

# Religion at the Academy

Dec 5, 2021

## John the Baptist: The Perfect Symbol for Advent

In today's Gospel, attention is drawn to someone who is out in the desert preparing the way for the Lord. We've met this guy before in a rather indirect way. His mom, Elizabeth, was supposed to be too old to have children. His dad, Zechariah, was so surprised by the announcement of his birth that he pretty much told the angel that brought the news that he was a liar. This guy recognized Jesus before anyone else. There is that beautiful account in which Mary, newly informed of her own impending joyous arrival, decides to take a breather and visit her cousin who just so happens to be the afore-mentioned Elizabeth. Elizabeth knows she's coming because

[W]hen Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Luke 1:41

The baby, John, leaps in her womb because he is in the presence of his Savior. As a foetus, John has more awareness of Jesus than some of us have as adults.

In today's Gospel, we have fast forwarded about 30 years. John is now an adult and he has taken up his mission. He is now preaching about the arrival of the Savior, and his message is simple. REPENT. PREPARE. Advent is about the same message. REPENT. PREPARE. Adult John knew that the world was about to be exposed to the most amazing gift, just as

John in the womb knew that the world was about to be exposed to the most amazing gift. John's story does not end well. He himself becomes a sacrifice to a woman's jealousy, and a man's weakness. Yet John is a fulfillment of the prophecy

"I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way" –  
"a voice of one calling in the wilderness,  
'Prepare the way for the Lord,  
make straight paths for him.' "

Mark 1: 2-4

John has always been one of my favorite Bible personages. He is all about what is truly important: Jesus and the saving of the world. I wonder sometimes what he would have made of our mad build-up to Christmas.

I have included a coloring page for the little ones. I hope that they enjoy it.

Wednesday is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Don't be confused. This is not about Jesus's conception. This is about Mary being conceived without sin. It is a holy day of obligation.

 [Feast of the Immaculate Conception \(12/8/16\)](#)



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# JOHN THE BAPTIST

*Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:3, Luke 3:4*

