make.
3. You might consider introducing the two or three ways by which you will show that your thesis is an appropriate interpretation of the topic.
2. In some situations, it is appropriate to leave your audience with a reflective comment or a call-to-action, either in the form of a question, statement or exclamatory remark.

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### The Chronology of the Writing Process

### Body

1. The body of the speech is where you will provide both the evidence of your research and your analysis of that research.
2. Some topics, more than others, lend themselves to an emphasis on personal reflections or experience. You should consider what the topic means to you and why.
3. Some topics, more than others, lend themselves to a comparison between ancient times and the present. You should consider how such a comparison is made most effectively.
1. Decide on a topic.
2. Read the suggested research material for your selected topic and take notes where appropriate.
3. Consider other avenues for research, including Scripture and Church History, using whatever tools are available to you.
4. Develop a thesis. What do you think about this topic? The entire speech should be structured around your particular (and unique) answer to the prompt.
5. After you have a thesis, develop an outline that will effectively communicate that thesis—individual paragraphs should reflect the individual points of the outline.
6. Write your first draft. Practice it in front of others, ask for their feedback so that you can revise the draft.
7. Make sure that the time of your delivery fits within the allotted time for your division.

### Conclusion

1. A strong conclusion will simultaneously lead your audience to believe that they now understand the topic more completely and that you have convinced them that your thesis was an appropriate one.



# Instructions for Hosting a Parish Oratorical Festival

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## PLANNING THE FESTIVAL

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### Schedule and Announce the Date of Your Parish Festival

(6 months prior to the festival)

The success of the oratorical festival depends on networking among the parish, district and metropolis chairpersons. Therefore, once you are appointed as parish chairperson, you must contact your district and metropolis chairpersons to let them know when your parish festival will be held and to learn when the district and metropolis festivals will be held. To find out who your district and metropolis chairpersons are, go to [www.goarch.org/oratorical](http://www.goarch.org/oratorical) and click on the link for your metropolis.

Find a date that works well for the students and your parish. Be sure to avoid dates when standardized tests (ACT and SAT) are given.

Consider hosting a festival after a church service, such as after the liturgy on a Sunday or after a weekday lenten service. This way you will have an audience beyond the participants' parents.



### Form a Committee

(2-3 months prior to the festival)

It is a lot of work to host an Oratorical Festival, so we suggest you form a committee to help you. Here are the responsibilities that you could divide among committee members:

- Promote the festival (see "Encourage Participation" below)
- Plan refreshments or meals
- Create and print a program for the event
- Provide feedback to participants as they write their speeches
- Be available for participants to practice delivering their speeches and provide feedback
- Lead the speaker orientation session
- Lead the judges orientation session
- Serve as time-keeper
- Prepare the certificates and gifts



## Encourage Participation

Here are some tasks to complete throughout the three months prior to your parish festival to encourage participation.

- Provide for potential participants the current topics, tips, key dates and information about the program, either in printed hard copy, by email or both.
- Work with your priest, Sunday school teachers and GOYA advisors to encourage participation—visit Sunday Church school classrooms, email membership lists, etc.
- Consider using a speech topic in a lesson plan or as a discussion starter in Sunday school or GOYA.
- Reach out directly to parents and encourage them to speak with their children about the program.
- Promote the festival in weekly and monthly church bulletins.
- Host speech writing workshops and practice speaking sessions to provide feedback to participants.



## Complete the Online Registration Forms

Complete the online parish chairperson registration form

Ensure all participants complete the online speaker registration form

Both registration forms can be found at [www.goarch.org/oratorical](http://www.goarch.org/oratorical).

Ensure all participants know they need to bring an extra hard copy of their speech to give to you, the chairperson, on the day of the festival, formatted as follows:

- Double-spaced
- Speech topic included at the top of the first page
- Participant's name, address, parish name/location and division (junior or senior) in the top right corner of the first page



## Select Judges

(2-3 months prior to the festival)

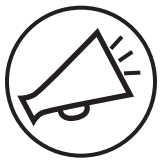
As a parish chairperson, selecting a qualified and objective panel of judges is one of the most important aspects of ensuring a successful Oratorical Festival program. Here is a set of requirements for your selection:

- The judges must be Orthodox Christians.
- The panel of judges should be composed of both men and women, with three judges total (to avoid a tie).
- The judges should be proficient in English and knowledgeable in public speaking. Educators and lawyers are often good choices, as well as those who have studied theology.
- The judges should not be personally familiar with the speakers (e.g., they should not be speakers' Sunday school teacher, GOYA advisor, etc.) or related to the speakers.
- The same judge(s) cannot be used from one festival level to the next (e.g., if someone is a parish judge, he or she may not also be a district / metropolis judge).

*Note: The judges should not hear the speeches before the festival (e.g., if someone is a judge, he or she may not also help with speech writing workshops, practice sessions, etc.).*

Email your judges the topics in advance of the Oratorical Festival along with the judges' instructions and the Speaker Evaluation Form. Ask your judges to plan to meet you at least an hour before the festival is scheduled to begin so you can go over the processes.

*Note: If you have used the same judges over multiple years you may consider finding judges from other nearby parishes. Perhaps you could share judges with another parish—the district chairperson can provide you with email addresses of other parish chairpersons to arrange this.*



## Promote the Festival to the Community

(as soon as it's scheduled and ongoing until the event)

Ask your priest to promote the event in his weekly announcements and encourage parishioners to attend.

Include announcements in the weekly and monthly church bulletins, and send information to parish email distribution lists or specific groups like Sunday Church school or GOYA.



## Prepare Certificates and Gifts for Participants and Judges

(suggested 2 weeks prior to the festival)

Order a certificate for each participant [www.orthodoxmarketplace.com](http://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com)

- It would be appropriate to present all participants with an icon, spiritual book or other small gift in recognition of their hard work.
- A small gift (an icon, spiritual book, gift card, etc.) should also be given to your judges to thank them for their time.



## Create a Printed Program (optional)

Some parishes create a printed program listing the names of the speakers and their respective topics, the order of events for the day, the names (and short biographies) of the judges and the names of committee volunteers.

More ideas and sample resources can be found on [www.goarch.org/oratorical](http://www.goarch.org/oratorical).

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# DURING THE FESTIVAL

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## Checklist of Items to Bring

- Certificates and gifts for the speakers / judges – save time by filling in certificates with participants' names in advance; then all you must do after the judges' results are known is fill out the ranking of the participants (for example, first place, second place, third place and honorable mention)
- Pencils and a clipboard for each judge
- Calculator or calculator app
- Speaker evaluation forms: one for each speaker plus a few extras (it's helpful to print the junior forms on one color paper and the senior forms on another color paper so they can be easily organized)
- Copies of the judge's instructions: one for each judge plus one additional for the person leading the judges orientation session.
- Two printed copies of the "Judge's Ranking Sheet - Form C" (one for the junior division and one for the senior division)
- Two printed copies of the "Timekeeper Report" (one for each division)
- Copies of the topics and topic tips for reference: one for each judge and one for the person leading the orientation
- Stopwatch or stopwatch app and large time notification cards to indicate time remaining to speakers (1 minute left, 30 seconds left)
- Names of the speakers printed on address labels–this makes it easier to place their speaking order number on "Speaking Order - Form A"
- Printed copies of the program (if you have one)
- Podium, microphone and (if needed) step-stool

*NOTE: All forms can be found in the last section of this manual.*

## Typical Schedule for a Parish Festival

This is a typical schedule for a parish festival. Specific guidance for each section is below.

