

Aelia Eudoxia, the wife of the eastern Emperor Arcadius, who assumed that his denunciations of extravagance in feminine dress was aimed at herself.

An alliance was soon formed against Saint John by Eudoxia, Theophilus and other enemies of his. They held a synod in 403 to charge John with the accusation of Origenism. It resulted in his deposition and banishment but he was immediately recalled by Arcadius when the people of the city became very angry over his departure. Peace was short-lived. A statue of Eudoxia was erected near the cathedral of Hagia Sophia. John denounced the dedication ceremonies and was again banished, this time to Caucasus in Georgia. Pope Innocent I protested the banishment, but to no avail. John continued to write letters which still held great influence in Constantinople. As a result he was exiled to Pityus (on the eastern edge of the Black sea). He never reached this destination, as he died during the journey. His final words were "Glory be to God for all things!"

During a time when city clergy were subject to much criticism for their high lifestyle, John was determined to reform his clergy at Constantinople. He was also noted as an excellent preacher and as a theologian. He continues to be very important in Eastern Christianity. John spoke plainly and applied Bible passages and lessons to everyday life.

\*(excerpted from: //orthodoxwiki.org; www.newadvent.org)

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## ***Saint John Chrysostom***

**Feast Day: January 27**



***"In the matter of piety, poverty serves us better than wealth, and work better than idleness, especially since wealth becomes an obstacle even for those who do not devote themselves to it..."***

## ***Saint John Chrysostom***

\*Saint John Chrysostom (347-407) was born in Antioch of noble parents; his father was a high-ranking military officer. His father died soon after his birth and so he was brought up by his mother Anthusa. He was baptized in 370 and tonsured a reader (one of the minor orders of the Church). He began his education under a pagan teacher named Libanius, but went on to study theology under Diodore of Tarsus (one of the leaders of the later Antiochian School) while practicing extreme asceticism. He was not satisfied and became a hermit (circa 375) and remained so until poor health forced a return to Antioch.

He was then ordained a deacon in 381 by Saint Meletius of Antioch, and was ordained a presbyter in 386 by Bishop Flavian I of Antioch. Over the next twelve years, he gained much popularity for the eloquence of his public speaking. Notable are his insightful expositions of Bible passages and moral teaching. The most valuable of his works are his *Homilies* on various books of the Bible. He particularly emphasized almsgiving. He was also most concerned with the spiritual and temporal needs of the poor. He spoke out against abuse of wealth and personal property. His straightforward understanding of the Scriptures meant that the themes of his talks were eminently social, explaining the Christian's conduct in life.

One incident that happened during his service in Antioch perhaps illustrates the influence of his sermons best. Around the time he arrived in Antioch, the bishop had to intervene with the Emperor Saint Theodosius I on behalf of citizens who had gone on a riotous rampage in which statues

of the Emperor and his family were mutilated. During the week of Lent in 397, John preached 21 sermons in which he entreated the people to see the error of their ways. These apparently had a lasting impression on the people: many pagans reportedly converted to Christianity as a result of them. In the event, Theodosius' vengeance was not as severe as it might have been, merely changing the legal standing of the city.

In 398 he was called to be the bishop of Constantinople. He deplored the fact that Imperial court protocol would now assign to him access to privileges greater than the highest state officials. During his time as bishop he adamantly refused to host lavish entertainments. This meant he was popular with the common people, but unpopular with the wealthy and the clergy. In a sermon soon after his arrival he said, "people praise the predecessor to disparage the successor." His reforms of the clergy were also unpopular with these groups. He told visiting regional preachers to return to the churches they were meant to be serving--without any pay out.

His time there was to be far less at ease than in Antioch. Theophilus, the Pope of Alexandria, wanted to bring Constantinople under his sway and opposed John's appointment to Constantinople. Being an opponent of Origen's teachings, he accused John of being too partial to the teachings of that master. Theophilus had disciplined four Egyptian monks over their support of Origen's teachings. They fled to and were welcomed by John. He made another enemy in