

Deacon Tony's Homily for the Nativity of John the Baptist

Today we celebrate the birthday of a truly great prophet. A prophet who was a bridge between the Old and the New Testaments and a model for each of us. Saint John the Baptist.

A model of humility and courage. A prophet who was wonderfully made. We acknowledge his greatness.

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge that we too were wonderfully made.

It is all a part of God's plan of salvation for all of creation. Turn to the person next to you and acknowledge a person who is wonderfully made and capable of doing miraculous things.

Indeed when we share God's working in our lives, new life is created in all who listen.

John had been given a sharp edged tongue. He scolded the unrepentant who came to be baptized and called them a brood of vipers. He called out Herod for marrying his brother's wife. He spoke truth boldly.

REPENTENCE WAS THE ISSUE

JOKE: Jacque the house painter.

Repaint and Thin No More!

Jock, the painter, often would thin his paint so it would go further. So when the Church decided to do some deferred maintenance, Jock was able to put in the low bid, and got the job. As always, he thinned his paint way down with turpentine.

One day while he was up on the scaffolding -- the job almost finished -- he heard a horrendous clap of thunder, and the sky opened.

The downpour washed the thinned paint off the church and knocked Jock off his scaffold and onto the lawn among the gravestones and puddles of thinned and worthless paint.

Jock knew this was a warning from the Almighty, so he got on his knees and cried: "Oh, God! Forgive me! What should I do?"

And from the thunder, a mighty voice: "REPAINT! REPAINT! AND THIN NO MORE!"

We too are called to speak truth boldly no matter what the consequences. We have opportunities to witness to the sanctity of marriage and sanctity of life. With the grace of God as our source of strength, we witness with our lives and sometimes our words about obeying God's commands.

John struggled and had many instances of failure. He was jailed and ultimately beheaded for his efforts.

He chose to live in the desert to avoid distractions from God's calls of encouragement.

Many times we feel that we are in a desert

but we must trust that God is always with us.

We too must avoid distractions that seem to call out to us. We too rely on God's grace to see us through the times when we feel discouraged because no one hears us. Thank God that He reads hearts and sees our sincerity in the lives we lead.

We share many similarities with John the Baptist.

God provided for John, for Jacque and he will provide for us too.