

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

JUNE 24, 2018

MASS READINGS

MONDAY: 2 KGS 17:5-8, 13-15A,18, PS 60, MT 7:1-5
TUESDAY: 2 KGS 19:9B-11,14-21,31-35A,36, PS 48, MT
7:6,12-14
WEDNESDAY: 2 KGS 22:8-13, 23:1-3, PS 119, MT 7:15-
20
THURSDAY: 2 KGS 24:8-17, PS 79, MT 7:21-29
FRIDAY: ACTS 12:1-11, PS 34, 2 TM 4:6-8,17-18, MT
16:13-19
SATURDAY: LAM 2:2,10-14,18-19, PS 74, MT 8:5-17
NEXT SUNDAY: THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – RDGS: WIS 1:13-15,2:23-24, PS 30, 2
COR 8:7,9,13-15, MK 5:21-43

WHY WAS HE SO SPECIAL?

LUKE 1:8-23

THE ANGEL GABRIEL ANNOUNCED HIS BIRTH.

HE SHALL BE CALLED JOHN.

MANY SHALL REJOICE AT HIS BIRTH.

HE WOULD BE A NAZARITE.

HE WOULD BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST.

HE WOULD TURN THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL TO THE LORD THEIR GOD.

HE WOULD MAKE READY A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE LORD.

MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: MARY HARDEN
TUESDAY: FR. STEPHEN CHURCHWELL
WEDNESDAY: AILEEN FORD
THURSDAY: FR. MARK GOTTEMULLER
FRIDAY: POOR SOULS
VIGIL: MARY JO DANAHER
7:30: MILDRED BUCKLES
10:00: FRED HARLESS
NOON: FOR THE PARISH

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Those serving in our Armed Forces, especially those soldiers who have connections to our parish: (Judy & Ed Buckles, Ray Mowery & Mary Salrin). Deceased members of Schlosser & Kanthack families. (Robert Bohan & Melvin Elliott). Donald Meihls. Kathleen Peters-Lester. Dorothy Nelson. Charles Connor. Ann Hubertz. (Marie Brown & Cecil Albregts). Luke Spitznagle. Shirley Wag-

ner

It should be painfully obvious that the naming of this child by other than his parents is indicative of some divine purpose. Biblically speaking God permitted Adam to name the animals of creation as a sign of his stewardship over them and setting forth his abiding responsibility for the things of the earth. By removing that privilege from his parents John is so named by God to direct our attention to his actions beginning, oddly enough in the womb. Babies shift, kick and move, so I am told and while it may be a moment of joy, depending on where you are standing, the precise reaction of John to the presence of Jesus, in the womb as well, clearly shows how anxious John is to be about the work of God. That work being proclaiming the coming of the Messiah. As we reflect upon the many themes which are available to us, apart from the obvious one just stated, we can reflect too on our own task, by virtue of our baptisms of proclaiming the Messiah in our lives. Messiah means anointed, the one who brings salvation, i.e. liberator. Hence being freed from the slavery of sin and death each movement of ours, in this case outside the womb, is an obvious demonstration of the fact that we belong to God. Even though our parents may have bestowed a name on us at birth, and at baptism, and we chose one at confirmation, the only real name which matters is Christian. John was quick to “jump” at the chance of acknowledging Christ when he found himself in his presence. As Christ is always present to us, even if we sin, we do well to consider our response, especially in the case of sin. To imagine ourselves constantly with Jesus at our side should undoubtedly affect the way we think, speak and act. To know that our Savior is with us at all times and there are no moments in which he is absent might move us to reconsider how we spend our “alone” time. Using the time God gives us to point to Christ, whether through what we read, watch, the activities we engage in, the company we keep, all the aspects of our lives are sanctioned by his abiding presence. If we think this is beginning to sound a bit smothering, we are very much mistaken. Too much of the worlds “things” will smother us beyond imagination, and the worse thing is that we will not know it. No, Christ’s continued presence frees us to be who we truly are and to reflect the fact that we very much belong to God.

