

Reflection Saturday Week 21 – Passion of John the Baptist 2020

Once known as the beheading of John the Baptist, today's feast is now called the Passion of John the Baptist. Passion can be understood in two ways. Passion in terms of suffering, trial and death, and passion in terms of the motivating force and energy of someone for a particular purpose. The gospels make it clear that John fully understood his purpose in preparing the way for the coming Messiah, for Jesus. As cousins, they may have known each other quite well in their childhood days and early years. John fulfilled his mission so well that his group of followers continued well after his death, although some, we know, turned to Jesus. To die, the way he did at the hands of Herod, seems scant reward for all that he did for Jesus. Yet he would not have wanted it any other way. He offers us a somewhat brutal lesson as followers of Jesus whose mission, passion like John's, is to prepare the way for Jesus to enter the lives of those we encounter. Our reward may not be glorious, happy, or joyful in any way. But, our reward, like John's, is to fulfil whatever God asks of us, however difficult, however challenging and however impossible it may seem. Let us pray with the psalmist: *"In you, O Lord, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame. Be a rock where I can take refuge, a mighty stronghold to save me; for you are my rock, my stronghold. Free me from the hand of the wicked. My lips will tell of your justice and day by day of your help."*

Be true to your mission, then, and know that you shall not be overcome because the Lord will be with you to deliver you!

I found a copy of Mission Impossible 3 among my Blu-ray film discs the other day...

I thought to myself: *'It cannot really be impossible if he's already done it twice.'*