



has come into the world, but because a son is born to her. Why then does He say this? It is because He wants to show that their sorrow is but passing, their joy enduring for ever; to show that death is but passing over to life, and that great is the reward of those birth pangs.

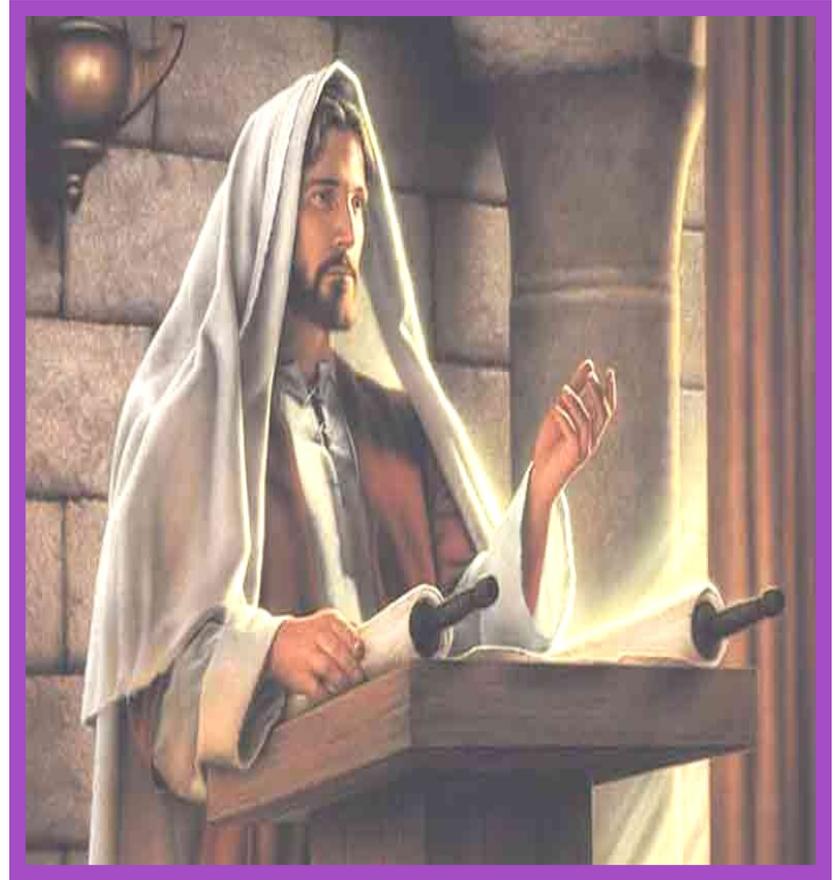
Neither did He say: *that a child is born into the world, but, that a man is born.* It appears that seems to be alluding to His own Resurrection; that He is about to be born, not from that birth which brings forth death,

but unto a Kingdom. He therefore does not say, a son is born to her, but because *a Man is born into the world.* So you also now indeed have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Then to show He will die no more, He says: *And your joy no man shall take from you;* through the grace and mercy of Our Lord Jesus Christ... Amen.



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**SERMON ON  
THE PROMISED JOY  
FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH  
# 152 - 1**



**JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!**

**THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER**

## Based on the Divine Office-Douay-Rheims Version

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Commentary on the Gospel of John 16: 16-22

by: Saint John Chrysostom, Bishop and Doctor

Nothing depresses a mind that is faint-hearted and in sorrow, as hearing over and over the words which have caused its sorrow. Why then did Christ, after He had said, I go away, and again, *I will not now speak many things* (Jn. xiv. 28, 30), return to these same words and say: *A little while, and you shall not see me; and, Because I go to him that sent me?* When He had just comforted them of the Holy Spirit, He again discourages them. Why is this? He does it to test their courage, and to make it more resolute. He is seeking to harden them strongly against the hearing of painful things, so that they shall bear manfully their coming separation from Himself; for when they had exercised their minds on His words, they would the more easily face the reality.

If you look at it closely, His saying that He was going to the father was also a consolation. He tells them by this, that He is not going to perish; that His death is but a passing over. He adds another consolation when He says, *A little while and you shall not see me, a little while and you shall see me;* showing them He will come again, and that their separation will be but for a while, and that their meeting then would be forever.

They did not understand this; indeed in this whole matter one may well wonder how they doubted, seeing they had heard it so frequently. How then was it that they did not understand? It was either because of their grief, or because

of the obscurity of what was said. He seemed to utter things contrary to each other, so they say: *We know not what he speaketh.* They knew that He was about to go away. They did not know that after a little while He would come to them again, because of this He reproached them: for not knowing what He said. In His desire to secure firmly in their minds what He had taught them regarding His own death, what does He say? *Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep:* because of His Cross and death: *But the world shall rejoice.* Since they desired it, they were easily led to believe that He would not die; and then hearing that He would die they were in doubt, not understanding what a little while meant. *You shall weep and lament,* He says, *but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.*

After He has shown that joy will come after their sorrow, and that grief brings forth gladness, He puts before them an example: *A woman, when she is in labor, hath sorrow.* The prophets frequently used this example: comparing sadness to the pains of childbirth. This is what it means: Pain like travail will come upon you; but the pain of childbirth are the cause of joy: here confirming His own words regarding the coming Resurrection, as well as showing that the going from this world is like going from the womb into splendid light...

Something mystical is also indicated; that He has also eased the pains of death, and has disposed that from them a *new man* shall be born... So great is the joy that will follow that one will not even remember the pangs that will come to an end. So shall it be with the saints. A woman does not rejoice because a man child