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John the Baptist is the Witness

By Fr. James Farfaglia

Saint John the Baptist commands our interest because he is a witness. By his witness, he reminds us that we are called to be witnesses. And in any age, to be a witness is challenging.

The witness of John the Baptist begins with his birth.

The miraculous circumstances of his conception and birth direct our attention to the mysterious and transcendent.

An angel announces his birth to a woman well beyond childbearing years. His father is struck dumb for his disbelief. As an infant, John, leaps in his mother's womb when he is in the presence of the Messiah's mother.

Upon his birth, he is given not his father's name, but rather the name, John, which translates "Yahweh is gracious". With the giving of this name spoken by the angel, John's father, Zechariah, recovers his power of speech.

Thus the miraculous circumstances surrounding his beginnings give witness to a sacred world, a world reaching beyond time and space.

As an adult, his chosen surroundings bear witness to a different reality.

John is a man of the desert. He totally separates himself from the world in order to give testimony of another world. Within his solitude he is able to hear the voice of God.

Between the center of Judea and the Dead Sea exists one of the most austere deserts of the world. John the Baptist made this place his home.

"For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up, to make level ground, so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God" (Baruch 5: 7).

John's manner of dressing bears witness as well. He does not clothe himself in the garments of the leaders of his day. And just as his location is counter-culture, going against the prevailing wisdom of his day, so also is his dress.

Through his garment of camel's hair, John shows how important it is to be simple and detached from the things of this world.

Riches make a soul soft and incapable of the rigorous walk of faith. Obsession with the latest fad clouds our minds and prevents us from focusing on the things that are really important.

John's food also bears witness. The gospels tell us that he eats locusts and wild honey. Like his living conditions and his dress, his food is also simple.

People cannot resist a witness like John.

Many people provide messages that they themselves do not live up to. But John not only preaches a message, he is the message. Because his beliefs and his actions are one and the same, people listen to what he says. He is an authentic witness because he himself is authentic.

John's preaching is a witness of the truth.

His message is effective because he is completely empty of himself. He does not preach himself. He points to someone beyond himself.

"One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit (Mark 1: 7-8).

Like Paul who comes after him, John is completely lost in the One whom he proclaims.

For this very reason Jesus cries out to the crowds: "I tell you, of all the children born to women, there is no one greater than John; yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Luke 7: 28).

John, the great witness, preaches the truth of Christ to the massive crowds.

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These are people who are hungry for the truth. They are tired of the burdens imposed upon them by their own leaders, the Pharisees, and the foreign leaders represented by King Herod.

The human soul cannot be kept locked up in the body by repressive systems that continue to lie.

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3: 4-6).

To those seeking the baptism that John offers the people in the waters of the Jordan, God gives the multitudes an opportunity to repent of their sins. John's baptism is a testimony of the baptism that will eventually come through Jesus Christ.

John's ultimate witness comes in his death. John is a man who is one with his mission and his message. His is incapable of denying either one.

In any age the truth will always meet opposition. Jesus makes this very clear to those wishing to be his disciples. In any age, there are those who hear only what they want to hear. In any age, there are those who will do anything in order to continue living a lie - even kill.

King Herod personifies those human beings who from the beginning of time until the end of time, choose to live a lie, rather than the truth.

From the depths of the dungeon, John's martyrdom is a testimony that every disciple of Jesus must never be afraid to proclaim the truth.

Saint John the Baptist, a difficult personage of the Bible to understand and perhaps even to relate to, is very relevant for us today.

He is a great witness precisely because he is the link between the Old and New Testaments. He is the last of the prophets who announces the coming of the Messiah. He is the first of the disciples who proclaims his coming: "Behold, there is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world" (John 1: 29).

John the Baptist is still relevant for us because as in any age, our age has an urgent need for disciples like John the Baptist.

Our world has an urgent need for witnesses.

We must witness that our identity is centered on true spirituality, and that our morality derives from that spirituality.

We must witness that our faith challenges many of the values of the dominant secular culture.

