

To Prepare a People Fit for the Lord

The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

As our son, Eric and his wife Megan prepare their children for bed each night, one important ritual is strongly enforced by their three year old son, Joe. The family gathers together to say their nightly prayers and offer gratitude for the important things in their lives. Jack (8), Evelyn (6) and Joseph (3) along with Benjamin (6 weeks) sit with their parents to perform this nightly ritual. To be part of this short but significant holy time is to watch a couple **“prepare a people fit for the Lord.”**

I am humbled and in awe that for my grandchildren, even one as young as three, there is a right way to do this nightly sacred time and any variance is noted and corrected by Joseph. “No, grandma, you forgot to say your gratitude!” Ok then...I am thankful that my son and his wife have decided to make God the center of their home and proclaim the importance and presence of Jesus in the lives of their children. Amen!

It is a lesson we all need to learn as we celebrate the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, the first herald of the coming Messiah. At every baptism the priest says to the parents: **“You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training this child in the practice of the faith. It is your duty to bring this child up to keep God’s commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?”**

It is a daunting question. For me, it is the encapsulation of the ministry of St. John the Baptist. In other words...Are you willing to proclaim the coming of the Lord to your children and to prepare them to do the work of the Lord? Will they know Christ by your words and examples of prayer, sacrifice and worship?

In this crazy, busy and complicated world, what we need is every day prophets like you who clean and prepare meals and then thank God. We need prophets who wash the dishes and then the baby while offering praises to the Lord. We need prophets, who change a dirty diaper and then who put a band-aid on a knee and proclaim Christ’s healing touch. It is this commission that we have been given. We are all baptized as priest, prophet and king. We are all called to proclaim Christ to others and **“prepare a people fit for the Lord.”**

“Hear me, O coastlands, listen, O distant people. The Lord called me from birth from my mother’s womb he gave me my name....I am made glorious in the sight of the Lord and my God is now my strength!”

Blessings!


Sue Schettler