

= John Chrysostom =

John Chrysostom ( / ʒkrɪsʰtəm , krɪsʰtəm / ; Greek : Ἰωάννης Χρυσόστομος ) , c . 349 ? 407 , Archbishop of Constantinople , was an important Early Church Father . He is known for his preaching and public speaking , his denunciation of abuse of authority by both ecclesiastical and political leaders , the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom , and his ascetic sensibilities . The epithet χρυσόστομος ( Chrysostomos , anglicized as Chrysostom ) means " golden @-@ mouthed " in Greek and denotes his celebrated eloquence .

He is honored as a saint in the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic churches , as well as in some others . The Eastern Orthodox , together with the Byzantine Catholics , hold him in special regard as one of the Three Holy Hierarchs ( alongside Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus ) . The feast days of John Chrysostom in the Eastern Orthodox Church are 13 November and 27 January . In the Roman Catholic Church he is recognized as a Doctor of the Church and commemorated on 13 September . Other churches of the Western tradition , including some Anglican provinces and some Lutheran churches , also commemorate him on 13 September . However , certain Lutheran churches and Anglican provinces commemorate him on the traditional Eastern feast day of 27 January . The Coptic Church also recognizes him as a saint ( with feast days on 16 Thout and 17 Hathor ) .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life and education = = =

John was born in Antioch in 349 to Greco @-@ Syrian parents . Different scholars describe his mother Anthusa as a pagan or as a Christian , and his father was a high @-@ ranking military officer . John 's father died soon after his birth and he was raised by his mother . He was baptised in 368 or 373 and tonsured as a reader ( one of the minor orders of the Church ) .

As a result of his mother 's influential connections in the city , John began his education under the pagan teacher Libanius . From Libanius , John acquired the skills for a career in rhetoric , as well as a love of the Greek language and literature .

As he grew older , however , John became more deeply committed to Christianity and went on to study theology under Diodore of Tarsus , founder of the re @-@ constituted School of Antioch . According to the Christian historian Sozomen , Libanius was supposed to have said on his deathbed that John would have been his successor " if the Christians had not taken him from us " .

John lived in extreme asceticism and became a hermit in about 375 ; he spent the next two years continually standing , scarcely sleeping , and committing the Bible to memory . As a consequence of these practices , his stomach and kidneys were permanently damaged and poor health forced him to return to Antioch .

= = = Diaconate and service in Antioch = = =

John was ordained as a deacon in 381 by Saint Meletius of Antioch who was not then in communion with Alexandria and Rome . After the death of Meletius , John separated himself from the followers of Meletius , without joining Paulinus , the rival of Meletius for the bishopric of Antioch . But after the death of Paulinus he was ordained a presbyter ( priest ) in 386 by Evagrius , the successor of Paulinus . He was destined later to bring about reconciliation between Flavian I of Antioch , Alexandria , and Rome , thus bringing those three sees into communion for the first time in nearly seventy years .

In Antioch , over the course of twelve years ( 386 ? 397 ) , John gained popularity because of the eloquence of his public speaking at the Golden Church , Antioch 's cathedral , especially his insightful expositions of Bible passages and moral teaching . The most valuable of his works from this period are his Homilies on various books of the Bible . He emphasised charitable giving and was concerned with the spiritual and temporal needs of the poor . He spoke against abuse of wealth and

personal property :

Do you wish to honour the body of Christ ? Do not ignore him when he is naked . Do not pay him homage in the temple clad in silk , only then to neglect him outside where he is cold and ill @-@ clad . He who said : " This is my body " is the same who said : " You saw me hungry and you gave me no food " , and " Whatever you did to the least of my brothers you did also to me " ... What good is it if the Eucharistic table is overloaded with golden chalices when your brother is dying of hunger ? Start by satisfying his hunger and then with what is left you may adorn the altar as well .

