June 24th: Solemnity of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist

Gospel text (*Lk* 1:57-66.80): When the time arrived for Elizabeth to have her child she gave birth to a son (…). When they came on the eighth day to circumcise the child, they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, but his mother said in reply, "No. He will be called John" (…). The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the desert until the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Birth of John the Baptist (chosen by God)

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Today, we celebrate the Nativity of the Baptist. St. John is a man of contrasts: he lives in the silence of the desert, but right from there he appeals to the crowds. He is humble enough to say he is only the voice, not the Word, but he dares to accuse and denounce all injustices even to the very king. Silent and humble, he is also strong and courageous enough to shed his blood. John the Baptist is a great man!

Perhaps, the secret of his greatness is the realization of knowing he has been chosen by God. All his childhood and youth was marked by the understanding of his mission: to provide testimony, which he does by baptizing Christ in the river Jordan, by favorably disposing the crowds for the Lord and, at the end of his life, by shedding his blood in favor of the truth.

—Through the baptism, we have all been chosen and sent to bear witness of the Lord. In an environment of indifference, St. John is a helping example to imitate.