- Speaker Orientation
- Judges' Orientation
- Gather everyone together where the festival will occur to announce festival will begin
- Opening prayer
- Welcome from parish chairperson
- Junior speakers
- Senior speakers
- Judges' deliberation
- Group photo, refreshments during judge's deliberation
- Announcement of finalists
- Parish chairperson closing remarks



### Speaker Orientation Session

Here is a checklist of tasks and items to prepare for the speaker orientation:

- Confirm participants have completed their online registration form (have copies of printed forms on hand just in case they are needed).
- Confirm you have the correct topic recorded for each of the speakers and collect the extra copy of each speech.
- Have participants pick their speaking order numbers out of a hat.
- Provide participants with an opening that makes sense given the clergy in attendance and time of day. An example would be: "Reverend Father(s), honorable judges, fellow parishioners, good morning." Each speaker should deliver the same greeting and say "Thank you" at the end of his or her speech.
- Show them where the judges and the time-keeper will be sitting. Introduce them to the time-keeper so they know who will be holding the time cards. Make sure the numbers on the time cards are large enough to be seen from the podium.
- Identify whether any speakers require a stepstool to be seen over the podium.
- Have each speaker say good morning into the microphone so they know the volume they need to project. The person introducing the speakers should plan to adjust the microphone for the height of each speaker.
- Remind them of the time limitations (3-4 minutes for juniors, 4-5 minutes for seniors) and the notifications they will see from the time-keeper (1 minute left; 30 seconds left).
- Have the participants sit in the pews in the order in which they will be speaking. As each speaker gets up to deliver his or her speech, the other participants can slide down; this way the person who just gave a speech can take a seat at the end of the pew.

Ideally, you will hold practice sessions in the church or wherever your festival will be held prior to the event itself. This way, your participants can practice with the microphone and become more comfortable in the space. You can also see if any participants need a step stool to see above the podium or any other accommodations. This is a good opportunity to time the participants to see if speech length or pacing need to be adjusted.



## Judges' Orientation Session

Here is a checklist of tasks and items to prepare for the judges' orientation:

- Provide the judges with copies of the topics and tips as well as pens / pencils and a clipboard.
- Provide the judges with speaker evaluation forms: one for each speaker plus a few extras (it's helpful to print the junior forms on one color paper and the senior forms on another color paper so they can be easily organized).
- Provide each judge with copies of the Judges Ranking Sheet -Form C (for the division they are judging; if you have one panel for both divisions, provide each judge with a junior form and senior form).
- Make sure the judges identify who will be the coordinating judge; this person is responsible for tabulating the results and leading discussion if there isn't a clear consensus.
- Walk the judges through the speaker evaluation form and ensure they understand the criteria for judging. Remind them that content and delivery are to be weighted equally. Encourage the judges to be thoughtful, to take their time and to write comments / notes to remind themselves of each speaker.
- Remind the judges of the time requirements (3-4 minutes for juniors, 4-5 minutes for seniors) and that there is a fifteen-second grace period. One point is deducted for every five seconds over or under the grace period (e.g., if a speaker is under the minimum time or over the maximum).
- Advise the judges that if there are significantly different perceptions of the top four speakers (for example, one speaker is voted first by one judge and eighth by another), the judges should discuss why they voted the way they did and feel free to make adjustments as they see fit.
- Guide the judges on where they will sit, ensuring that the podium is visible to them. It is less threatening to the participants if the judges are sitting in a pew rather than at a table.
- Advise the judges that they could and should provide feedback to any speakers who approach them afterwards. Note that the evaluation forms will not be provided to the speakers even if they request them.



## Speakers

Introduce each speaker by stating the speaker number, the topic number chosen, and then read the topic in full. For example:

- “Our first speaker in the junior division, will be speaking on topic number 5: In Mark 2:1-12, four men remove a roof in order to bring a paralytic to Jesus to be healed. How inventive are we in bringing people to Jesus for healing?”

The speaker will then walk to the podium (be ready to adjust the height of the microphone if needed).

As previously instructed, the speaker will open by addressing the congregation (see Speaker Orientation Session above). The speaker delivers his or her speech and ends by saying, “Thank You.” After the speech is given, he or she proceeds to the end of the row of speakers and takes a seat.

Before introducing the next participant, give the judges a few moments to complete their notes and comments. After confirming with the judges that they are ready to move on, introduce the next speaker.

*Note: If you have many junior and senior division participants, it is recommended to take a break between divisions. This way the judges can deliberate the junior division before listening to the senior division. If, on the other hand, you have fewer participants, the judges might feel comfortable hearing both divisions before deliberating. If there will be a long intermission between divisions, plan to serve refreshments and / or lunch.*



## Judges’ Deliberation

(may occur twice if you take an intermission between the junior and senior divisions)

Some tips:

- Be sure the judges are given the completed timekeeper form for the relevant divisions before leaving to deliberate.
- The judges will deliberate in a designated, private room. The person assigned to the judges should check in with them while they are deliberating in case they have questions.
- Ask the judges if they would like to see a printed copy of any speeches for review. If they do, you must cover up or black out the names of the participants on the printed copies.
- Remind them of the time limit for the divisions and that penalties are applied after the fifteen-second grace period (at the 5:16 mark for seniors and the 4:16 mark for juniors).

When the results of each division have been determined, the person assigned to fill in the results on the certificates will take the Judges’ Ranking Sheet - Form C and compare it to Speaking Order - Form A, writing in the names of the participants who received first, second and third place honors; all others receive the rank of honorable mention.



## Group Photo

Since the participants were introduced by speaking order number, during the judges' deliberation is the perfect time to introduce them by their names and take a few group photos. Try to take some of the junior and senior division separately as well as the entire group of participants. Sharing the photos on the church's website, Facebook and other social media is a great way to publicize the Oratorical Festival.



## Elementary Division (optional)

In some parishes, the fifth and sixth grade students (elementary division) are invited to present on an elementary division topic [see section 8 of this manual on page 33]. Including them not only fills the time while the judges deliberate, but it also gives these students the opportunity to listen to the junior and senior division speakers and become aware of what they will be asked to do once they reach seventh grade.



## Award Ceremony

The priest or parish chairperson should ask everyone to assemble for the award ceremony. Introduce the judges and present a gift to them at this time, and thank any volunteers. The chairperson should announce the speakers and how they ranked. Give the certificates and gifts to the priest to present to the participants. Announce the ranking in ascending order: honorable mentions first, followed by third place, second place and first place.\*

\*If the top two speakers in each division are advancing to your district festival, the certificates should read "Parish Finalist" and the announcement at the award ceremony should be the same. The parish finalist rank takes the place of first and second place. The next ranked speaker is awarded third place. All other participants receive the honorable mention rank. If only one person advances to your district festival, then the rankings must be honorable mentions, third, second and first place.

