

Reflections on John the Baptist

John, the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth, is a herald, a precursor. In the ancient Middle East, when the people were expecting the passage of a Royal caravan, an official herald of the Royal entourage went before the King, calling the people together and exhorting them to repair the roads – they were usually in poor condition – so that the Royal equipage might pass by safely.

(J. W. Shepard, *The Christ of the Gospels*)

It is not only the Christian gospels that speak of John the Baptist. The ancient Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, speaks of John, telling us that Herod imprisoned him because he feared John's political power with the masses.

Now some of the Jews thought that it was God who had destroyed Herod's army, and that it was a very just punishment to avenge John, surnamed the Baptist. John had been put to death by Herod, although he was a good man, who exhorted the Jews to practise virtue, to be just one to another and pious towards God and to come together by baptism. Baptism, he taught, was acceptable to God provided that they underwent it not to procure remission of certain sins but for the purification of the body, if the soul had already been purified by righteousness. When the others gathered round John, greatly stirred as they listened to his words, Herod was afraid that his great persuasive power over men might lead to a rising, for they seemed ready to follow his counsel in everything. Accordingly, he thought the best course was to arrest him and put him to death before he caused a riot, rather than wait until a revolt broke out and then have to repent of permitting such trouble to arise. Because of this suspicion on Herod's part, John was sent in chains to the fortress of Machaerus ... and there put to death. The Jews therefore thought that the destruction of Herod's army was the punishment deliberately sent upon him by God to avenge John."

(Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities*, xviii)

To whom or what are the ancient Jewish prophets referring when they speak of the "Messiah"? There is no such thing as a single, fixed Jewish Messianic hope. Many quite independent ideas are usually grouped under this term. Some people were looking for a new and greater prophet, some for a priestly leader, some for a supernatural figure, a sort of angelic judge. But the dominant hope was for a king like David, and that meant, by the time of Jesus, a warrior capable of defying the power of Rome and restoring the political glory of Israel. The theologians may have had other ideas, but if you had spoken to the man in the street about the Messiah, he would certainly have understood you to mean the "son of David," the warrior king of the coming empire of Israel.

(R. T. France, *I Came to Set the Earth on Fire: Portrait of Christ*)

John the Baptist and Jesus have much in common:

both were prophesied by the prophet Malachi; both had births which an angel foretold;
both preached about repentance and the kingdom, and criticized the religious leaders of the day;
both were opposed by many, often accused of operating by demonic influence;
both had disciples; both were arrested and put to death;
and the followers of both of them came and asked for their bodies.

MASS INTENTIONS JUNE 23 TO JULY 1, 2018

Saturday, June 23: Our Lady's Saturday

4:00 **IN LOVING MEMORY:** Alessandro Palladini, Pietro Di Meglio & Feni Coppa, Pasquale & Rosa Ferrara & Angela-Antonio & Stefano D' Astolfo, Leonard & Terry Winslade

Sunday, June 24: The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist

8:30 Antonio & Annunziata Castelli by the Piccolino family
Newton Lewis by the Smith family
Nightingale & Brunet families by Lucy

11:00 Costanza & Rosolino Sparapani by Maria Sparapani
Giuseppina Fiori by her children
Patricia Murphy by a friend

Monday, June 25: Weekday Mass

8:00 For all Parishioners Intentions

Tuesday, June 26: Weekday Mass

8:00 Diamante Matta by Anna & family
Lional William Brookes by Elisa Nucci
Constance Nucci by the Nucci family

Wednesday, June 27: Blesseds Nykyta Budka & Vasyl Velychkovsky

8:00 For all Parishioners Intentions

Thursday, June 28: Saint Irenaeus

8:00 For all Parishioners Intentions

Friday, June 29: Saints Peter & Paul

8:00 For all Parishioners Intentions

Saturday, June 30: The First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church

4:00 Italo & Anna Mariani & Italo Falcone by Luisa & Angelo Falcone
Joseph Rampersaud by his wife
Christopher Gray by the Sweeney's

Sunday, July 1: Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:30 **IN LOVING MEMORY:** Leona Clarke, Alba & Luigi Paliotti, Emma & Colombo Salvati & forgotten souls in purgatory, Christopher Gray, Domenico Amoruso

11:00 Giuseppe Fiori by his wife & family
Italia Cadilli by Louisa & Angelo Falcone
Ecaterina Kusiczki by Anna & Andre Nolin

Thank you for your ongoing support of our parish.

Collection for the weekend of **June 16 - 17, 2018** totalled
\$ 2,438.25.

Thank you:

Thank you to my faith community at St. Monica's. I was very touched by the card you sent, your get well wishes and prayers. Thank you so much. They are certainly helping me recuperate.

Sharon Di Fruscia.

Have you Changed your Address?

If you have moved or are moving soon, please call the office at 514-481-0267 and give us your new address so that we can update our records. This is especially important if you have a donation box.

Are You New to the Parish?

If you are new to St. Monica's Church, we invite you to register as a parishioner by filling out the registration form which you will find at the back of the church as you come in. Once filled out, you can simply hand it in at the parish office, send it by mail, or place the registration form in the Sunday collection baskets.

Office Hours in July & August:

For two weeks the office summer holiday hours will be Mondays to Thursdays from 9 am to 12 noon **only**
July 11 - July 16
August 9 - 15

Summer Bulletin Publications:

This is the last regular bulletin to be published until the end of August. However, there will be one published at the beginning of July and August with the listings of Mass intentions.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

Holiday Closure

The office will be closed on Monday, June 25 and Monday, July 2 for the Saint Jean-Baptiste and Canada Day holidays.