

The Birth of St John the Baptist

As we celebrate the nativity of St John the Baptist, I invite you to meditate with me on Birth as God's blessing to the world. The nativity of John the Baptist was indeed God's benediction to the world. The Baptist was a man specially chosen by God to be the herald of the Saviour. In fact, the Baptist had the role of preparing people for Christ the Lord. His voice challenged humanity to repent; his voice pointed the way to Christ the Lord.

For all the times we failed to be a blessing to the world; for all the times we failed to witness to the love and mercy of God, we confess and say: Kyrie eleison; Christe eleison; Kyrie eleison.

Meditation on: Isaiah 49: 1-6; Acts 13: 22-26; Luke 1: 57-66.80

Birth as God's blessing to the world

Jesus of Nazareth was aware that he was born to be a king who witnesses to the truth (Cf. John 18:37). We are all born to witness to the truth and love of God. As Christians we believe that God is the truth par excellence. To learn and teach the truth of God is to help human beings be open to God who calls us to be holy as he is holy. No-one can deny the fact that a call to holiness is a call to a constant conversion. Without a constant conversion, one's holiness becomes difficult.

No wonder, both John the Baptist and Jesus the Nazarene called to repentance. "The time is fulfilled," said Jesus, "and the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe in the gospel!" (Mark 1: 15). John the Baptist said: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." (Matthew 3: 2).

One of the ways of becoming a blessing to people is to warn them and call them to be on their guard so that evil may not destroy their lives. We need to proclaim the truth of God; the truth that sets people free and gives them life in abundance.

I believe that each birth is a gift of God for the world. I also believe that the hand of the Lord is always with a newborn baby. Through a child we see the love of God for his people. The nativity of each one of us is God's blessing. Hence, let our lives be a tangible sign of God's love; let us be God's messengers; messengers of the truth and love of God. May the Lord our God keep us in holiness so that we may continue to grow in wisdom and proclaim the Gospel of reconciliation and salvation.

It is our duty and right, as Christians, to proclaim the Gospel of salvation to the world. With God's wisdom we will be able to refute falsehood, correct error and call to obedience. John the Baptist was obedient to God and with patience he called people to repent and believe in Jesus as the Son of God, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

May God give us the humility of John the Baptist. Although he was famous and popular, the Baptist was humble enough to lead people to Jesus and not to himself. Pointing People to Jesus he said: "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because He was before me.'" (John 1: 29-30). True, one of the deepest longings of a Christian is to see others come to know Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

Before John ended his career he said: "I am not the one you imagine me to be; that one is coming after me and I am not fit to undo his scandal." My brothers and sisters in Christ and all you who fear God let us receive the message of salvation and proclaim it to the world. We are called to be God's blessings for the purification and sanctification of the world.

When we were being fashioned in secret and moulded in the depths of the earth, God already chose us to be his ambassadors; people who proclaim God's truth in order to set the world free. We were born to be witnesses; we were born to witness to the truth and love of God.

O Lord our God, we thank you for the wonder of our beings.