Inform the finalists when and where their District Oratorical Festival will be held.



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# AFTER THE FESTIVAL

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## Communication and Wrap-up

- Complete the Summary of Ratings and Rankings form. (The fillable PDF can be found at [www.goarch.org/oratorical](http://www.goarch.org/oratorical)) Email the completed form to the chairperson for the next level as well as the National Chairperson at [oratoricalchair@goarch.org](mailto:oratoricalchair@goarch.org).
- Consult with your priest to determine a good Sunday for your top speakers to present their speeches to the congregation after the liturgy.
- Contact the district chairperson by email and provide the names and registration information of the finalists; be sure to copy the finalists on the email.

# Instructions for Hosting a District Oratorical Festival

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## PLANNING THE FESTIVAL

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### Schedule and Announce the Date of Your Parish Festival

(3-6 months prior to the festival)

The success of the oratorical festival depends on networking among the parish, district and metropolis chairpersons. Therefore, once you are appointed as district chairperson, one of your first responsibilities is to communicate the date and location of your event to all parish chairpersons and clergy in your district. Their contact information will be made available to you by your metropolis chairperson. Please check the church calendar, as well as the local school calendars, to make sure there are no scheduling conflicts, and work with your metropolis chairperson to finalize the date of your district festival.

Please note: If you are in a district where there are five or fewer parishes participating, it is permissible for parishes to send two finalists per division (two junior and two senior) to the district festival. Because you likely won't know for certain how many parishes will be participating until February or even March, tell your parish chairpersons to plan to send one finalist per division and you will let them know as the district festival approaches if they may send more than one finalist per division.

On the other hand, your district might be accustomed to advancing two finalists per division from each parish even if there are more than five parishes participating. If so, we recommend that you have two panels of judges for the district festival for efficiency. You would have the panel of judges for the junior division deliberate while the senior speeches are being delivered.



### Form a Committee

(2-3 months prior to the festival)

At the district level, you will want to have a host committee to share the following responsibilities:

- Welcome and register the speakers on the day of the event
- Create and print the program for the event.
- Promote the festival

- Plan for refreshments or meals
- Lead the speaker orientation session
- Lead the judges' orientation session
- Serve as time-keeper
- Prepare the certificates and gifts



## Encourage Participation

Reach out to parishes that have not registered and encourage them to get involved in the Oratorical Festival.



## Select Judges

(2-3 months prior to the festival)

As a district chairperson, selecting a qualified and objective panel of judges is one of the most important aspects of ensuring a successful Oratorical Festival. Here is a set of requirements for your selection:

- The judges must be Orthodox Christians.
- The panel of judges should be composed of both men and women, with three judges total (to avoid a tie).
- The judges should be proficient in English and knowledgeable in public speaking. Educators and lawyers are often good choices, as well as those who have studied theology.
- The judges should not be personally familiar with the speakers (e.g., they should not be speakers' Sunday school teacher, GOYA advisor, etc.) or related to the speakers.
- You should not have a parish priest or presvytera from one of the parishes in your metropolis serve as a judge - you can ask a priest or presvytera from another metropolis or another jurisdiction (Antiochian Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, etc.)
- The same judge(s) cannot be used from one festival level to the next (e.g., if someone is a parish judge, he or she may not also be a district / metropolis judge).

*Note: The judges should not hear the speeches before the festival.*

Email your judges the topics in advance of the Oratorical Festival along with the judges' instructions and an example speaker evaluation form. Ask your judges to plan to meet you at least an hour before the festival is scheduled to begin so you can go over the processes.



## Promote the Festival to the Community

(as soon as it's scheduled and ongoing until the event)

Ask your priest to talk about your parish hosting the district festival and encourage parishioners to attend so they may welcome the speakers and hear the speeches.



## Prepare Certificates and Gifts for Participants and Judges

(Suggested: two weeks prior to the festival)

The committee member assigned to the certificates must download a certificate template from the Department of Religious Education *which can be* found in the Oratorical Festival section of [www.orthodoxmarketplace.com](http://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com). Follow the certificate instructions before downloading. Print the certificates on cardstock or parchment paper.

It would be appropriate to present all the participants with an icon, spiritual book or other small gift in recognition of their hard work. A small gift (an icon, spiritual book, gift card, etc.) should also be given to your judges to thank them for their time.



## Create a Printed Program

Include in the printed program the festival schedule and the speakers' information (list speakers alphabetically by their parish city): the name of the parishes they represent, their names and the topics of their speeches. Also include the names (and short biographies) of the judges and the names of committee volunteers.

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# DURING

## THE FESTIVAL

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### Checklist of Items to Bring

- Certificates and gifts for the speakers / judges -save time by filling in certificates with participants' names in advance; then all you must do after the judges' results are known is fill out the ranking of the participants (first place, second place, third place and honorable mention)
- Pencils and a clipboard for each judge
- Calculator or calculator app
- Speaker evaluation forms: one for each speaker plus a few extras (it's helpful to print copies of the junior forms on one color and the senior forms on another color so they can be easily organized)
- Copies of the judges' instructions: one for each judge plus one additional for the person leading the judges orientation session
- Two printed copies of the Judge's Ranking Sheet - Form C (one for the junior division and one for the senior division)
- Two printed copies of the Timekeeper's Report (one for each division)
- Copies of the topics for reference: one for each judge and one for the person leading the orientation session
- Stopwatch or stopwatch app and large time notifications cards to indicate time remaining to speakers (1 minute left, 30 seconds left)
- Names of speakers printed on address labels--this makes it easy to place their speaking order on the Speaking Order - Form A
- Printed copies of the program
- Podium, microphone and (if needed) step stool

*Note: All forms can be found in the last section of this manual.*

## Typical Schedule for a District Festival

This is a typical schedule for a district festival. Specific guidance for each section is below.

- Speaker Registration and Breakfast
- Speaker Orientation
- Judge Orientation
- Gather everyone together where the festival will occur to announce festival will begin
- Opening prayer
- Welcome from parish chairperson
- Junior speakers
- Senior speakers
- Judge's deliberation
- Group photo, refreshments during judge's deliberation
- Announcement of finalists
- Parish chairperson closing remarks



### Speaker Registration and Breakfast

Set up a welcome table to greet each speaker as they arrive. Each participant should provide a hard copy of his or her speech formatted as follows:

- Double-spaced
- Speech topic included at the top of the first page
- Participant's name, address, parish name/location and division (junior or senior) in the top right corner of the first page

Cross-reference topics on participants' speeches with the program to ensure they are the same.

**Speaker Orientation Session** – led by a pre-assigned committee member and held where the speeches will be delivered, preferably the church:

- Have participants pick their speaking order numbers out of a hat.
- Provide participants with an opening remark that makes sense given the clergy in attendance and the time of day, and have them practice this using the microphone. An example opening would be: "Reverend Father(s), honorable judges, parishioners, good morning." Each speaker should deliver the same greeting and say "Thank you" at the end of his or her speech.
- Be sure each participant can see above the podium. If not, you must provide a step stool. Let them know you will adjust the height of the microphone for them as needed.

