

Morning Prayer for the Feast of John the Baptist

*'I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen.'*Mt.11,11.

Invitation to Prayer

Leader We gather with John the Baptist our patron to praise you Hospitable God.

All John, be with us through this day.

Leader We acknowledge John's sense of the mission of God.

All John, be with us through this day.

Leader We too recognise the Christ through the example of John, the Baptist.

All John, be with us through this day.

Hymn

Prepare the Way

*There was a man of God, whose name was John.
He came to speak for the light
The voice of one in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord.'*

Chorus Prepare the way of the Lord (4)

*Mountains and hills shall be brought to the ground
The winding paths be straightened
And all on earth shall give you life,
'Prepare the way of the Lord.'*

Chorus: Prepare the way of the Lord (4)

*He's the Lamb of God and you must follow him
Who takes the sin of the world
And He has come to give you life-
'Prepare the way of the Lord'.*

Chorus: Prepare the way of the Lord (4)

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Psalm 62:2-9 (alternate sides)

Antiphon His name will be called John; many will rejoice at his birth.

Voice(s) 1 O God, you are my God, for you I long;
For you my soul is thirsting.
My body pines for you
Like a dry, weary land without water.
So I gaze on you in the sanctuary
To see your power and your glory.

Voice(s) 2 For your love is better than life,
My lips will speak your praise.
So I will bless you all my life,
In your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
My mouth shall praise you with joy.

Voice(s) 1 On my bed I remember you,
On you I muse through the night
For you have been my help;
In the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings fast to you;
Your right hand holds me fast.

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All **Glory to you, Source of all being,
Eternal Word and Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
Is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

Word of God *Luke 1:57-66, 80.*

The time came for Elizabeth to give birth and she bore a son. Her neighbours and relatives heard that God had shown mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

On the eighth day, they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said: "No, he is to be called John." They said to her: "None of your relatives has this name." Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him.

He asked for a writing tablet and wrote: "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue was freed, and he began to speak, praising God.

Fear came over all their neighbours, and all these things were talked about throughout the whole country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said: "What, then, will this child become?" For, indeed, the hand of God was with him.

The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

A Pause for quiet Reflection

Canticle of Zechariah

Leader **John said, "I have seen and I testify that Jesus is the Chosen One of God."**

Benedictus *Bernadette Farrell*

*Blest be the Lord, the God of Israel,
Who brings the dawn and darkest night dispels,
Who raises up a mighty saviour from the earth,
Of David's line, a son of royal birth.*

*The prophets tell a story just begun
Of vanquished foe and glorious victory won,
Of promise made to all who keep the law as guide:
God's faithful love and mercy will abide.
This is the oath once sworn to Abraham:
All shall be free to dwell upon the land,
Free now to praise, unharmed by the oppressor's rod,
Holy and righteous in the sight of God.*

*And you, my child, this day you shall be called
The promised one, the prophet of our God,
For you will go before the Lord to clear the way,
And shepherd all into the light of day.*

*The tender love God promised from our birth
Is soon to dawn upon this shadowed earth,
To shine on those whose sorrows seem to never cease,
To guide our feet into the path of peace.*

*All glory be to God, Creator blest,
To Jesus Christ, God's love made manifest,
And to the Holy Spirit, gentle comforter,
All glory be both now and evermore.*



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All **John said, "I have seen and I testify that Jesus is the Chosen One of God."**

Intercessions

Leader **John the Baptist was called the Prophet of the Most High, to go before the Lord and prepare a way for Christ. Let us pray.**

For all who prepare pathways for God in our world.

Response **O God hear our prayer**

Response For all who, like John the Baptist, Mary MacKillop and ourselves who are called to participate in God's mission.

O God hear our prayer

Response For those in authority in the world who speak out for truth and justice.

O God hear our prayer

Response For young people seeking direction in their lives and relationships.

O God hear our prayer

Response For those who becomes a voice for the voiceless .

O God hear our prayer

Response For all who have died, especially our Sisters whose anniversaries are today.

O God hear our prayer

Invitation to share other prayers aloud or in silence.

Leader In the company of John the Baptist we pray..

Our Father

Closing Prayer

Leader *God of hospitality and mission, we call upon John the Baptist, to give us courage to witness to the Word of God in what we say and do. May we be hope-givers in our world struggling with the effects of recession and violence.*

*We ask this with confidence through Jesus the Christ and the Spirit of Hope. **Amen***

Blessing

Leader **May we respond generously to the needs of our time.**

All Bless us with clear sight and open hearts.

Leader **May John the Baptist's heart for mission be our characteristic too.**

All Bless us with community-minded hearts.

Leader **May the heart of God, drawing us in, holding us together, leading us onwards, centre us in courage and humility.**

All Bless us with hospitable hearts. Amen.

Evening Prayer for the Feast of John the Baptist

Gathering

Leader Let us begin in the name of God, Source of all Life, Lover of all creation, Inspirer of all hearts, Amen.

