

Daily Homily
The Nativity of St. John the Baptist
Solemnity
Week Twelve in Ordinary Time, Thursday
23 June 2022
[USCCB Daily Reading](#)

What then will this child be? What a mysterious question that is posed at the birth of any child. What will become of this baby... what will they be in their adult lives? Another way to phrase this question is, how will this child listen to the voice of God as they grow and develop and live and be?

The word "vocation" comes from the Latin word *vocare* which translates "voice" which is about God's voice calling into our lives. The deal is, we need the ears to hear God's voice and we need the heart to follow where God's voice is calling. This is a vocation, where our truest, deepest sense of "what will we be" is discovered.

What was John the Baptist's vocation? What did he hear from God? What was his purpose, and what will become of him?

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 see and follow him.

His vocation was rooted in repentance. Go to confession. Clean yourself up inside and out. John's message was harsh. He attacked sin. He went after it. Especially if people simply settled for it, like King Herod, who loved to hear John speak but was also troubled by what John said. John gave people a new way and new direction for their lives – a baptism of repentance. However, he also knew that one mightier than he was coming after him who would baptize with not only water but also fire. John's water prepared the people for the fire of the Christ to fill their lives.

His vocation was rooted in Martyrdom. Long before John was beheaded, he gave up his life to God. He gave up home for the desert. He gave up his family for the people who came to hear him preach. He gave up good food and worldly comfort for a diet of bugs and honey and camel hair as his cloak. He gave up his own words to speak the Word. He gave up his own likeness and offer the world the likeness of Christ. And so it makes sense that he would give up his life in death for the truth of the one who would also die in order to bring forth the glory of resurrection.

So how is your vocation? Are you listening to the voice of God calling you to be who you are in His sight? Are you a tune to the voice of God and His ongoing call? Have you gone to confession recently? If not, go. In the ongoing sacrifices you make do you see Christ increase within you, even if that means you have to decrease... or even die?

What would this child be? Well, after hearing and being formed by the voice of God, the child became a man of purpose, courage, integrity, and depth... may His voice create the same within us as well.