- Show them where the judges and the time-keeper will be sitting. Introduce them to the time-keeper so they know who will be holding the time cards. Make sure the numbers on the time cards are large enough to be seen from the podium.
- Remind them of the time limitations (3–4 minutes for juniors, 4–5 minutes for seniors) and the notifications they will see from the time-keeper (1 minute left; 30 seconds left).
- Have the participants sit in the pews in the order in which they will be speaking. As each speaker gets up to deliver his or her speech, the other participants can slide down; this way the person who just gave a speech can take a seat at the end of the pew.

**Judges’ Orientation Session** – led by a pre-assigned committee member

Here is a checklist of tasks and items to prepare for the judges’ orientation:

- Provide the judges with copies of the topics and topic tips as well as pens / pencils and a clipboard.
- Provide the judges with speaker evaluation forms: one for each speaker plus a few extras (it’s helpful to print the junior forms on one color paper and the senior forms on another color paper so they can be easily organized).
- Provide each judge with copies of the Judges Ranking Sheet –Form C (for the division they are judging; if you have one panel for both divisions, provide each judge with a junior form and a senior form).
- Make sure the judges identify who will be the coordinating judge: this person is responsible for tabulating the results and leading the discussion if there isn’t clear consensus.
- Walk the judges through the speaker evaluation form and ensure they understand the criteria for judging. Remind them that content and delivery are to be weighted equally. Encourage the judges to be thoughtful, to take their time and to write comments / notes to remind themselves of each speaker.
- Remind the judges of the time requirements (3–4 minutes for juniors, 4–5 minutes for seniors) and that there is a fifteen-second grace period. One point is deducted for every five seconds over or under the grace period (e.g., if a speaker is under the minimum time or over the maximum).
- Advise the judges that if there are significantly different perceptions of the top four speakers (for example, one speaker is voted first by one judge and eighth by another), the judges should discuss why they voted the way they did and feel free to make adjustments as they see fit.
- Guide the judges to where they will sit, ensuring that the podium is visible to them. It is less threatening to the participants if the judges are sitting in a pew rather than at a table.
- Advise the judges that they could and should provide feedback to any speakers who approach them afterwards. Note that the evaluation forms will not be provided to the speakers even if they request them.



## Speeches

The junior speakers should go first, followed by the senior speakers.

Introduce each speaker by stating the speaker number, the topic number chosen, and then read the topic in full. For example:

- “Our first speaker in the junior division will be speaking on topic number 5: In Mark 2:1-12, four men remove a roof in order to bring a paralytic to Jesus to be healed. How inventive are we in bringing people to Jesus for healing?”

The speaker will then walk to the podium (be ready to adjust the height of the microphone if needed.)

As previously instructed, the speaker will open by addressing the congregation (see Speaker Orientation Session above). The speaker delivers his or her speech and ends by saying, “Thank You.” After the speech is given, he or she proceeds to the end of the row of speakers and takes a seat.

Before introducing the next participant, give the judges a few moments to complete their notes and comments. After confirming with the judges that they are ready to move on, introduce the next speaker.

*Note: If you have many junior and senior division participants, it is recommended to take a break between divisions. This way the judges can deliberate on the junior division before listening to the senior division. If, on the other hand, you have fewer participants, the judges might feel comfortable hearing both divisions before deliberating. If there will be a long intermission between divisions, plan to serve refreshments and / or lunch.*



## Judges’ Deliberation

(may occur twice if you take an intermission between the junior and senior divisions)

Some tips:

- Be sure the judges are given the completed timekeeper form for the relevant division before leaving to deliberate.
- The judges will deliberate in a designated, private room. The person assigned to the judges should check in with them while they are deliberating in case they have any questions.
- Ask the judges if they would like to see a printed copy of any speeches for review. If they do, you must cover up or black out the names of the participants and their parishes on the printed copies.
- Remind them of the time limit for the divisions and that penalties are applied after the fifteen-second grace period (at the 5:16 mark for seniors and the 4:16 mark for juniors).



When the results of each division have been determined, the person assigned to fill in the results on the certificates will take the Judges' Ranking Sheet - Form C and compare it to Speaking Order - Form A, writing in the names of the participants who received first, second and third place honors; all others receive the rank of honorable mention.

Be sure that when the certificates are filled in, first and second place recipients are written in as district finalists. When the announcements are made at the award ceremony, these recipients are referred to as the two junior and two senior district finalists who will attend the metropolis festival not as first and second place speakers.



## Group Photo

Since the participants were introduced by speaking order number, during the judges' deliberation is the perfect time to introduce them by their names and the parishes they are from and take a few group photos.

Try to take some of the junior and senior division separately as well as the entire group of participants.

Sharing the photos on the church's website, Facebook and other social media platforms is a great way to publicize the Oratorical Festival.



## Award Ceremony

The priest or district chairperson should ask everyone to assemble for the award ceremony. Introduce the judges and present a gift to them at this time, and thank any volunteers. The chairperson should announce the speakers and how they ranked. Give the certificates and gifts to the priest to present to the participants. Announce the ranking in ascending order: honorable mentions first, followed by third place and then the two junior and two senior district finalists who will represent the district at the metropolis festival.

Inform the finalists when and where their metropolis Oratorical Festival will be held.

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# AFTER THE FESTIVAL

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## Communication and Wrap-up

- Complete the Summary of Ratings and Rankings form. (The fillable PDF can be found at [www.goarch.org/oratorical](http://www.goarch.org/oratorical)) Email the completed form to the Metropolis Chairperson as well as the National Chairperson at [oratoricalchair@goarch.org](mailto:oratoricalchair@goarch.org).
- Contact the metropolis chairperson by email and provide the names and registration information of the finalists; be sure to copy the finalists on the email.

# Instructions for Hosting a Metropolis Oratorical Festival

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## **PLANNING THE FESTIVAL**

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The metropolis festival is scheduled by the metropolis coordinator and metropolitan. If the metropolis coordinator is different from the metropolis host chairperson, please be sure to keep each other informed on decisions.



### **Form a Committee**

(2-3 months prior to the festival)

At the metropolis level, you will want to have a host committee to share the following responsibilities:

- Welcome and register the speakers on the day of the event
- Create and print the program for the event
- Promote the festival
- Plan breakfast, refreshments and lunch for the event
- Lead the speaker orientation session
- Lead the judges orientation session
- Serve as time-keeper
- Prepare the certificates and gifts



### **Select Judges**

(2-3 months prior to the festival)

As a metropolis chairperson selecting a qualified and objective panel of judges is one of the most important aspects of ensuring a successful Oratorical Festival. Here is a set of requirements for your selection:

- The judges must be Orthodox Christians.
- The panel of judges should be composed of both men and women, with three judges total (to avoid a tie). So that the event can run more efficiently, it can be helpful to have two panels of judges at the metropolis level (one panel of three for juniors and another panel for seniors).

- The judges should be proficient in English and knowledgeable in public speaking. Educators and lawyers are often good choices, as well as those who have studied theology.
- The judges should not be personally familiar with the speakers (e.g., from the participants' parish) or related to the speakers.
- The same judge(s) cannot be used from one level to the next (e.g., if someone is a parish / district, judge, he or she may not also be a metropolis judge).

