

2021 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival to be held virtually



With the blessing of Archbishop Elpidophoros, the Archdiocesan St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Committee has decided that the Archdiocesan, or National level Festival, scheduled for June 11-13, 2021 will be a virtual festival.

While everyone is hopeful and optimistic, given the current state of the pandemic and the vaccine rollout, there are still many uncertainties that have affected planning. There is a high likelihood that some of the students and families who would attend the National festival in June may not feel comfortable traveling by plane, staying in hotels, etc., or attending a large in-person event. The committee also considered the challenges of hosting a weekend-long large gathering with all the necessary safety precautions that are expected to be in place. Out of concern for the families and the host parish, the committee decided that this is the best way to proceed at this still difficult time.

Taking inspiration from the many Church programs that have continued during the pandemic with virtual events that build fellowship, the plan is to host a multi-day virtual festival the weekend of June 11-13, 2021 that will include several

opportunities for the students to get to know one another, an online prayer service and the junior and senior level speaking sessions. His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros has been invited to participate in the Festival to hear the participants' speeches and to share remarks at a virtual awards ceremony. The same awards that have been provided at in-person festivals will be granted to the speakers. The Festival itself, the speaking program and awards ceremony will be live streamed so that a broader audience can benefit from hearing the speeches.

The committee thanks everyone in advance for their understanding and support. They look forward to hearing the young people share their faith and insights.

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