



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
Department of Youth and Parish Ministries

Archdiocesan and Diocesan Oratorical Festival Rules

Topics

Each year the topic to be studied is chosen by the Department of Youth and Parish Ministry, and is posted [online](https://Orthodoxyouth.org) at <https://Orthodoxyouth.org> along with study guides, and current rules, the sign-up form, and other pertinent information. The topic will be sent to all parishes by 1 October of each year, for the upcoming year Oratorical Festival.

Participants

Each parish and mission of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America is eligible to enter orators in each division.

The divisions are

DIVISION	AGES
Junior	13-15 years old
Senior	16-19 years old

The Diocesan Oratorical Festival shall be held in conjunction with the Diocese Parish Life Conference. A Judge's Choice will be selected in each Diocesan Divisions and award will be presented by the Diocese, not the Archdiocese. The Senior Judge's Choice is expected to represent their Diocese at the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival, held at either the Archdiocese Convention (odd years) or the summer meetings at the Antiochian Village (even year).

The Diocesan Senior Division Judge's Choice shall represent your Diocese at the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival, held at the Archdiocese Convention (odd years) or during the Archdiocese Mid-Summer meetings, held at the Antiochian Village (even year). Travel expenses and two nights lodging will be covered by Diocesan Ministry Council.

Anyone Orator who has been selected as the Judge's Choice at an Archdiocese Oratorical Festival is ineligible to participate again in that division; any Diocesan Judge's Choice may compete at the Diocese Oratorical as follow:

- Senior Division: Diocesan Judge's Choice may not compete in the next conference year but can return the year after if he/she meet the age requirements (See above).

- Junior Division: Diocesan Judge's Choice may not compete in the next conference year in the Junior Division (unless the Orator was the sole competitor in that division) but can return the year after if he/she meets the age requirements. The Junior Division winner may compete the following year in the Senior Division if they meet the age requirement for that division (See above).

In the instance when the Judges' Choice of the Senior Oratorical division is unable to attend the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival, the runner-up for the Senior Division will represent their Diocese at the Archdiocese level and will receive any Archdiocese rewards or stipends given and will also have his/her oration appear in The Word Magazine and website.

Proper Attire

Participants are asked to dress appropriately for the Oratorical festival in a manner that represents their Diocese and parish well in a public Church event. Torn jeans or t-shirt attire would be considered inappropriate unless.

Registration

All Oratorical contestants must register online to participate in the Diocesan Oratorical Festival **no less than two weeks** beforehand. Orator's that have not registered online **shall not be allowed to compete** without the approval of the Diocesan Oratorical Coordinator and the Department of Youth and Parish Ministries Chair. To register online go to <http://www.OrthodoxYouth.org>, which opens on February 1 every year. During the registration process they will have the option to either to upload their speech and resumé or do it at a later date (will get an email with instructions).

Resume Guidelines

The Oratorical Contestant, shall compose a resume and shall include the following information:

- Name
- Address
- Home Phone
- Cell Phone
- Email
- Parent Cell Number
- Birthdate
- Parish with City and State/Province
- Year in School that you will be starting in Fall
- Awards and Recognition
- Future Goals and Aspirations
- Activities
 - Church and Youth Groups
 - School and Clubs

- Community
- Other

Scoring

Each Oratorian shall follow the time limits below:

<u>Division</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Leeway</u>
Junior	3 minutes	5 minutes	15 seconds
Senior	6 minutes	10 minutes	30 seconds

If the orator speech is less than the minimum or goes beyond the leeway time, points will be deducted from his/her final score. These points are divided among the three judges, see below for these deductions.

JUNIOR DIVISION		SENIOR DIVISION	
<u>Time of Oration</u>	<u>Penalty</u>	<u>Time of Oration</u>	<u>Penalty</u>
2:45-2:59 or 5:00-5:15	None	5:30-5:59 or 10:00-10:30	None
2:30-2:44 or 5:16-5:30	9 points	5:00-5:29 or 10:31-11:00	9 points
2:15-2:29 or 5:31-5:45	15 points	4:30-4:59 or 11:01-11:30	15 points
2:00-2:14 or 5:46-6:00	21 points	4:00-4:29 or 11:31-12:00	21 points
1:45-1:59 or 6:01-6:15	27 points	3:30-3:59 or 12:01-12:30	27 points
Under 1:44 or Over 6:16	Disqualification	Under 3:29 or Over 12:31	Disqualification

