



2018 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Topics

About the Festival

Introduced in 1983, the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival provides Greek Orthodox teenagers the opportunity to write and talk about their faith. The Oratorical Festival Program begins at the parish level and is divided into three divisions:

- Elementary Division (local festival only) for students in grades 4–6
- Junior Division for students in grades 7–9
- Senior Division for student in grades 10–12

The top speakers in the Junior and Senior Divisions advance to the district level. Two finalists in each district division represent the district at the Metropolis Oratorical Festival. The top speaker in each metropolis division is then selected to participate in the Archdiocese Finals, which is hosted by a different metropolis each year.

All eighteen finalists at the Archdiocese Finals participate in a weekend of activities, the highlight of which is the delivery of their speeches on Saturday morning. The Oratorical Festival Scholarship Fund provides college scholarships to the top speakers. In 2015, the top three speakers of each division received college scholarships of \$2,000, \$1,500 and \$1,000. This year, each Honorable Mention speaker was awarded \$500.

National Festival

The 34th National Oratorical Festival will be hosted by the Metropolis of Boston and the Parish of Annunciation Woburn, MA on June 9-11, 2017.

The Chrysostom Scholarship for Hellenic College

In the 2016 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival, each Senior and Junior division first, second, and third place finalist in each category (Oratory, Poetry, and Essay) at the parish, district, metropolis, and national levels of competition is eligible to receive a Chrysostom Scholarship to Hellenic College. This scholarship has been amended to provide awards ranging from \$2,500 up to \$30,000 per year. Please download the terms and conditions to view the award structure.

Junior Division (Grades 7–9)

1. In John 15:13–15, Jesus teaches about friendship to His disciples. Discuss the importance of friendship in your life.
2. Choose a parable from the Gospel of Luke and discuss how it speaks to our contemporary life.
3. Talk about a time and circumstance when you were in awe and wonder – where you sensed the majesty of God.
4. Discuss how prayer, fasting, serving others, or study of Orthodoxy assists you with your relationship with Christ and the Church.
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?

Senior Division (Grades 10–12)

1. People often say, “It felt right” in order to explain their decisions. How many of our decisions factor in not only our feelings but also the will and commandments of God?
2. Christ’s disciples made the commitment to follow Him without knowing what the outcome might be. What does it mean to follow Christ today?
3. How can we have religious conversations on social media in an age of trolling?
4. Christ said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Mark 4:9). The Lord said this with reference to the way we hear the word of God. What is our response?
5. Our lives are saturated with violence, not only in terms of the proliferation of war and terrorism but even as entertainment through movies and video games. In such an environment, how can a Christian cultivate virtues that lead to empathy, peacemaking, and self-sacrifice?