



Lessons from a Prophet

Every year on June 24th the Church celebrates the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. John's birth is recorded in scripture because he is the herald of the coming messiah. There are four lessons we can learn from the Baptist.

1. John bridges the gap between the Old Testament to the New Testament. St. Augustine said that John was born of elderly parents to signify his birth from the Old Testament. Even though he was born from older parents, he came from fertile ground. We must have respect for the Old Testament as well as the New. It is fertile ground from which God speaks to us.

2. John proclaimed the coming messiah. Even as an infant, John prophesies the coming messiah by leaping in Elizabeth's womb. St. Mother Theresa remarked that it was an unborn child who first recognized the messiah. Our entire existence is a testimony to Jesus. Every stage of life is an opportunity for us to bear witness to Jesus in our day to day activities.

3. John is a man of great humility. He is not swayed by the lure of temporal power or pleasures. He lives a modest life. He exclaims that he must decrease and Christ increase. Humility is how we begin this process of transformation and increasing Christ's action in our lives.

4. John stood up for what is right. He was arrested and put to death because he opposed Herod's unlawful marriage. Despite pressure to recant, John stood his ground with integrity. He stood up for what was right in the face of great personal loss.

John the Baptist stands as an example of what it means to dedicate one's life to following God's will. These four lessons are worth incorporating into our own lives.