St. John the Baptist!

Did you know that St. John the Baptist is a cousin of Jesus? His parents were named Zechariah and Elizabeth, and Elizabeth was a relative of Mary, Jesus’ mother.

During the story of the Visitation (Lk. 1:39-45), when Mary rushes to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, it was John the Baptist who leapt within Elizabeth’s womb at the sound of Mary’s voice. Both he and Jesus were growing in their mothers’ wombs at the same time!

When he grew older, St. John the Baptist left his village to live as a hermit in the desert. He eventually became a great preacher and taught at the banks of the River Jordan, proclaiming that everyone must repent, change their lives, and be baptized.

Today we celebrate Jesus’ baptism. It was not Jesus’ parish priest who baptized Him, it was his cousin, John the Baptist.

St. John the Baptist, pray for us!

Everyone became excited and wondered, “Could John be the Messiah?” John said, “I am just baptizing with water. But someone more powerful is going to come, and I am not good enough even to untie his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”

After everyone else had been baptized, Jesus himself was baptized. Then as he prayed, the sky opened up, and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in the form of a dove. A voice from heaven said, “You are my own dear Son, and I am pleased with you.”

Gospel Reflection

I wonder why the Holy Spirit came as a dove... (how is the Holy Spirit like a dove?)

I wonder how Jesus' baptism was similar to/different from my baptism...

I wonder how the crowd felt when they heard God's voice from heaven...

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