*Note: The judges should not hear the speeches before the festival.*

Email your judges the topics and topic tips in advance of the Oratorical Festival along with the judges' instructions and the Speaker Evaluation Form). Ask your judges to plan to meet you at least an hour before the festival is scheduled to begin so you can go over the processes.



## Promote the Festival to the Community

(as soon as it's scheduled and ongoing until the event)

Ask your priest to talk about your parish hosting the metropolis festival and encourage parishioners to attend so they may welcome the speakers and hear the speeches.



## Prepare Certificates and Gifts for Participants and Judges

(suggested: 2 weeks prior to the festival)

The committee member assigned to the certificates must download a certificate template from the Department of Religious Education which can be found in the Oratorical Festival section of [www.orthodoxmarketplace.com](http://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com). Follow the certificate instructions before downloading. Print the certificates on cardstock or parchment paper.

- It would be appropriate to present all the participants with an icon, spiritual book or other small gift in recognition of their hard work.
- A small gift (an icon, spiritual book, gift card, etc.) should also be given to your judges to thank them for their time.



## Create a Printed Program

Include in the printed program the festival schedule and the speakers' information (list speakers alphabetically by their district): the name of the parishes they represent, their names and the topics of their speeches. Also include the names (and short bios) of the judges and the names of the committee of volunteers. More ideas and sample resources can be found at [www.goarch.org/oratorical](http://www.goarch.org/oratorical).

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# DURING

## THE FESTIVAL

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### Checklist of Items to Bring

- Certificates and gifts for the speakers / judges -- save time by filling in certificates with participants' names in advance; then all you must do after the judges' results are known is fill out the ranking of the participants (first place, second place, third place and honorable mention)
- Pencils and a clipboard for each judge
- Calculator or calculator app
- Speaker evaluation forms: one for each speaker plus a few extras (it's helpful to print copies of the junior forms on one color and the senior forms on another color so they can be easily organized)
- Copies of the judges' instructions: one for each judge plus one additional for the person leading the judges orientation session
- Two printed copies of the Judge's Ranking Sheet - Form C (one for the junior division and one for the senior division)
- Two printed copies of the Timekeeper's Report (one for each division)
- Copies of the topics for reference: one for each judge and one for the person leading the orientation session
- Stopwatch or stopwatch app and large time notification cards to indicate time remaining to speakers (1 minute left, 30 seconds left)
- Names of the speakers printed on address labels--this makes it easy to place their speaking order on the Speaking Order - Form A
- Printed copies of the program
- Podium, microphone and (if needed) step stool

*Note: All forms can be found in the last section of this manual.*

# Typical Schedule for a Metropolis Oratorical Festival

This is a typical schedule for a metropolis festival. Specific guidance for each section is below.

- Speaker Registration and Breakfast
- Speaker Orientation
- Judges' Orientation
- Gather everyone together where the festival will occur to announce festival will begin
- Opening prayer
- Welcome from district chairperson
- Junior speakers
- Break
- Senior speakers
- Judges' deliberation
- Group photo, during judges' deliberation
- Luncheon
- Announcement of finalists
- District chairperson closing remarks

Additional guidance is provided below.



## Speaker Registration and Breakfast

Set up a welcome table to greet each speaker as they arrive. Each participant should provide a copy of his or her speech formatted as follows:

- Double-spaced
- Speech topic included at the top of the first page
- Participant's name, address, parish name/location and division (junior or senior) in the top right corner of the first page

Cross-reference topics on participants' speeches with the program to ensure they are the same.

**Speaker Orientation Session** - led by a pre-assigned committee member and to be held where the speeches will be delivered, preferably the church

- Have the participants pick their speaking order numbers out of a hat.
- Provide participants with an opening remark that makes sense given the clergy in attendance and the time of day, and have them practice this using the microphone. An example opening would be: "Your Eminence/Grace, Reverend Father(s), honorable judges, parishioners, good morning." If a hierarch is present, each speaker should kiss his hand before walking to the lectern. Each speaker should deliver the same greeting and say "Thank you" at the end of his or her speech.

- Be sure each participant can see above the podium. If not, you must provide a step stool. Let them know you will adjust the height of the microphone for them as needed.
- Show them where the judges and the time-keeper will be sitting. Introduce them to the time-keeper so they know who will be holding the time cards. Make sure the numbers on the time cards are large enough to be seen from the podium.
- Remind them of the time limitations (3-4 minutes for juniors, 4-5 minutes for seniors) and the notifications they will see from the time-keeper (1 minute left; 30 seconds left).
- Have the participants sit in the pew(s) in the order in which they will be speaking. As each speaker gets up to deliver his or her speech the other participants can slide down; this way the person who just gave a speech can take a seat at the end of the pew.
- Identify whether any speakers require a stepstool to be seen over the podium.
- Have each speaker say good morning into the microphone so they know the volume they need to project. The person introducing the speakers should plan to adjust the microphone for the height of each speaker.

### **Judges' Orientation Session** - led by a pre-assigned committee member

- Provide the judges with copies of the topics and topic tips as well as pens / pencils and a clipboard.
- Provide the judges with speaker evaluation forms: one for each speaker plus a few extras (it's helpful to print the junior forms on one color paper and the senior forms on another color paper so they can be easily organized).
- Provide each judge with copies of the Judges Ranking Sheet - Form C (for the division they are judging; if you have one panel for both divisions, provide each judge with a junior form and a senior form).
- Make sure the judges identify who will be the coordinating judge: this person is responsible for tabulating the results and leading the discussion if there isn't clear consensus.
- Walk the judges through the speaker evaluation form and ensure they understand the criteria for judging. Remind them that content and delivery are to be weighted equally. Encourage the judges to be thoughtful, to take their time and to write comments / notes to remind themselves of each speaker.
- Remind the judges of the time requirements (3-4 minutes for juniors, 4-5 minutes for seniors) and that there is a fifteen-second grace period for those that run over or under time. One point is deducted for every five seconds over or under the grace period (e.g., if a speaker is under the minimum time or over the maximum).
- Advise the judges that if there are significantly different perceptions of the top four speakers (for example, one speaker is voted first by one judge and eighth by another), the judges should discuss why they voted the way they did and feel free to make adjustments as they see fit.
- Guide the judges to where they will sit, ensuring that the podium is visible to them. It is less threatening to the participants if the judges are sitting in a pew rather than at a table.
- Advise the judges that they could and should provide feedback to any speakers who approach them afterwards. Note that the evaluation forms will not be provided to the speakers even if they request them.

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# DURING

## THE FESTIVAL

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### Speeches

Introduce each speaker by stating the speaker number, the topic number chosen, and then read the topic in full. For example:

- “Our first speaker in the junior division, will be speaking on topic number 5: In Mark 2:1-12, four men remove a roof in order to bring a paralytic to Jesus to be healed. How inventive are we in bringing people to Jesus for healing?”

The speaker will then kiss the hierarch’s hand (if one is present) and walk to the podium (be ready to adjust the height of the microphone if needed).

As previously instructed, the speaker will open by addressing the congregation (see Speaker Orientation Session above). The speaker delivers his or her speech and ends by saying “Thank You.” After the speech is given, he or she proceeds to the end of the row of speakers.

