

SEPTEMBER 13 FATHER TOMASZ SKIBINSKI

Today, we commemorate St. John Chrysostom in the church. He was a bishop and a Doctor of the Church, known for his eloquence and intelligence—attributes that earned him the name "Chrysostom," meaning "golden mouth." Beyond his remarkable speaking abilities, he was a man of deep faith, great patience, and one who endured immense suffering.

During a time when the Church had regained its freedom, St. John bravely preached the truth of Christ. However, his boldness was not always welcomed, leading to his banishment and removal from his diocese. Despite these trials, he never gave up, nor did he judge or condemn others. Rather, he accepted the injustices he faced, becoming a model for generations to come. St. John was one of the great minds of the Church, prolific in his writings, whose homilies and speeches profoundly moved people. This is why he is referred to as "Chrysostom," for he was able to speak in a way that resonated with the hearts of his listeners.

St. John exemplified the qualities of an apostle and a disciple of Christ—bold in his preaching yet unwavering in his commitment to the gospel. In today's first reading, we hear St. Paul writing to the Corinthians, declaring, "Woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel." St. Paul, who once found himself in a low moment despite his intelligence, discovered the transformative power of truth. His zeal and spirit to announce the gospel were evident in his words: "This is not to boast, but an obligation laid upon me." Paul understood that if he received the gospel, he had a duty to share it with others.

His powerful declaration of the necessity to proclaim the good news serves as a driving force in our lives, encouraging us to cultivate a similar zeal within ourselves. St. Paul acknowledged his own faults, pleading with the Lord to take them away, only to receive the answer, "My grace is enough for you." Indeed, it is God's grace that empowers us, urging us to run toward the Lord and strive for the rewards ahead.

In today's lesson from Jesus, the emphasis is placed on humility and self-awareness. He teaches about the log in one's own eye compared to the speck in another's. This metaphor serves as a reminder that true blindness is not a physical inability to see but a spiritual oversight, as demonstrated in St. Paul's life before his conversion. Encountering the Lord transformed him, allowing him to see the love of God at work in the lives of others.

Today, the Lord invites us to embody the spirit of Christ, who does not judge or condemn us despite our flaws. God's mercy reveals His desire for us to know His love, just as St. Paul and St. John Chrysostom experienced it. In every Mass, we celebrate this communion with God, acknowledging His readiness to forgive and embrace us. He does not condemn us, even when we embody hypocrisy. Instead, He offers Himself to us today, filled with the good news we need in our lives. As we approach the Lord with humility, we recognize that it is He who nourishes us, a merciful Father and a loving God.