



Daily Reflections

WHO ARE YOU?

By Sr. Jeanne Fallon, CSJ

Excerpts from the First Reading and Gospel

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vindication by our God.

ISAIAH 61:1-2a

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.

And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer

to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" He said: "I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord,' as Isaiah the prophet said."

"I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

JOHN 1:6-8, 19-23, 26-28

Reflection

In the first reading, we hear the words of the prophet Isaiah describing his divine inspiration and God-given mission. Whenever I hear these words, I cannot help hearing them on the lips of Jesus of Nazareth when he was invited to read from the scroll and give an exhortation in his hometown (Luke 4:16-20). *"The eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him."* They gazed at him; a man familiar to them as the son of Joseph. "Who are you?" they mused as Jesus told them that these words were being fulfilled as they listened. "Who ARE you?"

The Gospel highlights John, who had a special mission from God to be a voice crying out in the wilderness, making a way for the coming of the Lord. John, dressed in camel's hair with a leather belt on his waist, was baptizing people and preaching a message of repentance. Jewish authorities in Jerusalem sent priests to ask John, *"Who are you?"* The Christ? Elijah? The Prophet? John humbly confessed that he was not the Christ; he was sent to point to the presence of *"One who is among you whom you do not recognize, One who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie."*



"Saint John the Baptist" by MCS@flickr is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

For Pondering and Prayer

During these Advent days we also ponder: who is this One who is to come? Who is the One bringing glad tidings to the poor? Who heals the brokenhearted and releases captives? Who proclaimed his mission from God in the words of Isaiah to a people who did not recognize him?

This is a day of great rejoicing because the Lord is near. Isaiah says, in my God is the joy of my soul. John the Baptist says, make straight the way of the Lord. Let us rejoice in the One who is near, whose presence we long for, who

mends our broken hearts and releases us from whatever binds us. We rejoice in the glad tidings you bring!

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