Before introducing the next participant, give the judges a few moments to complete their notes and comments. After confirming with the judges that they are ready to move on, introduce the next speaker.

*Note: If you have many junior and senior division participants, it is recommended to take a break between divisions. This way the judges can deliberate the junior division before listening to the senior division. If, on the other hand, you have fewer participants, the judges might feel comfortable hearing both divisions before deliberating. If there will be a long intermission between divisions, plan to serve refreshments and / or lunch.*



### Judges’ Deliberation

(may occur twice if you take an intermission between the junior and senior divisions)

Some tips:

- Be sure the judges are given the completed timekeeper form for the relevant division before leaving to deliberate.
- The judges will deliberate in a designated, private room. The person assigned to the judges should check in with them while they are deliberating in case they have any questions.
- Ask the judges if they would like to see a printed copy of any speeches for review. If so, you must cover up or black out the names of the participants and their parishes on the printed copies.
- Remind them of the time limit for the divisions and that penalties are applied after the fifteen-second grace period (at the 5:16 mark for seniors and the 4:16 mark for juniors).



When the results of each division have been determined, the person assigned to fill in the results on the certificates will take the Judges' Ranking Sheet - Form C and compare it to Speaking Order - Form A, writing in the names of the participants who received first, second and third place honors; all others receive the rank of honorable mention.



## Group Photo

Since the participants were introduced by speaking order number, during the judges' deliberation is the perfect time to introduce them by their names and the parishes they are from and take a few photos (try to take some of the junior and senior divisions separately as well as the entire group of participants). Sharing the photos on the church's website, Facebook and other social media platforms is a great way to publicize the Oratorical Festival.



## Award Ceremony

The priest or metropolis chairperson should ask everyone to assemble for the award ceremony. Introduce the judges and present a gift to them at this time, and thank any volunteers. The chairperson should announce the speakers and how they are ranked. Give the certificates and gifts to the hierarch (if present) or priest to present to the participants. Announce the rankings in ascending order: honorable mentions first, followed by third place, second place and finally the first place speaker who will be the metropolis finalist and advance to the National Oratorical Festival.

Before the two metropolis finalists depart, be sure they are given any documents or other information pertaining to the National Oratorical Festival.

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# AFTER

# THE FESTIVAL

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- Complete the Summary of Ratings and Rankings form. (The fillable PDF can be found at [www.goarch.org/oratorical](http://www.goarch.org/oratorical)) Email the Archdiocese Chairperson at [oratorical@goarch.org](mailto:oratorical@goarch.org).
- About two weeks after your metropolis festival, contact the two finalists to confirm they are attending the National Oratorical Festival and that they returned the requested information and to the appropriate persons. If either of the finalists cannot attend the National Oratorical Festival, then you must inform the second place finalist that he or she is eligible to represent your metropolis.

# The Elementary Division

## ► PURPOSE

The purpose of the elementary division program is to offer children in the fifth and sixth grades the opportunity to express their feelings about their Faith and Church, as well as to help them gain confidence and self-esteem. In addition, it provides an incentive for children to participate in the junior and senior divisions in the future.

## Structure

The basic differences between the elementary division and the junior and senior divisions are as follows:

- The elementary division is strictly a local program.
- There is no judging.
- The topics are modest but invite creativity: Jesus, prayer, icons, etc.
- It is designed to fit easily into the Sunday Church school program with flexible topics that coincide with the curriculum.
- To make it even more interesting, consider having some participants sing a song or re-enact a parable or a Bible story. Be creative!

## Rules

Encourage all children to participate. Teachers and parents should assist the children in choosing a topic. Invite the children to present their talks at a community gathering, perhaps after the Divine Liturgy, as part of a parish event, during a special oratorical program exclusively for the elementary division or as part of the junior and senior division festival.

Each elementary division talk should last 30-90 seconds. However, strict timing should not be observed. For instance, one child may offer only two or three sentences, and another may offer considerably more. Also, if a child feels more comfortable using an icon, picture or poster as part of the talk, this is permissible.

## Suggested topics

- Helping Others
- The Bible
- Love
- Being Kind
- Lighting a Candle
- The Cross
- My Church
- My Family
- Prayer
- Church School
- My Favorite Icon

## The Oratorical Festival Scholarship Fund

The St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Scholarship Fund was established to provide scholarships for the top three speakers in the junior and senior divisions of the national Archdiocese Oratorical Festival. The first scholarships were awarded in 1988. The Oratorical Scholarship Fund also receives support from individuals and a growing list of parishes and Philoptochos chapters and other ministries of the Church that annually contribute to the scholarship fund.

One of the major concerns of teenagers today is the rising cost of higher education. A major goal of the Oratorical Festival Scholarship Fund is that it be enlarged to the point where scholarship awards will not only be maintained but also increased. Meeting this goal, however, requires the help of individuals, parishes and organizations that appreciate and will help meet the needs of our college-bound youth.

## The Fr. John and Presvytera Margaret Orfanakos Scholarship Fund

The Archdiocese Department of Religious Education has established the Orfanakos Scholarship Fund for the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Scholarship as a tribute to the late chairpersons of the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival. Fr. John fell asleep in the Lord on August 20, 2014.

Fr. John (+2014) and Presvytera Margaret (+2018) were the chairpersons of the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival for three decades, where they helped grow and shape the festival into what it is today. Donations to the Orfanankos Scholarship Fund can be made out to Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America with "SJCOF - ORFANAKOS" in the Memo.

<b>AWARDS</b>			
<b>JUNIOR DIVISION</b>		<b>SENIOR DIVISION</b>	
First Place	\$2,000	First Place	\$2,000
Second Place	\$1,500	Second Place	\$1,500
Third Place	\$1,000	Third Place	\$1,000

All finalists who receive the rank of honorable mention receive various other prizes.

Those interested in offering gifts, appreciated securities or other forms of support to the scholarship fund can do so by contacting:

The Department of Religious Education  
50 Goddard Avenue  
Brookline, MA 02445  
(800) 566-1088

# Oratorical Festival Materials

Additional printouts and resources for the Oratorical Festival can be found at [www.goarch.org/oratorical](http://www.goarch.org/oratorical).

## ORATORICAL FESTIVAL BLOG

The Department of Religious Education publishes blog posts on [www.blogs.goarch.org/oratorical-festival](http://www.blogs.goarch.org/oratorical-festival) that offer various topics and tips related to the Oratorical Festival.

The following supplies may be obtained from the Department of Religious Education by visiting our online store, **Orthodox Marketplace**, at [www.orthodoxmarketplace.com](http://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com) or calling (800) 566-1088.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Like our St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival page on Facebook and follow our instagram account @oratorical\_festival to stay in the loop on the latest updates.

## CERTIFICATES

Each speaker should receive a certificate to recognize participation in the festival. Certificates are available for parish, district, metropolis and elementary division festivals.

## AWARDS

**St. John Chrysostom Medallion:** A round medallion with three-color enamel depiction of the icon of the saint (2" diameter)

**St. John Chrysostom Icons:**  
3½ × 5" icons of the saint, available in various forms

## BOOKS

Supplementary book entitled *Daily Readings from the Writings of St. John Chrysostom*

## Also available: videos of speeches

A number of Archdiocese Oratorical Festival speeches are available on YouTube, which you may use to inform and motivate your students. Go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search for "St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival" to find videos of past years' speeches.