We must witness that our traditions have great meaning for us.

We must witness that challenging commitments offer firm principles by which we may live our lives.

We must witness that adherence to traditional morality often comes at a considerable personal cost: perhaps of losing family, friends, even jobs.

We must witness that what we have found in Christ Jesus is true, real and worth living out to the ultimate consequence.

We must witness that our seeking solely for lasting happiness as the meaning of life is an indictment of the falsehoods of past generations.

We must witness by striving for personal holiness, authenticity and integration. Witness has no room for complacency, hypocrisy, or self-indulgence.

To be a witness in this way is not an easy task. We may stumble and fall many times. However, the Lord will magnify our frail efforts into enormous accomplishments for the fulfillment of his salvific plan.

Let us come closer to Christ so that we can become a witness like Saint John the Baptist.

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that your family may walk in the way of salvation and, attentive to what Saint John the Precursor urged, may come safely to the One he foretold, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

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"He Must Increase; I Must Decrease"

Those were the words of John the Baptist when his disciples came to him concerned that Jesus had started to attract larger crowds than John. It's such an awesome thing to say, "He must increase; I must decrease" (Jn.3:30) - so incredibly noble. It sounds so spiritually "romantic" ... but then you yourself are called to live it, and all of the air goes out of the tires.

Each of us is going to experience times, probably many times, in our efforts to serve God when all of our plans come to nought. As best we can tell, our hearts are in the right place; and we are using our abilities as we believe the Lord wants, but our efforts do not *appear* to meet with success. But when we look around at our brothers and sisters we see just the opposite - their efforts to tell others about the Lord Jesus and to be of help to others are flourishing. We have to beware of the Enemy at moments like that; he would love nothing more than to encourage a spiritual jealousy in our hearts.

St. Paul encouraged the us to keep our heads on straight, guarding our thoughts with "the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph.6:17). And what does the word tells us?

"My son, when you come to serve the LORD, prepare yourself for trials. Be sincere of heart and steadfast, undisturbed in time of adversity. Cling to him, forsake him not; thus will your future be great. Accept whatever befalls you, in crushing misfortune be patient; For in fire gold is tested, and worthy men in the crucible of humiliation. Trust God and he will help you; make straight your ways and hope in him." (Sir.2:1-6)

- Not to say that any of us find ourselves in this position, but when other Christian preachers were trying to outshine Paul in proclaiming Christ, his attitude was, "What does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice" (Phil.1:18)

- "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mt.20:28)

"So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'" (Lk.17:10)

It's not our kingdom that we are building. It is not our names that we wish to magnify. The trials we face, the setbacks are not truly defeats; they create opportunities for us to persevere in loving the Lord, in expending ourselves for love of Him. These are the moments when He grows our souls, transforms them to be more like His - poured out on the Cross for love of the Father ... and us. Trials in our efforts to serve purify us. They provide opportunity to overcome, to burn away, any residual desire we have to build *our* kingdoms, to make a name for *ourselves*, with the Fire of Love - the Holy Spirit who made saints of John the Baptist and Paul. (Shane Kapler)

*Where is the lore the Baptist taught,
The soul unswerving and the fearless
tongue?*

*The much-enduring wisdom, sought
By lonely prayer the haunted rocks
among?*

*Who counts it gain
His light should wane,
So the whole world to Jesus throng?
Thou Spirit who the Church didst
lend*

*Her eagle wings, to shelter in the
wild,
We pray thee, ere the Judge descend,
With flames like these, all bright and
undefiled,
Her watchfires light,
To guide aright*

*So glorious let Thy Pastors shine,
That by their speaking lives the world
may learn*

*First filial duty, then divine,
That sons to parents, all to Thee may
turn;*

*And ready prove
In fires of love,*

At sight of Thee, for aye to burn.