Hymn

John and Jesus (Peter Kearney)

*Of John and Jesus, the rise and the fall:
John was a prophet, the greatest of all
And Jesus the Saviour whom God did send
They had the same message and came to the same sudden end.*

*John kept to basic in food and in dress
He made his home out in the wilderness
The down and out were his neighbours there
He showed us the way when we didn't know where to begin.*

Chorus *He said Come on everyone to the river to drown
To be tumbled and tossed, turned upside down
Change your heart, come clear your mind
And find your feet on new ground.*

*One day the Pharisees came from the town
Smooth-talking men in their fancy gowns
And John, he said, 'you're a brood of snakes!
You know every law but not what it takes to be good.*

*He spoke without fear and news of him spread
The poor, like children, came to hear what he said
He wasn't giving them stones, he gave them bread
They fed on the truth, every word that he said it all (Chorus)*

*John gave them a warning, 'destruction is due!
The people asked him. 'just what should we do?'
If you've got two coats, then one is to share
If you have power, be sure that you are fair to the poor.'*

*You know that Jesus, when he came along
He went straight to the river to be baptised by John
And as he took his place where John took his stand
Brought news of a Kingdom where the poor of the land could belong (Chorus)*

*Herod the king liked to hear John speak
What he said made him nervous but he sure was unique
Then John criticised his plans to rewed
So they put him in prison, before very long John was dead.
And how many people since Jesus and John
Spoke out the truth and soon were gone*

*After naming the names of the snakes in the pile
They're gone, but just for a while. (Chorus)*

*'What did you go to the desert to see?
Was it a reed shaking in the breeze?
'Oh, no, it was a wiry tree
Growing up strong in a place where a tree shouldn't be! (Chorus)*

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Antiphon **Draw us close as evening comes, O God of the Night.**

Psalm 143

Alternate sides

*Blessed be God, my Rock.
You train my arms for battle;
You prepare my hands for war.
You are my love, my fortress;
You are my stronghold, my Saviour,
My shield, my place of refuge.
You bring peoples under my rule.*

*O God, what am I that you care for me,
A mortal being, that you keep me in mind?
I am merely a breath
My life fades like a shadow.*

*Lower your heavens and come down;
Touch the mountains and wreath them in smoke.
Flash your lightnings; rout the foe,
Shoot your arrows and put them to flight.*

*Reach down from heaven and save me;
Draw me out from the mighty waters,
from the hands of alien foes
Whose mouths are filled with lies,
Whose hands are raised in perjury.*

*To you, O God, will I sing a new song;
I will play on the ten-stringed harp.
To you who give kings their victory,
You set David your servant free.*

*Glory to you, Source of all being,
Eternal Word and Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning
Is now and ever shall be
World without end.*



Antiphon **Draw us close as evening comes, O God of the Night.**

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Word of God John 1:29-34

The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!. This is the one I was talking about when I said 'A man is coming after me, but he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was born.' I did not know who he would be, but I came baptising with water in order to make him known to the people of Israel." And John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and rest on him. I still did not know that he was the one, but God, who sent me to baptise with water, had said to me, 'You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man: he is the one who baptises with the Holy Spirit.' "I have seen it," said John, "and I tell you that he is the Son of God."

Time for Reflection and Sharing

Canticle of Mary

Leader The child that is born to us this day is greater than any prophet: this is the one of whom Jesus said, 'Among those born of women there was no greater than John the Baptist.'

Hymn

Magnificat

Bernadette Farrell

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord
My spirit sings to God, my saving God,
Who on this day above all others favoured me
And raised me up, a light for all to see.*

*Through me great deeds will God make manifest,
And all the earth will come to call me blest.
Unbounded love and mercy sure I will proclaim
For all who know and praise God's holy name.*

*God's mighty arm, protector of the just,
Will guard the weak and raise them from the dust.
But mighty kings will swiftly fall from thrones corrupt.
The strong brought low, the lowly lifted up.*

*Soon will the poor and hungry of the earth
Be richly blest, be given greater worth.
And Israel, as once foretold to Abraham,
Will live in peace throughout the promised land.*

*All glory be to God, Creator blest,
To Jesus Christ, God's love made manifest,
And to the Holy Spirit, gentle comforter,
All glory be both now and evermore.*

Intercessions

Leader God of hope for our world, you chose John the Baptist to announce your reign and to prepare a way for Jesus. With joy and confidence, we pray this evening.

Response May we have faith like John the Baptist to know your will in these times.
God of Hope, hear us.

Response May we have confidence like John, to live and proclaim the love of Christ.
God of Hope, hear us.

Response May we have humility like John, to participate in ministry to our last breath.
God of Hope, hear us.

Invitation to share other prayers aloud or in silence.

Our Father

Leader Let us now pray in the words of Jesus.

Concluding Prayer

*God, source of our hope,
Through John the Baptist you gave us an example
of a man close to the concerns of your own heart,
and alive to the needs of his time.
As our patron, may we too draw on his courage,
forthrightness and love of you and your people.
May we live into his characteristics and become more truly
Sisters of St Joseph for today's world.
We ask this confident of your generosity and encouragement.
Amen.*

Blessing

Leader As the fearless one follows the pathways of mission.

All Bless us with firm footsteps, God of Mission.

Leader As the called one recognises the insistent voice of the Divine.

All Bless us with discerning hearts God of Mystery.

Leader As the faithful one trusts in the unfolding of life.

All Bless us with purpose, God of Community.

Leader As the prophetic one sees the possibilities for God's world.

All Bless us with rolled up sleeves and engaged hearts, God of Daily Life.

Amen

