September 13th: Memorial of Saint John Chrysostom, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Gospel text (*Mk* 4:1-10.13-20): Jesus began to teach by the lake, but such a large crowd gathered about him that He got into a boat and sat in it on the lake while the crowd stood on the shore. He taught them many things through stories or parables (...).

St. John Chrysostom, bishop and doctor of the Church (347-407)

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today we celebrate St. John Chrysostom (= "Golden Mouth"). Appointed Bishop of Constantinople (397), he worked there before the two exiles he suffered.

The intimacy with the Word of God, cultivated in his years at the hermitage, had developed in him an irresistible urge to preach the Gospel. Chrysostom is among the most prolific of the Fathers (17 treatises, more than 700 authentic homilies, commentaries on Matthew and on Paul and 241 letters). He was not a speculative theologian. Nevertheless, he passed on the Church's tradition and reliable doctrine in an age of theological controversies, sparked above all by Arianism. His is a perfectly pastoral theology in which there is constant concern for consistency between thought expressed via words and existential experience: the value of the human being lies in «exact knowledge of true doctrine and in rectitude of life».

John planned the reform of his Church from the outset: the austerity of the episcopal residence had to be an example for all. Attentive to the poor, John was also called "the Almoner". Indeed, he was able as a careful administrator to establish highly appreciated charitable institutions. Despite his kind heart, his life was far from peaceful. He was the Pastor of the capital of the Empire, and often found himself involved in political affairs and intrigues. He was removed in the year 403, and sentenced to a first brief exile. In 406 he was exiled again to Armenia: his condemnation to exile was a true death sentence!

—He saw the ultimate end of his existence as that glory of God which —now dying— he left as his last testament: «Glory be to God for all things».