

# Tridentine Rite Parish

24<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> June 2007

## The Nativity of John the Baptist

Jerry & Susan Bubniak  
(36<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary)

### **The Nativity of John the Baptist**

([www.newadvent.org](http://www.newadvent.org))



The commemoration of his Nativity is one of the oldest feasts, if not the oldest feast, introduced into both the Greek and Latin liturgies to honour a saint. But why is the feast proper, as it were, of St. John on the day of his nativity, whereas with other saints it is the day of their death? Because it was meant that the birth of him who, unlike the rest, was "filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb", should be signalized as a day of triumph. The celebration of the Decollation of John the Baptist, on 29 August, enjoys almost the same antiquity. We find also in the oldest martyrologies mention of a feast of the Conception of the Precursor on 24 September. But the most solemn celebration in honour of this saint was always that of his Nativity, preceded until recently by a fast. Many places adopted the custom introduced by St. Sabas of having a double Office on this day, as on the day of the Nativity of the Lord. The first Office, intended to signify the time of the Law and the Prophets which lasted up to St. John (Luke 16:16), began at sunset, and was chanted without Alleluia; the second, meant to celebrate the opening of the time of grace, and gladdened by the singing of Alleluia, was held during the night. The resemblance of the feast of St. John with that of Christmas was carried farther, for another feature of the 24<sup>th</sup> of June was the celebration of three masses: the first, in the dead of night, recalled his mission of Precursor; the second, at daybreak, commemorated the baptism he conferred; and the third, at the hour of Terce, honoured his sanctity. The whole liturgy of the day, repeatedly enriched by the additions of several popes, was in suggestiveness and beauty on a part with the liturgy of Christmas. So sacred was St. John's day deemed that two rival armies, meeting face to face on 23 June, by common accord put off the battle until the morrow of the feast (Battle of Fontenay, 841). "Joy, which is the characteristic of the day, radiated from the sacred precincts. The lovely summer nights, at St. John's tide, gave free scope to popular display of lively faith among various nationalities. Scarce had the last rays of the setting sun died away when, all the world over, immense columns of flame arose from every mountain-top, and in an instant, every town, and village, and hamlet was lighted up" (Guéranger). The custom of the "St. John's fires," whatever its origin, has, in certain regions, endured unto this day.

### **Tridentine Latin Masses for the Week**

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> at 12pm** "4<sup>th</sup> Class Feria" Stephen Martinelli (L), by Carol Martinelli

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> at 12pm** "Vigil of Sts Peter & Paul" All members enrolled in prayer, by the Society of Our Lady of Good Success