## St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Judges' Instructions

1. You will be provided with speaker evaluation forms to use as you listen to and watch the speakers.
2. One member of the judging panel will be asked to serve as a coordinating judge during the deliberations. This person is responsible for tabulating the results and leading the discussion if there isn't a clear consensus.
3. After all the speakers have finished, you will depart to a private room for deliberations. You will be given the timekeeper's report to determine if any penalties are to be applied for running under or over time.
4. If you have a theological question about one of the speeches, you may ask the parish priest to come in to discuss the point in question. In addition, you can ask the person conducting the orientation session for a printed copy of a speech if you aren't sure about a certain statement or reference you heard (any identifying information of the speaker will be covered).
5. Where there is a discrepancy among scores for the top four speakers (for example, one speaker is rated first by one judge and eighth by another), the judges should discuss why they voted the way they did and feel free to make adjustments as they see fit.
6. After you tally the ranking points of each speaker and write down the numbers in the columns on the Judges' Ranking Sheet-Form C, the coordinating judge sums the points from each judge to find each speaker's total ranking points to determine who received first, second or third place. The person leading your orientation session will compare the ranking sheet scores from Form C to Speaking Order-Form A, which has the names of the participants in their speaking order.
  - At the parish level, typically one junior and one senior speaker advances to the district Oratorical Festival. The exceptions to this rule are for those districts with five or fewer churches participating or in the case where even though there are more than five participating parishes it is felt this encourages more parish participation. In such cases, two speakers from each division advance to the district festival. The person conducting the orientation session will then designate the top two participants as "Parish Finalists" and the participant with the next lowest rank as third place.
  - At the district level, two speakers per division advance to the metropolis Oratorical Festival.
  - At the metropolis level, one speaker per division advances to the National Finals level of the Oratorical Festival.

7. Positive and encouraging comments to the participants and audience are encouraged and beneficial. Expect some participants to approach you after the award ceremony to ask how they did and request their speaker evaluation forms. **You are not permitted to share speaker evaluation forms with speakers. Likewise, the details of the judging panel's deliberations must not be made public.** While you can offer comments, keep them positive and be sensitive to the speakers' abilities to understand and accept remarks that may be critical. In the past, we permitted Speaker Evaluation Forms to be shared with speaker if he or she wanted additional feedback from the judges' scoring. This is no longer permitted because each judge scores very differently, and evaluation forms do not offer significant input on how to improve writing, delivery, etc.
8. Upon completion of deliberation, the "Speaker Evaluation Forms" are to be given to the chairperson for future reference.

## Scoring and Ranking Process

We've designed a system that accommodates the variation among judges' scores (for example, one judge might have total points of all the speakers at 90 or higher, while another judge might have total points of all the speakers at 85 or lower).

STEP	FORMS USED
<p>Each judge rates the speakers individually during or immediately after each speech. Speakers can be awarded up to 100 points total (50 for content and 50 for delivery).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaker Evaluation Form</li> </ul>
<p>In the deliberation room, the judges review the timekeeper's report. Each judge subtracts any time penalties as necessary and calculates the total points.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaker Evaluation Form</li> <li>• Timekeeper Report</li> </ul>
<p>Then, each judge reviews his/her own speaker evaluation forms (for junior speakers and senior speakers separately) and sorts them in order from highest to lowest number of Total Points. Each judge assigns a rank from first to the lowest ranking number (depending on how many speakers there are) in the top right corner of the form.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> <i>If there is a tie in total points, the judge should indicate both speakers as the same ranking number and then skip a number. For example, if a judge has a tie for second place, his/her rankings would be 1, 2, 2, 4, etc.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaker Evaluation Form</li> </ul>
<p>Each judge now takes his/her speaker evaluation forms and re-sorts them according to speaking order number. Each speaker's rank that was given by each judge is then written down on the Judges' Ranking Sheet - Form C. To avoid confusion, it is recommended that the coordination judge ask each judge, "What rank did you give speaker number 1, 2, 3," etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaker Evaluation Form</li> <li>• Judges' Ranking Sheet-Form C</li> </ul>
<p>After all judges have entered their ranking numbers onto the Judges' Ranking Sheet - Form C the coordinating judge sums each column to find each speaker's Total Ranking Points. The speaker with the lowest number of ranking points is awarded first place, then second place and then third place. Fourth place and above are awarded Honorable Mention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judges' Ranking Sheet-Form C</li> </ul>
<p><b>Note:</b> <i>If there is a tie for first, second, third, or fourth place, the judges should refer to their speaker evaluation forms and refer to total points (located at the bottom of the form) for the speakers who are in question. The speaker with the highest number of total points would win the tie.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaker Evaluation Form</li> <li>• Judges' Ranking Sheet-Form C</li> </ul>
<p>The coordinating judge transcribes the speaking order number of the speakers who are awarded first, second and third places onto the bottom right hand section of the Judges' Ranking Sheet - Form C. Then the person who led the orientation session identifies the name of the speaker in each ranking by cross-referencing with Speaking Order - Form A.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judges' Ranking Sheet - Form C</li> <li>• Speaking Order - Form A</li> </ul>

# Speech Requirements

**Participants:** Junior Division - Students in grades 7-9 Senior Division - Students in grades 10-12

**The Speech:** The speech Topic must be taken from the official list compiled by the Department of Religious Education. Speakers are expected to have prepared their own speech through research and personal experience. Quotations should be used effectively as supportive material and must have sources identified. No audio-visual material can be used. The delivery must largely be given from the lectern and should not be a dramatic presentation.

**The Length:** Juniors, 3-4 minutes; Seniors, 4-5 minutes. A 15-second grace period will be given to speakers who run under or overtime. The penalties assessed are one point lost for every five seconds beyond the 15-second grace period. Such points will be deducted from each judge's "TOTAL" for "Content and Delivery" found at the bottom of the "Speaker Evaluation Form." The report of the timekeeper will determine if any penalties are in order.

## Judges' Criteria for Evaluating Speeches

### Content

**Organization:** Is there a clear introduction that draws the listeners into the speech? Is the body clearly organized with supporting information? Is the development of ideas logical and easy to follow? Does the conclusion draw the ideas together and give clear emphasis to the thesis of the speech?

**Persuasiveness:** Did the speaker offer persuasive arguments, through logic or other means and cause a new thinking about the topic rather than just summarizing it?

**Adaptation of Topic:** Did the speaker approach the topic in an innovative way? Was the speech well-researched? Did the speaker use appropriate, descriptive, and convincing language? If personal experience was referenced, was it effective?

**Theology:** Is the content theologically sound, reflecting Orthodox Tradition accurately? Did the speech draw upon scriptural, liturgical, and historical resources?

**Conclusion:** Did the speaker offer a call-to-action and/or final thoughts that are designed to move the audience to the speaker's point-of-view?

### Delivery

**Vocal Skills:** Was the speaker's voice expressive, easily understood and heard? Did the speaker's voice effectively express the mood and feeling of the speech?

