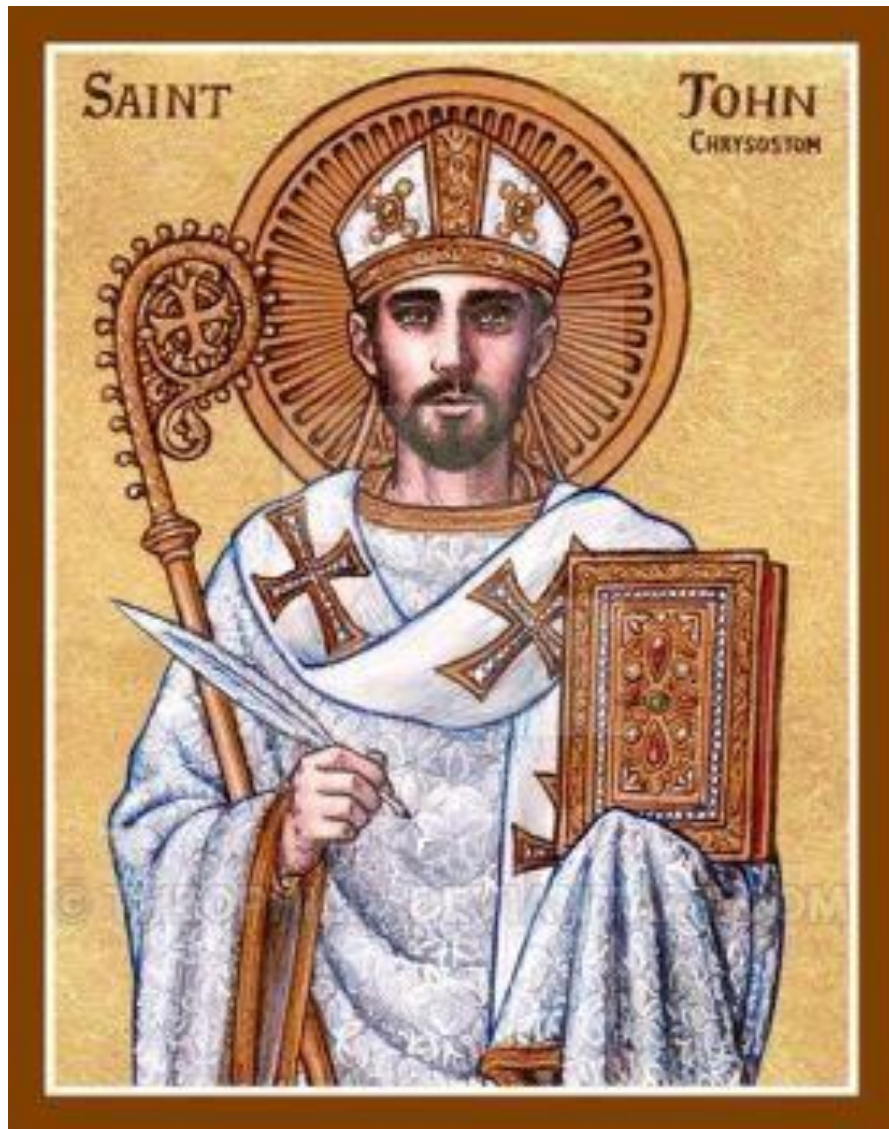


Art of the Month: September



On Friday 13 September we celebrate the Memorial of St John Chrysostom whose Greek name means “golden-mouthed” on account of his eloquence and oratory. We know of 1400 sermons he preached, most notably his Easter Sermon on the Resurrection. In 398, he became the Bishop of Constantinople but was twice exiled because he incurred the hatred and animosity of the Patriarch of Alexandria and of the Empress. In spite of these evil deeds he remained in contented peace and happiness.

An icon is “written” rather than painted. We see in this 2016 icon by Cecilia Lawrence based on an earlier one by Theophania, St John with a mitre and crozier, signs of his episcopal authority as one who is to sanctify his people. The Pallium draped around his shoulders points to him as a metropolitan archbishop (of Constantinople). The whiteness of the icon represents his purity and how by his famous Easter Sermon, he enlightens the faithful. The gold reminds us of the Golden Words he preached. The quill marks him out as a writer; he would become a Doctor of the Church. The beautifully decorated Book of the Gospels is a sign of his role as a teacher. His deep set eyes stare out, full of love, and draws the viewer into the Mysteries of Faith.

As a teacher, how well do I use my learning to excite and encourage my pupils? Do I have such interest and enthusiasm about my subject as to instil a vibrant excitement in the students? Do I realize that the words from my golden mouth may influence the young men and women entrusted to my care for many years to come?

Monsignor Monaghan