His straightforward understanding of the Scriptures ? in contrast to the Alexandrian tendency towards allegorical interpretation ? meant that the themes of his talks were practical , explaining the Bible 's application to everyday life . Such straightforward preaching helped Chrysostom to garner popular support . He founded a series of hospitals in Constantinople to care for the poor .

One incident that happened during his service in Antioch illustrates the influence of his homilies . When Chrysostom arrived in Antioch , Flavian , the bishop of the city had to intervene with Emperor Theodosius I on behalf of citizens who had gone on a rampage mutilating statues of the Emperor and his family . During the weeks of Lent in 387 , John preached more than twenty homilies in which he entreated the people to see the error of their ways . These made a lasting impression on the general population of the city : many pagans converted to Christianity as a result of the homilies . As a result , Theodosius ' vengeance was not as severe as it might have been .

= = = Archbishop of Constantinople = = =

In the autumn of 397 , John was appointed Archbishop of Constantinople , after having been nominated without his knowledge by the eunuch Eutropius . He had to leave Antioch in secret due to fears that the departure of such a popular figure would cause civil unrest .

During his time as Archbishop he adamantly refused to host lavish social gatherings , which made him popular with the common people , but unpopular with wealthy citizens and the clergy . His reforms of the clergy were also unpopular . He told visiting regional preachers to return to the churches they were meant to be serving ? without any payout .

His time in Constantinople was more tumultuous than his time in Antioch . Theophilus , the Patriarch of Alexandria , wanted to bring Constantinople under his sway and opposed John 's appointment to Constantinople . Theophilus had disciplined four Egyptian monks ( known as " the Tall Brothers " ) over their support of Origen 's teachings . They fled to John and were welcomed by him . Theophilus therefore accused John of being too partial to the teaching of Origen . He made another enemy in Aelia Eudoxia , wife of Emperor Arcadius , who assumed that John 's denunciations of extravagance in feminine dress were aimed at herself . Eudoxia , Theophilus and other of his enemies held a synod in 403 ( the Synod of the Oak ) to charge John , in which his connection to Origen was used against him . It resulted in his deposition and banishment . He was called back by Arcadius almost immediately , as the people became " tumultuous " over his departure , even threatening to burn the royal palace . There was an earthquake the night of his arrest , which Eudoxia took for a sign of God 's anger , prompting her to ask Arcadius for John 's reinstatement .

Peace was short @-@ lived . A silver statue of Eudoxia was erected in the Augustaion , near his cathedral . John denounced the pagan dedication ceremonies . He spoke against her in harsh terms : " Again Herodias raves ; again she is troubled ; she dances again ; and again desires to receive John 's head in a charger " , an allusion to the events surrounding the death of John the Baptist . Once again he was banished , this time to the Caucasus in Abkhazia .

Around 405 , Chrysostom began to lend moral and financial support to Christian monks who were enforcing the emperors ' anti @-@ Pagan laws , by destroying temples and shrines in Phoenicia and nearby regions .

= = = Death and canonization = = =

Faced with exile , John Chrysostom wrote an appeal for help to three churchmen : Pope Innocent I ,

the Bishop of Milan , Venerius , and the third to the Bishop of Aquileia , Chromatius . In 1872 , church historian William Stephens wrote , " The Patriarch of the Eastern Rome appeals to the great bishops of the West , as the champions of an ecclesiastical discipline which he confesses himself unable to enforce , or to see any prospect of establishing . No jealousy is entertained of the Patriarch of the Old Rome by the Patriarch of the New Rome . The interference of Innocent is courted , a certain primacy is accorded him , but at the same time he is not addressed as a supreme arbitrator ; assistance and sympathy are solicited from him as from an elder brother , and two other prelates of Italy are joint recipients with him of the appeal . "

Pope Innocent I protested John 's banishment from Constantinople to the town of Cucusus in Cappadocia , but to no avail . Innocent sent a delegation to intercede on behalf of John in 405 . It was led by Gaudentius of Brescia ; Gaudentius and his companions , two bishops , encountered many difficulties and never reached their goal of entering Constantinople .