*Our Lord said of John the Baptist, "Amen,
I say to you, among those born of women
there has been none greater than John
the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom
of heaven is greater than he."*

*May we all be included in that number,
and may we have the courage of St. John
the Baptist as well.*

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Announcements and Upcoming Events



2018 HABITAT CATHOLIC BUILD.

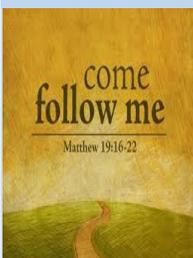
This will be the 9th Habitat build St. Ann's and the five other area Catholic churches have contributed toward creating homes for families here and abroad. This year the Gualajara Family will be partnering for their future home in Lafayette. The August 19th breakfast will be for Our Habitat Build. There is a PURPLE envelop in your JUNE packet for the HABITAT FOR HUMANITY CATHOLIC BUILD. You may also make a donation anytime by marking a plain envelop "Catholic Build/St/Ann's and drop it in the offering basket.

Raise the Walls is Sat. Aug 4th. @10:00

St. Ann's Volunteer Coordinators: Dave and Jane Link cel 765-404-5571
linkdj68@gmail.com .Hospitality Coordinator; Barb Wood 765-403-9166
bjwood2@frontier.com

Don't forget when making donations to Habitat ReSTORE through August, our parish will get some credit . Must write down "for St. Ann's/Catholic Build." ReStore will pick up items or you can drop off at 3825 Fortune Dr. 765-423-2585

St. Ann's Goal 2018 is \$9,000.



JUNE SEMINARIAN APPEAL: Although we have already had a second collection and ear marked our parish breakfast proceeds to go toward our goal of \$6,688.83, there will remain in the pews envelopes should you decide to make a donation later and please take a prayer card and make it part of your morning offering to pray for our seminarians and for vocations. God bless!

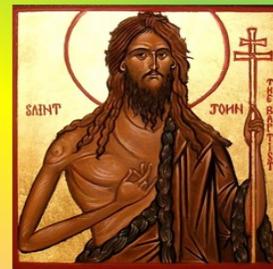
IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PARENTS PLANNING ON ENROLLING A SECOND GRADE STUDENT IN THE 2018-2019 SRE YEAR. PLEASE CONTACT ME ASAP TO RECEIVE SOME IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON CHANGES WE WILL BE INTRODUCING IN THE COMING YEAR. THOSE WHO HAD CHILDREN ENROLLED ALREADY THIS PAST YEAR WILL RECEIVE THIS INFORMATION IN THE MAIL.



Millie's want to thank so many individuals and families of the Catholic community who have been '*thinking first of Millie's*' when they have clothing and household items that need to be recycled. By your donations, the quality of our inventory has increased greatly. After items are sorted or a season is over, we have leftover items to share. Recently, a kind farmer took an entire truckload to a Catholic church in the Appalachians. To handle the increase in activity, we always need **more volunteers to help in the store**. Please consider helping us for [4 to 6 hours a week](#) by calling Barbara Ahler, 765-428-1929 or stop in the store at 626 N Earl Avenue, Monday – Friday, 10:00 to 4:00. We accept used Catholic school **uniforms** year-round to pass onto other families. Earnings from our sales are donated to the Lafayette Catholic School System to support the Teachers Fund. Thank you.

Solemnity of the Birth of St. John the Baptist June 24

Obedient to his Mission
Prepared the people for the coming of the Messiah
Baptism of Jesus Christ at Jordan River



Today is the Solemnity of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (the Feast Day of the birth of John the Baptist). To say John the Baptist and Jesus were closely related and connected is an understatement.

Both were foretold by prophets, especially Isaiah. The only record of the birth of John the Baptist appears in the Gospel of Luke and it is at the heart of our Gospel Reading today. A key player in this event is, of course, John the Baptist's father Zechariah. Zechariah was a Jewish priest, but when the Archangel Gabriel revealed to him that he would father a child, Zechariah refused to believe it. As a result he was rendered speechless until John was born.

Zechariah had total trust in the Lord, however. Although it was traditional at that time to name the first son after the father, he and Elizabeth had been told that they were to name him John. As reported in the Gospel, Elizabeth said "He will be called John." The family protested at which time Zechariah wrote "His name is John." When he did that, Zechariah could speak once more. He did not say "should be"; he said "is."

