

# SOLEMNITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST



## **Invitation to pray with the image**

Take a few moments to open your heart and mind to God and become conscious of your breathing.

When you are ready, slowly look and notice the image.

Let feelings and thoughts come to you as you take in the various elements of the image.

Take time to become aware of what you find yourself drawn to?

Notice what feelings are being evoked in you?

When you are ready, return to the image with an open heart and mind.



Allow new thoughts, meanings, and feelings to arise.

Reflect more fully on these meanings and feelings as they come to you and ponder them prayerfully.

What might the image be revealing to you as you attend to it in the quietness of your heart?

What desires and longings from your life experience are evoked in your prayer?

Take the time to respond to God in gratitude, supplication, wonder, lament, praise.....

Jot down insights you want to remember, wisdom you hope to embody, feelings or thoughts you wish to express.

*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.*

*Amen.*

*(Taken from a prayer for St John the Baptist – rsj website)*

# SOLEMNITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST Day One - The Call

As we prepare to celebrate the Solemnity of the Nativity of St John the Baptist we reflect on him as one who was chosen by God.



*St John the Baptist be with us as we too strive to  
witness to God alive in our world*

## Scripture

*Isaiah 40: 1, 2a, 3-5, 9-1 (Jerusalem Bible)*

"Console my people, give them comfort," says your God. "Speak tenderly to Jerusalem's heart, and tell it that it's time of service is ended." A voice cries out, "Clear a path through the wilderness for the Living God! Make a straight road through the desert for our God! Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low; let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges become a valley!" Go up on a high mountain, you who bring good news to Zion! Shout with a loud voice you who bring good news to Jerusalem! Shout without fear and say to the towns of Judah "here is your God!" Living God, O Sovereign One, you come

with power and rule with a strong arm! You bring your reward with you, and your reparation comes before you. Like a shepherd you feed your flock, gathering the lambs and holding them close, and leading mother ewes with gentleness.

### Reflection

John was chosen by God. You are invited to contemplate God's choice of you.

What in this passage touches your heart?

To what does this call you?

How are you moved to pray?

*We encourage you to write or illustrate your reflections.*

### Response

*We pray in solidarity with each other*

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.

*(Taken from a prayer for St John the Baptist – rsj website)*



**Sisters of Saint Joseph**  
*of the Sacred Heart*

# SOLEMNITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST Day Two - The Witness

As we prepare to celebrate the Solemnity of the Nativity of St John the Baptist we reflect on his response to God's call in his life.



*St John the Baptist be with us as we too strive to witness to God alive in our world*

## **Scripture**

*John 1:19-34 (adapted)*

And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, "Who are you?" he admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Messiah." 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."

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, "a man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.' John testified further, saying, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptise with water told me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptise with the holy Spirit.' Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

*Matthew 11:11*

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

### **Reflection**

John witnessed to the Son of God. You are invited to contemplate how you give witness to the Son of God.

What in this story touches your heart?

To what does this call you?

How are you moved to pray?

*We encourage you to write or illustrate your reflections.*

### **Response**

*We pray in solidarity with each other*

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we call upon John the Baptist,  
to give us courage to witness to the Word of God  
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*(Taken from a prayer for St John the Baptist – rsj website)*

# SOLEMNITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST Day Three - The Proclaimer

As we prepare to celebrate the Solemnity of the Nativity of St John the Baptist we reflect on him as one who proclaimed Jesus.



*St John the Baptist be with us as we too strive to witness to God alive in our world*

## Scripture

*John 1:23*

I am 'the voice of one crying out in the desert, make straight the way of the Lord.'

*Luke 17:22*

"The coming of the Kingdom of God cannot be observed, and no one will announce, 'Look, here it is,' or, 'There it is.' For behold the Kingdom of God is with you.

## Reflection

As the cousin of Jesus and the one who prepared the way for his coming, John the Baptist is a patron of the Sisters of St Joseph. Like him the Sisters of St Joseph and those with a Josephite heart, by their presence and activity, point to the presence of Jesus within all people.

How are you called to prepare the way for Jesus?

How are you moved to pray?

*We encourage you to write or illustrate your reflections.*

## Response

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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.

*(Taken from a prayer for St John the Baptist – rsj website)*



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