John wrote letters which still held great influence in Constantinople . As a result of this , he was further exiled from the Caucasus ( where he stayed from 404 to 407 ) to Pitunt ( Pityus ) ( in modern Abkhazia ) where his tomb is a shrine for pilgrims . He never reached this destination , as he died at Comana Pontica on 14 September 407 during the journey . His last words are said to have been " ????? ?? ??? ?????? ?????? " ( Glory be to God for all things ) .

John came to be venerated as a saint soon after his death . Three decades later , some of his adherents in Constantinople remained in schism . Saint Proclus , Patriarch of Constantinople ( 434 ? 446 ) , hoping to bring about the reconciliation of the Johannites , preached a homily praising his predecessor in the Church of Hagia Sophia . He said , " O John , your life was filled with sorrow , but your death was glorious . Your grave is blessed and reward is great , by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ O graced one , having conquered the bounds of time and place ! Love has conquered space , unforgetting memory has annihilated the limits , and place does not hinder the miracles of the saint . "

These homilies helped to mobilize public opinion , and the patriarch received permission from the emperor to return Chrysostom 's relics to Constantinople , where they were enshrined in the Church of the Holy Apostles on 28 January 438 . The Eastern Orthodox Church commemorates him as a " Great Ecumenical Teacher " , with Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian . These three saints , in addition to having their own individual commemorations throughout the year , are commemorated together on 30 January , a feast known as the Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs .

There are several feast days dedicated to him :

27 January , Translation of the relics of St John Chrysostom from Comana to Constantinople

30 January , Synaxis of the Three Great Hierarchs

14 September , Repose of St John Chrysostom

13 November , St John Chrysostom the Archbishop of Constantinople

= = Writings = =

= = = Homilies = = =

= = = = Paschal Homily = = = =

The best known of his many homilies , the Paschal Homily ( Hieratikon ) , is rather brief . In the Eastern Orthodox Church it is traditionally read in full each year at the Paschal Divine Liturgy ( eucharistic ) service following the midnight Orthros ( or Matins ) .

= = = = General = = = =

Chrysostom 's extant homiletical works are vast , including many hundreds of exegetical homilies on both the New Testament ( especially the works of Saint Paul ) and the Old Testament (

particularly on Genesis ) . Among his extant exegetical works are sixty @-@ seven homilies on Genesis , fifty @-@ nine on the Psalms , ninety on the Gospel of Matthew , eighty @-@ eight on the Gospel of John , and fifty @-@ five on the Acts of the Apostles .

The homilies were written down by stenographers and subsequently circulated , revealing a style that tended to be direct and greatly personal , but formed by the rhetorical conventions of his time and place . In general , his homiletical theology displays much characteristic of the Antiochian school ( i.e. , somewhat more literal in interpreting Biblical events ) , but he also uses a good deal of the allegorical interpretation more associated with the Alexandrian school .

John 's social and religious world was formed by the continuing and pervasive presence of paganism in the life of the city . One of his regular topics was the paganism in the culture of Constantinople , and in his homilies he thunders against popular pagan amusements : the theatre , horseraces , and the revelry surrounding holidays . In particular , he criticized Christians for taking part in such activities :

" If you ask [ Christians ] who is Amos or Obadiah , how many apostles there were or prophets , they stand mute ; but if you ask them about the horses or drivers , they answer with more solemnity than sophists or rhetors " .

