



## THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH & PARISH MINISTRIES

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA  
METROPOLITAN JOSEPH, PRIMATE

PO Box 389 ▪ Westwood, MA 02090-0389 ▪ [www.antiochian.org/youth](http://www.antiochian.org/youth)

September 2018

October is Antiochian Archdiocese Youth Month  
Bible Bowl and Oratorical Festival

My Dear Brother in Christ,

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

I pray all is well with you, your ministry, and your loved ones. Please know that you are in my prayers, as I also ask that you keep me and my family in your prayers.

Enclosed in this mailing are the Bible Bowl and Oratorical sheets for you to promote these opportunities for our young people and adults to deepen their faith. To further assist we have updated our Bible Bowl and Oratorical website at [www.orthodoxyouth.org](http://www.orthodoxyouth.org). Soon, study questions will be available at this website.

As you know, October is Youth Month across our archdiocese. This is the time to introduce our teens to more Liturgical activities in the services; reading the epistle, ushering, collecting, chanting, singing in the choir, hosting coffee hour, etc. This is also a good month to introduce the Bible Bowl and Oratorical Topics and to encourage participation in these Festivals. Our hopes are that in creating opportunities for our teens to be more active during Youth Month that they will do so all year.

### **Bible Bowl:**

Here is an opportunity for you to change lives and engage young people in learning the Word of God. Our studies have shown that young people who read the Scriptures regularly make better choices and more often believe what the Church teaches.

During this coming Parish Life Conference there will be three categories for the Bible Bowl:

- Ages 10-12 – Pre-Teen - we believe it is critical to engage our children with the Scriptures as early as possible.
- Ages 13-19 Teen  
(in the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West there are two teen age groupings - ages 13-15 and 16-19)
- Ages 20+ (Adult)

I have enclosed three 8.5" X 11" flyers for the Bible Bowl, one for you, one for your Youth Director and one for the person leading your Bible Bowl efforts. I have also enclosed an 11" X 17" Bible Bowl Poster for you to prominently post in your parish hall or education wing to promote the Bible Bowl. Please let me know if you need more than one poster.

**Oratorical:**

The Oratorical Festival is a wonderful opportunity for the youth of your parish to dive deep into their faith and to learn to bear witness to the Orthodox Faith before others. As part of raising up disciples and leaders we encourage you to facilitate the participation of your teens in this Oratorical Festival.

There are two Oratorical age categories, Ages 13-15 (Junior) and 16-19 (Senior). I have enclosed three 8.5" X 11" flyers with the Oratorical Topic and guidelines for you to encourage teens from your parish to explore deeper into the Scriptures, the teachings of the Fathers of the Church, and to observe the witness of others to their Orthodox Faith. We hope that this effort will enhance our teens skills and experience to bear witness to Christ before others. You may download more flyers at [www.orthodoxyouth.org](http://www.orthodoxyouth.org).

I ask that you work to have as full participation as possible in both the Bible Bowl and Oratorical Festivals for this coming Parish Life Conference. Over the past forty years, I have witnessed how both festivals have changed tens of thousands of lives across our archdiocese. I am encouraged by former teens who tell me, many years after a Bible Bowl or Oratorical, how these events have greatly impacted their faith and life. I encourage you to give this opportunity to your young people and ask your Parish Council to facilitate their participation in both preparation and attendance at the Parish Life Conference Bible Bowl and Oratorical.

**Thank You:**

Most importantly, I want to thank you for your continued ministry to our young people in your parish and across the archdiocese. May our Lord continue to bless and multiply all your good works. The love which your young people have for you, as their spiritual father, is a testament of your love for Christ, His Holy Orthodox Church and the faithful members of the Body of Christ. I am grateful for the sacrifices that you and your family make daily for our young people and all the faithful of your parish. I thank you for the trust you have placed in me and our Diocesan Spiritual Fathers and Youth Directors. May God Grant You Many More Years of blessed ministry in His Vineyard.

Your brother in Christ,



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P.S. Check out our Teen SOYO Website [www.teenSOYO.org](http://www.teenSOYO.org)  
And our Bible Bowl and Oratorical Site [www.OrthodoxYouth.org](http://www.OrthodoxYouth.org)