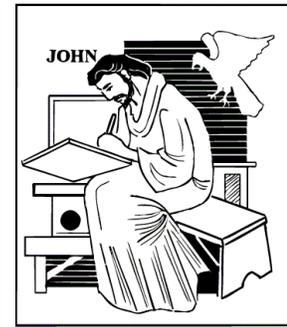
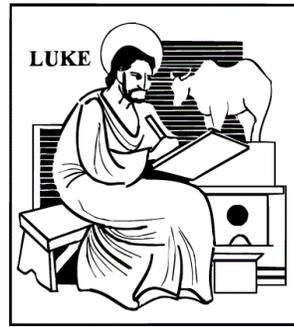
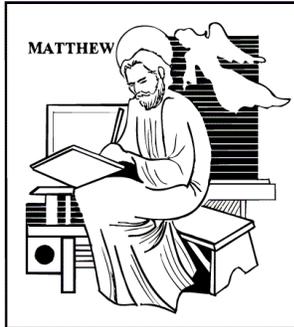


Breaking Open the Word



December 14, 2014 Third Sunday of Advent Lectionary: 8 Gospel [jn 1:6-8, 19-28](#)

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, "Who are you?" He admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Christ." So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" He said: "I am *the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord,'*" as Isaiah the prophet said." Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Spiritual Reflection: John invites us to be prepared for the Lord's coming. How do you prepare your house for a guest? How can you prepare yourself for the Lord?

Spiritual Questions:

1. How can you prepare yourself for the Lord?
2. If John's father was a temple priest, why do you think John is not?
3. What would have happened if John pretended to be somebody he was not like the Messiah or Elijah?
4. How can you prepare the way of the Lord by being yourself and not by being someone who you are not?
5. If you could ask John the Baptist one question what would it be?