One of the recurring features of John 's homilies is his emphasis on care for the needy . Echoing themes found in the Gospel of Matthew , he calls upon the rich to lay aside materialism in favor of helping the poor , often employing all of his rhetorical skills to shame wealthy people to abandon conspicuous consumption :

" Do you pay such honor to your excrements as to receive them into a silver chamber @-@ pot when another man made in the image of God is perishing in the cold ? "

= = = = Homilies on Jews and Judaizing Christians = = = =

During his first two years as a presbyter in Antioch ( 386 ? 387 ) , John denounced Jews and Judaizing Christians in a series of eight homilies delivered to Christians in his congregation who were taking part in Jewish festivals and other Jewish observances . It is disputed whether the main target were specifically Judaizers or Jews in general . His homilies were expressed in the conventional manner , utilizing the uncompromising rhetorical form known as the psogos ( Greek : blame , censure ) .

One of the purposes of these homilies was to prevent Christians from participating in Jewish customs , and thus prevent the perceived erosion of Chrysostom 's flock . In his homilies , John criticized those " Judaizing Christians " , who were participating in Jewish festivals and taking part in other Jewish observances , such as the shabbat , submitted to circumcision and made pilgrimage to Jewish holy places .

John claimed that synagogues were full of Christians on the shabbats and Jewish festivals , especially of Christian women , because they loved the solemnity of the Jewish liturgy and enjoyed listening to the shofar on Rosh Hashanah , and applauded famous preachers in accordance with the contemporary custom . A more recent theory is that he instead tried to persuade Jewish Christians , who for centuries had kept connections with Jews and Judaism , to choose between Judaism and Christianity .

In Greek the homilies are called *Kata Ioudaiōn* ( ????? ????????? ) , which is translated as *Adversus Iudaeos* in Latin and *Against the Jews* in English . The original Benedictine editor of the homilies , Bernard de Montfaucon , gives the following footnote to the title : " A discourse against the Jews ; but it was delivered against those who were Judaizing and keeping the fasts with them [ the Jews ] . "

According to Patristics scholars , opposition to any particular view during the late 4th century was conventionally expressed in a manner , utilizing the rhetorical form known as the psogos , whose literary conventions were to vilify opponents in an uncompromising manner ; thus , it has been argued that to call Chrysostom an " anti @-@ Semite " is to employ anachronistic terminology in a way incongruous with historical context and record . This does not preclude assertions that Chrysostom 's theology was a form of Anti @-@ Jewish supersessionism .

### == Treatises ==

Apart from his homilies , a number of John 's other treatises have had a lasting influence . One such work is John 's early treatise *Against Those Who Oppose the Monastic Life* , written while he was a deacon ( sometime before 386 ) , which was directed to parents , pagan as well as Christian , whose sons were contemplating a monastic vocation . Chrysostom wrote that , already in his day , it was customary for Antiochenes to send their sons to be educated by monks .

Other important treatises written by John include *On the Priesthood* ( written 390 / 391 , it contains in Book 1 an account of his early years and a defence of his flight from ordination by Bishop Meletios of Antioch , and then proceeds in later books to expound on his exalted understanding of the priesthood ) , *Instructions to Catechumens* , and *On the Incomprehensibility of the Divine Nature* . In addition , he wrote a series of letters to the deaconess Olympias , of which seventeen are extant .

### == Liturgy ==

Beyond his preaching , the other lasting legacy of John is his influence on Christian liturgy . Two of his writings are particularly notable . He harmonized the liturgical life of the Church by revising the prayers and rubrics of the Divine Liturgy , or celebration of the Holy Eucharist . To this day , Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Churches of the Byzantine Rite typically celebrate the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom as the normal Eucharistic liturgy , although his exact connection with it remains a matter of debate among experts .

### == Legacy and influence ==

During a time when city clergy were subject to criticism for their high lifestyle , John was determined to reform his clergy in Constantinople . These efforts were met with resistance and limited success . He was an excellent preacher whose homilies and writings are still studied and quoted . As a theologian , he has been and continues to be very important in Eastern Christianity , and is generally considered the most prominent doctor of the Greek Church , but has been less important to Western Christianity . His writings have survived to the present day more so than any of the other Greek Fathers .