Tiebreaker Procedures

In the event of a tie

- Add the ranking of only the two or more contestants who are tied for 1st place.
- If this does not produce a winner then a Secret ballot amongst the three judges, voting for their top choice amongst those tied for 1st place only will determine the winner,
 - i. abstentions are not allowed, and each judge can only vote for one contestant.
- If there is a three or more-way tie for first place and if the above procedure still does not produce a winner, then take the top scorers only that are still tied and follow the above procedure again.
- If the tie is still not broken then the three judges will need to discuss who and why they believe should be the judges' choice and find a way to break the tie, with the Clergy judge leading the discussion.
- In addition, in the instance when an individual judge incidentally marks the same score for two or more contestants, he/she is required to make a judgment to reflect which oration was better by ranking them with a "rating" number of 1, 2, 3 and so forth. No two contestants should receive the same rating.

Judges

Collectively, judges may only select one choice (winner) per division, per the rules set forth (see below). Judges must also use the guideline on the “Oratorical Rating Sheet”, which reads: The lowest total score (of the three added ratings) determines first place. Please enter the “rating” number from the bottom of each judges score sheet for each contestant. If there is a tie for Judges’ Choice (first place) after this procedure, please consult the Tiebreaker Procedures.

Diocese Oratorical Festival Coordinator shall announce the Judge’s Choice for each division. All rankings shall be listed on the score sheets and only shared by contestants if they choose to do so privately.

There shall be three judges for the Oratorical, all three judges **cannot be a member** of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America:

- Orthodox Clergy
- Orthodox Lay/Clergy with a degree from an Orthodox Seminary
- Professional Judge (preferably Orthodox), in the field of speech, oratory, English, journalism, or any other of the oratory fields

Timekeeper

A Timekeeper shall record the time length of each Oratorian to ensure the Orator does not go under/over the allotted time and the Judges record any penalty if applicable.

Oratorian

The speech is an oration, not a sermon or dramatic presentation, therefore, the following guidelines will apply:

- Only gestures, intonation, eye contact, and other methods of physical communication can be utilized. Props and costumes are not allowed.
- Contestants will be given a standard greeting to recite from the Diocese Coordinator, commemorating the hierarchy, the clergy and the laity. Timing will begin at the first word of the oration, following the standard greeting.
- The orator may use 8 ½” x 11” printed pages, 3” x 5” note cards, tablets, notebook computer, or other small devices to present their oration.
- The orator is not to make references by name to themselves, family members, city or parish. The orators must remain completely anonymous to the Judges.
- Each orator must write his/her own oration. They may seek guidance and advice from their parish priest, parent, advisor, etc., but must be the author of their oration.

The Oratorical topic may not be altered by any Diocese.

At least two (2) weeks before the Diocesan Oratorical Festival, the orator must email the Diocesan Oratorical festival Coordinator (or upload it to the Oratorical sign-up form) with the following:

- Double-spaced, 8-1/2 x 11” typed copy of his/her oration. Please make sure that contestants do not include their names and information on these, as the judges will be provided with this copy.
- Brief résumé (including full name, age, address, phone number, email address, parish and city, grade in school, church school and civic activities, awards, future vocational goals or plans, etc.) using the form at the end of this section.

Once the contestants have arrived at the Festival, whether it is the hotel chapel, or conference room, they are to be undisturbed. Parents, clergy, coaches, friends and judges cannot talk to the contestants, as it may lead to bias for the Festival.

Senior division diocesan winners must present in large part the same oration that was delivered at their Diocesan Festival. Corrections/amendments are permitted only of grammatical or theological inaccuracies where noted by the Diocesan Judges and/or the contestant’s Pastor. Minor polishing of the grammar and delivery style of one’s oration may be done to fix delivery problems experienced on the diocesan level. The updated Oration must be presented, in writing, by e-mail or in person, to the Diocese Oratorical Festival Coordinator at least seven days prior to the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival.

Electronic Release

No orator, coach, or family member may release video or audio recording without the written approval of the Archdiocese Department of Youth Chair. This including email, posting on any social media streaming of Video/audio or publication on any website. However, photographs are permitted and can be released.

The Archdiocese Oratorical Festivals fall under the direction of the Department of Youth and Parish Ministries. All questions and requirements should be submitted to the Archdiocese Oratorical festival Coordinator appointed by the Chairman of the Archdiocese Department of Youth and Parish Ministries.

Any questions email: frjoseph@orthodoxyouth.com