

The Nativity of John the Baptist (June 24)

First Reading: **Is 49: 1-6;**

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 139: 1b-3; 13-15;

Gospel Reading: **Lk 1: 57-66,80)**

THEME: The Greatest Birthday Gift for John the Baptist

Today we celebrate a very special birthday. John the Baptist is the only saint who is so “wonderfully made” (Ps 139) and whose birth is celebrated as a solemn feast. John’s name means “God is gracious.” The birth of John the Baptist ushered in a new era in God’s relationship with mankind. His birth was the beginning of God’s gracious Law of LOVE.

John the Baptist was the first of the New Testament saints. About the greatness of John the Baptist Christ said, “Among those born of women no one is greater than John” (Luke 7: 28). John the Baptist was greater than the Prophet Isaiah. He was called to show Christ, the Light, to the world.

Notwithstanding the greatness of John the Baptist, we who are born with Water and the Holy Spirit are greater. We who partake in the Holy Sacraments are greater. When the Holy Eucharist is lifted high after consecration, we usually hear the words of John the Baptist to the world: “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” (Jn 1: 29).

The birth of John the Baptist parallels that of Jesus Christ. The birth of John the Baptist brought great joy. We have to consider what birthday gift that we can offer to John the Baptist. The best gift that John the Baptist would prefer is the gifts of our pure hearts. He would like renewed hearts that he can offer to Christ.

By Fr. Sev Kupo, Associate Pastor