

# Readings: MARTYRDOM of Saint JOHN the Baptist, Memorial

First Reading: Jer 1:17-19

The word of the LORD came to me thus:

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.

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Responsorial Psalm: Ps 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5-6ab, 15ab and 17

R/ I will sing your salvation.

In you, O LORD, I take refuge;  
let me never be put to shame.  
In your justice rescue me, and deliver me;  
incline your ear to me, and save me.  
**R/ I will sing your salvation.**

Be my rock of refuge,  
a stronghold to give me safety,  
for you are my rock and my fortress.  
O my God, rescue me from the hand of the wicked.  
**R/ I will sing your salvation.**

For you are my hope, O LORD;  
my trust, O God, from my youth.  
On you I depend from birth;  
from my mother's womb you are my strength.

R/ I will sing your salvation.

My mouth shall declare your justice,  
day by day your salvation.  
O God, you have taught me from my youth,  
and till the present I proclaim your wondrous deeds.

R/ I will sing your salvation.

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Gospel Reading: Mark 6:17-29

Herod was the one who had John the Baptist 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' 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.