

Daily Homily

The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Solemnity

Week Twelve in Ordinary Time, Wednesday

24 June 2020

[USCCB Daily Reading](#)

Three nativities, three birthdays does the Church celebrate: today, John the Baptist; December 8, the birth of Mary; December 25, the birth of Christ. Three core, heart, central figures in God's plan of salvation.

The Word of God chosen for his birthday reflects on vocation. From the Latin, the word *vocare* translates to "vocal" or "voice" which translates into "the call." God calls. When we hear His voice, we then discover our deepest purpose and our true meaning in tuning our lives to the sound of His voice. God calls and the sound heard roots our heart and our life into the reality of what we are meant to be in creation and for all of creation.

What was John the Baptist's vocation? What did he hear from God? What was his purpose, and what was God's plan for his life?

His vocation was rooted in preparation. His purpose was found in getting the world around him ready. His plan was to fix things, tidy things up, pull things together, put things in place before the Messiah came. It is said that John is the hinge between the Old Testament prophets and New Testament Messiah. All the prophets in some way, including John, tried to tune the ears of their people to the sound of God's voice. John the Baptist most especially, prepared the people to not only hear Him but to actually see Him. His vocation was not just one of listening, but his vocation was one of pointing the Christ out so people could actually follow him.

But how were they to get ready? John's message was "repent." Go to confession. Clean yourself up inside and out. John's message was harsh. When sin has no hold on us, then we can hear more clearly the voice of God in our life. When we relinquish sin's power over us then we can tune our life more certainly in what God's purpose and plan is for us. Sin has a way of distracting us, make us fall into self-loathing, regret, remorse when our life could be focusing on the easy and light of God's yoke. Sin, when given into, could also make us glaze over with a sense of no return. We may think, this is how life is. One may grow complacent and see sin as a norm. Disrespecting people, using people to fulfill our needs, stealing without thinking much about it, wanting pleasure and then more pleasure, anger that is never acknowledged or overcome is all sin that blocks God's voice and inhibits our true vocation.

This was the other part of John's vocation. He mended and unblock deaf and closed up ears. He could tell what people needed to do in order to hear God's voice clearly. This is what got him into trouble with King Herod. The king loved to listen to John speak, but he was also upset by what he said. John was a light and if eyes don't adjust well to light, they sting in the light's rays. John was a sound and if ears are not a tune to the sound, we may only hear clanging and dissonance. Herod had potential, but the other voices of his life – impressing his colleagues, drunken parties, his wife's insecurities, his step-child's strange seductions prevailed over John's courageous, noble, holy, pure, and good voice.

The other part of John's vocation: Martyrdom.

Have you been to confession recently? With Mass opening up, confession is open as well, it may be time when you feel safe enough to go. Are you in tune with God's voice in your life? In your vocation what has been your purpose? How have you fulfilled God's plan?