

Liturgy Alive of Feria

Introduction

Indeed, "God is gracious." This is the meaning of the name John. We are told today about the birth of the forerunner of Jesus, John the Baptist. We remember the coming of the Savior and how a special **messenger** of God had to prepare the hearts of people for the coming of the Savior. But our Savior Jesus came long ago. How much are we living as people who are saved? How much do we enter into God's plan to save our world? How much do we prepare Jesus' coming into the hearts of people today?

Opening Prayer

Lord our God,
in this time of waiting
you must still be waiting for us
how we respond to the coming of your Son Jesus
in our hearts and in our world.
Make us people of hope,
not people of the past,
but men and women,
the young and children too
who want to see Jesus our Savior
alive and active among us.

We ask you this through Christ our Lord.

Liturgy of the **Word**

Gospel Introduction:

The Gospel scene is homey, even humorous. Elizabeth and Zechariah must insist, over the protests of family and friends, that the child's name is John. With that, Zechariah's "mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God." All are astonished and, although the fear that descends on all in the environs is really awe, it is colored to some extent by the words of the first reading. In Christian tradition, John the Baptist is the messenger sent to prepare the way of the Lord. He is the Elijah who will announce that "great and terrible" day.

The Gospel concludes by saying that all who heard of these happenings in the hill country of Judea "took them to heart." Similarly, in Advent we store in our hearts the signs and wonders the Church proclaims, asking ourselves once again, "What, then, will this child be?"

General Intercessions

- Lord Jesus, give the grace of faith to people who keep groping in the dark for something or someone like you to give meaning to their lives, we pray:

- Lord Jesus, give the grace of peace to the country and the people where you were born and where the center is the city of peace, Jerusalem, we pray:

- Lord Jesus, give the grace of liberation to people captive in their evil and in oppression, we pray:

Prayer over the Gifts

Lord our God,
you are always coming
to renew us, to be gracious to us.
Make us attentive and eager
to keep welcoming your Son Jesus Christ
as one of us, here and now,
living in us, active in us,
going with us our pilgrim way
as our Lord who leads us to you,

our living God for ever and ever.

Prayer after Communion

God of our hope,
when we hear the word of your Son
and sit at his table,
we realize how deaf we often still are
to his word of life and his love.
Make us hear him
when he knocks at the door of our hearts,
dispose us to let him enter
and to let him make us
messengers of his integrity and peace.

For he is our Lord for ever.

Blessing

At the birth of John the Baptist his Father Zechariah praised God for giving him a son who was to do great things for God. We too give praise to God for giving us his Son Jesus, and in him the grace of forgiveness and life. May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