### == Influence on the Catechism of the Catholic Church and clergy ==

John 's influence on church teachings is interwoven throughout the current Catechism of the Catholic Church ( revised 1992 ) . The Catechism cites him in eighteen sections , particularly his reflections on the purpose of prayer and the meaning of the Lord 's Prayer :

Consider how [ Jesus Christ ] teaches us to be humble , by making us see that our virtue does not depend on our work alone but on grace from on high . He commands each of the faithful who prays to do so universally , for the whole world . For he did not say " thy will be done in me or in us " , but " on earth " , the whole earth , so that error may be banished from it , truth take root in it , all vice be destroyed on it , virtue flourish on it , and earth no longer differ from heaven .

Christian clerics , such as R.S. Storr , refer to him as " one of the most eloquent preachers who ever since apostolic times have brought to men the divine tidings of truth and love " , and the 19th @-@ century John Henry Newman described John as a " bright , cheerful , gentle soul ; a sensitive heart . "

### == Music and literature ==

John 's liturgical legacy has inspired several musical compositions . Particularly noteworthy are Sergei Rachmaninoff 's *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* , Op. 31 , composed in 1910 , one of his two

major unaccompanied choral works ; Pyotr Tchaikovsky 's Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom , Op. 41 ; and Ukrainian composer Kyrylo Stetsenko 's Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom . Arvo Pärt 's Litany sets Chrysostom 's twenty @-@ four prayers , one for each hour of the day , for soli , mixed choir and orchestra .

James Joyce 's novel Ulysses includes a character named Mulligan who brings ' Chrysostomos ' into another character ( Stephen Dedalus ) ' s mind because Mulligan 's gold @-@ stopped teeth and his gift of the gab earn him the title which St. John Chrysostom 's preaching earned him , ' golden @-@ mouthed ' : " [ Mulligan ] peered sideways up and gave a long low whistle of call , then paused awhile in rapt attention , his even white teeth glistening here and there with gold points . Chrysostomos " .

= = = The legend of the penance of St. John Chrysostom = = =

A late medieval legend ( not included in the Golden Legend ) relates that , when John Chrysostom was a hermit in the desert , he was approached by a royal princess in distress . The Saint , thinking she was a demon , at first refused to help her , but the princess convinced him that she was a Christian and would be devoured by wild beasts if she were not allowed to enter his cave . He therefore admitted her , carefully dividing the cave in two parts , one for each of them . In spite of these precautions , the sin of fornication was committed , and in an attempt to hide it , the distraught saint took the princess and threw her over a precipice . He then went to Rome to beg absolution , which was refused . Realising the appalling nature of his crimes , Chrysostom made a vow that he would never rise from the ground until his sins were expiated , and for years he lived like a beast , crawling on all fours and feeding on wild grasses and roots . Subsequently the princess reappeared , alive , and suckling the saint 's baby , who miraculously pronounced his sins forgiven . This last scene was very popular from the late 15th century onwards as a subject for engravers and artists . The theme was depicted by Albrecht Dürer around 1496 , Hans Sebald Beham and Lucas Cranach the Elder , among others . Martin Luther mocked this same legend in his Die Lügend von S. Johanne Chrysostomo ( 1537 ) . The legend was recorded in Croatia in the 16th century .

= = = Relics = = =

John Chrysostom died in the city of Comana in the year 407 on his way to his place of exile . There his relics remained until 438 when , thirty years after his death , they were transferred to Constantinople during the reign of the Empress Eudoxia 's son , the Emperor Theodosius II ( 408 ? 450 ) , under the guidance of John 's disciple , St. Proclus , who by that time had become Archbishop of Constantinople ( 434 ? 447 ) .

Most of John 's relics were looted from Constantinople by Crusaders in 1204 and taken to Rome , but some of his bones were returned to the Orthodox Church on 27 November 2004 by Pope John Paul II . They are now enshrined in the Church of St. George , Istanbul .

