

Patriarchal Auxiliary Bishop Varlaam of Ploiești urges believers to read works of St John Chrysostom



The Patriarchal Auxiliary Bishop Varlaam of Ploiești on Tuesday urged the believers present at the National Cathedral's Chapel to read the works of Saint John Chrysostom.

His Grace Bishop Varlaam celebrated the Divine Liturgy on the feast of St John Chrysostom and told the faithful that they should join the veneration of St John's relics with the reading of his works.

His Grace pointed to the Saint's Treatise on the compunction of the heart noting that it teaches 'control one should have over his mind and heart, to overcome the sinful incentives, the enticements to comfort and a pleasure-oriented life.'

Saint John also wrote 'the incomparable Treatise on priesthood, which remains until now a pearl of Christian literature and the most precious guide for all young people

who wish for priestly ministry,' Bishop Varlaam said Nov. 13.

HG Bp Varlaam of Ploiesti encouraged the faithful to read St John's commentaries on the books of the Old and the New Testaments, especially those on the Holy Gospels, which 'contain a multitude of useful teachings that God desires to convey to us.'

His Grace presented St John as an example of pure life. An important part of the Saint's life was the two-year withdrawal into the wilderness where he 'sanctified his life and thoroughly deepened the Holy Scripture and the works of the Holy Fathers with his sharp and learned mind.'

'As an orator,' His Grace noted, 'Saint John Chrysostom preached as no one else, that is why his contemporaries called him the Christian Demosthenes since Demosthenes was the greatest orator of Antiquity.'

'A short time after passing away to eternal life, he was called Gold-mouthed because his words were truly golden, and his gift of preaching received from God was totally particular.'

Patriarch Daniel's assistant bishop related an occurrence when an official of Constantinople entered silently the room where St John Chrysostom was writing his biblical commentaries and saw St Paul the Apostle dictating 'the deep understandings of the Epistles he had written to the various communities or leaders of the Church.'

'As Archbishop of Constantinople, he began an extraordinary reform: he asked the priests and monastics to have an exemplary life and developed a social-philanthropic work following the example of Saint Basil the Great: he founded hospitals, elderly homes, orphanages, hospitality houses etc.'

Bishop Varlaam recalled that with the efforts of Romania's former Patriarch Teoctist a particle of St John Chrysostom's relics was offered to the Romanian Orthodox Church, being now enshrined at the Chapel of the National Cathedral in Bucharest.

Ending his speech, the hierarch urged the believers to entreat Saint John 'to protect the Church, the well-believing Romanians everywhere, to strengthen the ministers and inspire them with the virtues he wanted to see in the priests he shepherded.'