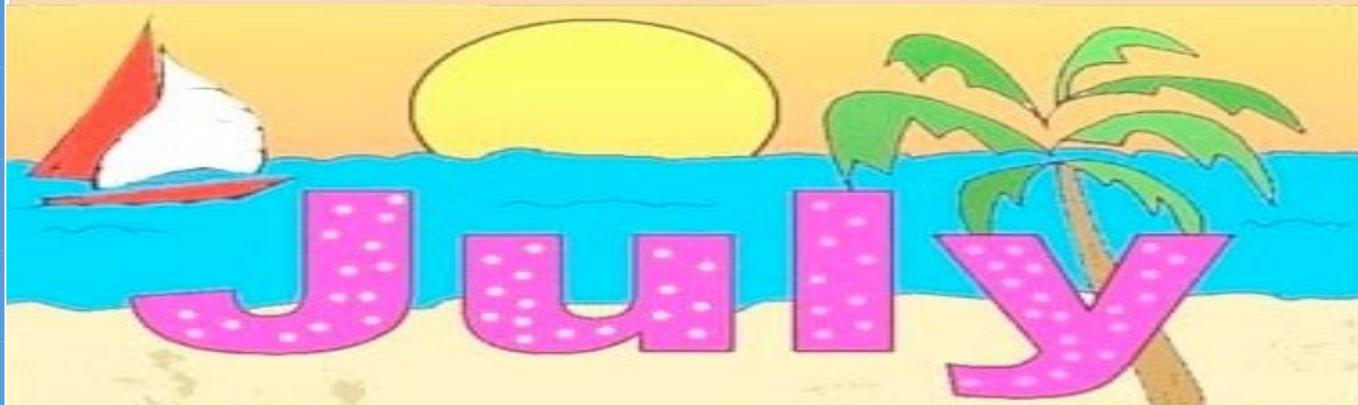
The trust shown by Zechariah is an example to us that we must trust in God, not just when it is convenient, but all the time. Those of advanced generations know who Lawrence Welk was. Born and raised Catholic, Welk practiced his faith throughout his life. He once said, "Never trust anyone completely but God. Love people, but put your full trust only in God."

SUNDAY OFFERING:

\$5608

"FIND OUT HOW MUCH GOD HAS GIVEN YOU, AND FROM IT TAKE WHAT YOU NEED; THE REMAINDER IS NEEDED BY OTHERS"

ST. AUGUSTINE



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 13TH S OT	2	3 	4 	5	6 FIRST FRIDAY DEVOTIONS 	7 SUMMER MIS- SION APPEAL
8 14TH S OT	9	10 SAA MTG 6PM BT	11 	12	13	14
15 15TH S OT	16	17	18 PARISH COUNCIL 6PM BT	19	20	21
22 16TH S OT- PARISH B'FAST – NOVENA KICKOFF	23 NOVENA-5PM	24 NOVENA-5PM	25 NOVENA-5PM 	26 NOVENA-6PM 	27 NOVENA-5PM	28 CHURCH IN AFRI- CA APPEAL PARISH PICNIC
29 17TH S OF	30	31 		<p>GROUPS, CONTACTS AND ACTIVITIES: FINANCE COUNCIL, STEVE SCHILLING-steve_schilling@hotmail.com LEGION OF MARY, (LOM)PEGGY MARVIN pegmarv7@aol.com CHRIST RENEWS, RYAN DOUGLAS ryandouglass92377@yahoo.com PARISH COUNCIL, SANDRA MCMAHON sscmahon1@comcast.net RCIA, TOM MATTINGLY tpmatt@gmail.com ACTION COMMUNITY, ROSE KILLIAN ALLENDUF killianrm54@gmail.com HOMEBOUND kshatke@yahoo.com RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, FR. DOMINIC dominic@stannli.comcastbiz.net</p>		