The skull , however , having been kept at the monastery at Vatopedi on Mount Athos in northern Greece , was not among the relics that were taken by the crusaders in the 13th century . In 1655 , at the request of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich , the skull was taken to Russia , for which the monastery was compensated in the sum of 2000 rubles . In 1693 , having received a request from the Vatopedi Monastery for the return of St John 's skull , Tsar Peter the Great ordered that the skull remain in Russia but that the monastery was to be paid 500 rubles every four years . The Russian state archives document these payments up until 1735 . The skull was kept at the Moscow Kremlin , in the Cathedral of the Dormition of the Mother of God , until 1920 , when it was confiscated by the Soviets and placed in the Museum of Silver Antiquities . In 1988 , in connection with the 1000th Anniversary of the Baptism of Russia , the head , along with other important relics , was returned to the Russian Orthodox Church and kept at the Epiphany Cathedral , until being moved to the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour after its restoration .

Today , the monastery at Vatopedi posits a rival claim to possessing the skull of John Chrysostom , and there a skull is venerated by pilgrims to the monastery as that of St John . Two sites in Italy also

claim to have the saint 's skull : the Basilica di Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence and the Dal Pozzo chapel in Pisa . The right hand of St. John is preserved on Mount Athos , and numerous smaller relics are scattered throughout the world .

= = = Collected works = = =

Widely used editions of Chrysostom 's works are available in Greek , Latin , English , and French . The Greek edition is edited by Sir Henry Savile ( eight volumes , Eton , 1613 ) ; the most complete Greek and Latin edition is edited by Bernard de Montfaucon ( thirteen volumes , Paris , 1718 ? 38 , republished in 1834 ? 40 , and reprinted in Migne 's " Patrologia Graeca " , volumes 47 ? 64 ) . There is an English translation in the first series of the Nicene and Post @-@ Nicene Fathers ( London and New York , 1889 ? 90 ) . A selection of his writings has been published more recently in the original with facing French translation in Sources Chrétiennes .

= = = Works = = =

Works by or about John Chrysostom at Internet Archive

Works by John Chrysostom at LibriVox ( public domain audiobooks )

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Study Text of the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom ( Ruthenian Edition , with Scriptural references )

Writings of Chrysostom in the Christian Classics Ethereal Library edition of the Nicene and Post @-@ Nicene Fathers :

On the Priesthood , Ascetic Treatises , Select Homilies and Letters , Homilies on the Statues

Homilies on the Gospel of St. Matthew '

Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Romans

Homilies on First and Second Corinthians

Homilies on the Epistles to the Galatians , Ephesians , Philippians , Colossians , Thessalonians , Timothy , Titus , and Philemon

Homilies on the Gospel of St. John and the Epistle to the Hebrews

The Hieratikon Easter Sermon of St. John Chrysostom

Eight Homilies Against the Jews

Opera Omnia by Migne Patrologia Graeca with analytical indexes

The Auxiliary Resources page on the Electronic Manipulus florum Project Website provides digital transcriptions of the Latin translations of De laudibus sancti Pauli homeliae ( PG 50 , 473 ? 514 ) , Dialogus de sacerdotio ( PG 48 , 623 ? 91 ) , and In epistolam ad Hebraeos homeliae ( PG 63 , 9 ? 236 ) , as well as the Latin text of the Pseudo @-@ Chrysostom Opus imperfectum in Mattheum ( PG 56 , 611 ? 946 ) . It also provides digital transcriptions of Anianus of Celeda 's prologue on the homilies on Matthew and his Latin translations of the first eight homilies ( PG 58 , 975 ? 1058 ) and also Anianus of Celeda 's prologue and his Latin translations of Chrysostom 's homilies 1 ? 25 on Matthew from the editio princeps published in Venice in 1503 .

Ps.Chrysostom Homily 2 on Christmas at Tertullian.org and here at Archive.org.

= = = Orthodox feast days = = =

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