

August 29th.

Saint JOHN THE BAPTIST, Martyr

In Transjordan: Solemnity

Elsewhere: Memorial

St. John the Baptist was beheaded on the orders of Herod Agrippa in the citadel of Machaerus overlooking the Dead Sea. Dying out of faithfulness to the Word of God, but not directly for Christ, John the Baptist is the Precursor who, through his fate, his humiliating death, anticipates in himself what Jesus was to suffer. This is what Jesus claimed in Matthew 17: 12: "... they did not recognize him but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands."

All as in the Missal and in Vol. III of the Lectionary, but for those in Transjordan adding the second reading given below.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Ps 118 : 46-47

I spoke, O Lord, of your decrees before kings, and was not confounded ; I pondered your commands and loved them greatly.

COLLECT

O God, who willed that Saint John the Baptist should go ahead of your Son both in his birth and in his death, grant that, as he died a Martyr for truth and justice, we, too, may fight hard for the confession of what you teach.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ...

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah

1: 17-19

But do you gird your loins; stand up and tell them all that I command you. Be not crushed on their account, as though I would leave you crushed before them; for it is I this day who have made you a fortified city, a pillar of iron, a wall of brass, against the whole land: Against Judah's kings and princes, against its priests and people. They will fight against you, but not prevail over you, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 71: 1-6, 15, 17 (R. 15)

R. My mouth will tell of your justice, O Lord.

In you, O LORD, I take refuge;

let me never be put to shame.

In your justice, rescue me, free me;

incline your ear to me and save me.

Be my rock, my constant refuge,

a mighty stronghold to save me,

for you are my rock, my stronghold.

My God, free me from the hand of the wicked,

from the grip of the unjust, of the oppressor.

It is you, O LORD, who are my hope,

my trust, O LORD, from my youth.
On you I have leaned from my birth;
from my mother's womb, you have been my help.
At all times I give you praise.

My mouth will tell of your justice,
and all the day long of your salvation.
O God, you have taught me from my youth,
and I proclaim your wonders still.

SECOND READING

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles 19: 1-7

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior of the country and came (down) to Ephesus where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the holy Spirit when you became believers?" They answered him, "We have never even heard that there is a holy Spirit." He said, "How were you baptized?" They replied, "With the baptism of John." Paul then said, "John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid (his) hands on them, the holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Matt 5:10

R. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

R. R. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

A reading of the Gospel according to Saint Mark 6: 17-29

Herod was the one who had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, whom he had married. John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." Herodias harbored a grudge against him and wanted to kill him but was unable to do so. Herod feared John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man, and kept him in custody. When he heard him speak he was very much perplexed, yet he liked to listen to him. She had an opportunity one day when Herod, on his birthday, gave a banquet for his courtiers, his military officers, and the leading men of Galilee. Herodias's own daughter came in and performed a dance that delighted Herod and his guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask of me whatever you wish and I will grant it to you." He even swore (many things) to her, "I will grant you whatever you ask of me, even to half of my kingdom." She went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the Baptist." The girl hurried back to the king's presence and made her request, "I want you to give me at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was deeply distressed, but because of his oaths and the guests he did not wish to break his word to her. So he promptly dispatched an executioner with orders to bring back his head. He went off and beheaded him in the prison. He brought in the head on a platter and gave it to the girl. The girl in turn gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Through these offerings which we bring you, O Lord, grant that we may make straight your paths, as taught by that voice crying in the desert, Saint John the Baptist, who powerfully sealed his teaching by the shedding of his blood.

Through Christ our Lord.

PREFACE : *The Mission of the Precursor*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

In his Precursor, Saint John the Baptist, we praise your great glory, for you consecrated him for a singular honour among those born of women.

His birth brought great rejoicing; even in the womb he leapt for joy at the coming of human salvation. He alone of all the prophets pointed out the Lamb of redemption.

And to make holy the flowing waters, he baptised the very author of Baptism and was privileged to bear him supreme witness by the shedding of his blood.

And so, with the Powers of heaven, we worship you constantly on earth, and before your majesty without end we acclaim :

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...

COMMUNION ANTIPHON John 3: 27, 30

John answered and said: He must increase; but I must decrease.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, O Lord, as we celebrate the heavenly birth of Saint John the Baptist, that we may revere, for what it signifies, the saving Sacrament we have received and, even more, may rejoice at its clear effects in us.

Through Christ our Lord.