**Expressiveness:** Did the speaker demonstrate a desire to communicate his/her thoughts? Were pauses and phrasing effective?

**Physical Movements:** Did the speaker exhibit poise via posture, eye contact, facial expression? Was there effective use or overuse of movements, gestures? Did these emphasize key points?

**Effective Use of Manuscript:** It is not a requirement for the speech to be memorized. If a manuscript is used, did the speaker use it discreetly without relying on it throughout or having it become a distraction to the audience?

**Communication:** Did the speaker effectively communicate his/her thoughts with the audience by making contact with them in a conversational style?



**SECTION 11**

**ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL  
Speaking Order - Chairperson Copy - Form A**

The name of each speaker should be previously typed on self adhesive labels, thereby making it easier for names to be put in speaking order number. At a district and metropolis festival, you should also include the parish or district they are representing.

*Sample District Label*

Mary Pappas  
Annunciation Church, Modesto, CA

*Sample Metropolis Label*

Mary Pappas  
Northern CA District  
Annunciation Church, Modesto, CA

**JUNIOR DIVISION**

**SENIOR DIVISION**

1			1
2			2
3			3
4			4
5			5
6			6
7			7
8			8
9			9

# ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

## Timekeeper Report - Form B

JUNIORS: Minimum 3 minutes, maximum 4

SENIORS: Minimum 4 minutes, maximum 5

(A 15-second grace period will be given to speakers for speeches that run over or under time.)

The timekeeper must be present at the orientation session and should be seated in clear view of the speakers, and will give a signal when **one minute remains**, and another signal when **one half-minute remains**. The timing should begin after the speaker's initial greeting. The stopwatch should be kept running until the speaker has finished, so that an accurate timing of each talk can be listed on this form. Names are not needed on this form because judges only refer to the speaker's number. **The timekeeper report must be given to the judges as soon as the judges leave to begin deliberating.**

### JUNIOR DIVISION

### SENIOR DIVISION

Speaker Number	Time	Speaker Number	Time
1		1	
2		2	
3		3	
4		4	
5		5	
6		6	
7		7	
8		8	
9		9	

# Speaker Evaluation Form

**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Speaker order number:** \_\_\_\_\_

Category: (check one)       Junior Division     Senior Division

Point Scale:      Outstanding, Superior..... 9-10 points  
                          Good, better than average..... 7-8 points  
                          Satisfactory, fair, average..... 5-6 points  
                          Below average..... 3-4 points  
                          Ineffective..... 1-2 points

## CONTENT

### Points

\_\_\_\_\_ **Organization:** Was the speech content effective and organized with a clear introduction, body and conclusion?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Persuasiveness:** Did the speaker offer persuasive arguments and a clear point-of-view, rather than just summarizing the topic?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Adaptation of Topic:** Did the speaker approach the topic in an innovative way? Was the speech well researched? If personal experience was referenced, was it effective?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Theology:** Is the content theologically sound, reflecting accurate Orthodox Tradition? Did the speech draw upon scriptural, liturgical and historical resources?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Conclusion:** Did the speaker offer a call-to-action and/or final thoughts that are designed to move the audience to the speaker's point-of-view?

\_\_\_\_\_ POINTS - **Content Subtotal (50 is a perfect score)**

## DELIVERY

### Points

\_\_\_\_\_ **Vocal Skills:** Effectiveness of vocal skills via diction and volume. Did the voice express the mood and feeling of the speech?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Expressiveness:** Did the speaker communicate his/her thoughts with enthusiasm, and were pauses and phrasing effective, yet not too theatrical?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Physical Movements:** Were physical movements, eye contact, posture, poise and facial expressions effective?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Effective Use of Manuscript:** If a manuscript was used, was it distracting during the delivery of the speech?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Communication:** Did the speaker effectively communicate his/her thoughts with the audience?

\_\_\_\_\_ POINTS - **Delivery Subtotal (50 is a perfect score)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL POINTS** – (Content plus delivery)

\_\_\_\_\_ Minus time penalty, if applicable

\_\_\_\_\_ **GRAND TOTAL**

JUDGE \_\_\_\_\_

**ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL**  
**Judges' Ranking Sheet - Form C**

Division: \_\_\_\_\_ Junior

\_\_\_\_\_ Senior

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Judge A												
Judge B												
Judge C												
<b>Total Ranking Points</b>												

**RANKINGS:**

First Place (Lowest number of ranking points)      Speaker No.      Points      Speaker Name\* \_\_\_\_\_

Second Place (2nd lowest number of ranking points)      \_\_\_\_\_

Third Place (3rd lowest number of ranking points)      \_\_\_\_\_

\*Names to be filled in by Festival Chairperson.

# ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

## Speaker Summary Of Ratings And Rankings

The summary of ratings and rankings is the official record of each Oratorical Festival (Parish, District, Metropolis).

You have the option of mailing/faxing or filling this form out via fillable PDF, which you can then e-mail to the appropriate chairperson(s). Go to [www.religioused.goarch.org](http://www.religioused.goarch.org) and follow the links to the **St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival** to **Forms** and to **Summary of Ratings and Rankings**.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:  Parish Festival  District Festival  Metropolis Festival

Place of Festival \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Festival Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

Please enter the information from the "Judges' Ranking Sheet - Form C" for each speaker. The speaker with the lowest number of RANKING POINTS will be ranked #1; the speaker with the next lowest number of RANKING POINTS will be ranked #2; the next will be #3. All others will receive "Honorable Mention."

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### JUNIOR DIVISION SPEAKERS

Name, Parish, and Speech Topic Number

Judge

Total  
Points from  
each Judge

Ranking  
Points of  
the Speaker

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

---

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

---

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

**JUNIOR DIVISION - Continued**

Name, Parish, and Speech Topic Number	Judge	Total Points from each Judge	Ranking Points of the Speaker
---------------------------------------	-------	------------------------------------	-------------------------------------

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

**REMINDER TO ALL FESTIVAL CHAIRPERSONS**

Send copies of this Form: "Summary of Ratings and Rankings" as follows:

**1. PARISH CHAIRPERSONS:**

- E-mail/mail one copy to your District Chairperson.
- E-mail/mail one copy to your Metropolis Chairperson.
- E-mail/mail one copy to the Archdiocese Chairperson.
- Keep one copy in your file.

**2. DISTRICT CHAIRPERSONS:**

- E-mail/mail one copy to your Metropolis Chairperson.
- E-mail/mail one copy to the Archdiocese Chairperson.
- Keep one copy in your file.

**3. METROPOLIS CHAIRPERSONS:**

- E-mail/mail one copy to the Archdiocese Chairperson.
- Keep one copy in your file.

Archdiocese Chairperson Contact Information:  
**oratorical@goarch.org**

The contact info for other chairpersons can be found at [www.goarch.org/oratorical](http://www.goarch.org/oratorical)

**SENIOR DIVISION SPEAKERS**

Name, Parish, and Speech Topic Number

Judge

Total  
Points from  
each Judge

Ranking  
Points of  
the Speaker

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

A		
B		
C		

Total Ranking Points =

*This page may be photocopied if additional spaces are needed.*

