

*Liturgy of the Hours*  
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

OFFICE OF READINGS

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June 24, 2026

{ Solemnity – Birth of John the Baptist }



*Stand and make sign of cross*

God, come to my assistance.

— Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

**HYMN**

You fled the turmoil of the crowded city,  
seeking from childhood shelter in the desert,  
lest you should tarnish by the least aspersion  
your life and virtue.

Camel hair garments clothed holy body,  
your waist was girded with a belt of leather,  
your drink was water and your food was locusts  
mixed with wild honey.

All other prophets sang of future glory  
from their heart's vision filled with expectation;  
you, though, have pointed to the Lamb removing  
the world's offenses.

None born of woman, through the world's wide orbit,  
was great and worthy as Saint John the Baptist;  
he touched with water Christ who cleansed the ages  
of sin and evil.

God, One and Triune, citizens of heaven  
honor and praise you with their joyful singing;  
while we beseech you, grant us your forgiveness,  
pardon the ransomed. Amen.

*Metrical hymn, melody: DIVA SERVATRIX, 11 11 11 5; from the Bayeux  
Antiphoner, 1739*

*Plainsong, mode IV, melody 75; Liber Hymnarius, Solesmes, 1983\*, Text: Antra deserti  
teneris sub annis, attributed to Paul the Deacon, ca. 720-799*

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*International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation (ICEL).*

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*Sit or stand*

## PSALMODY

### *Antiphon 1*

The Lord called me before I was born; from my mother's womb he named me.

*Psalm 21:2-8, 14*

*Thanksgiving for the king's victory*

*He accepted life that he might rise and live for ever (Saint Hilary).*

O Lórd, your stréngth gives jóy to the kíng; \*  
hów your sáving hélp makes him glád!  
You have gránted hím his héart's desíre; \*  
you háve not refúsed the práyer of his líps.

You cáme to méet him with the bléssings of succés, \*  
you have sét on his héad a crówn of pure góld.  
He ásked you for lífe and thís you have gíven, \*  
dáys that will lást from áge to áge.

Your sáving hélp has gíven him glóry. \*  
You have láid upón him májesty and spléndor,  
you have gránted your bléssings to hím for éver. \*  
You have máde him rejóice with the jóy of your présence.

The kíng has pút his trúst in the Lórd: \*  
through the mércy of the Most Hígh hé shall stand firm.  
O Lórd, arise in your stréngth, \*  
we shall síng and práise your pówer.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, \*  
and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, \*  
and will be for ever. Amen.

*Antiphon*

The Lord called me before I was born; from my mother's womb he named me.

*Antiphon 2*

The Lord made my tongue a sharp sword; he hid me in the shadow of his hand.

*Psalm 92*

*Praise of God the Creator*

*Sing in praise of Christ's redeeming work (Saint Athanasius).*

*I*

It is good to give thanks to the Lórd,\*  
to make músic to your náme, O Most Hígh,  
to procláim your lóve in the mórning\*  
and your trúth in the wátches of the níght,  
on the tén-stringed lýre and the lúte,\*  
with the múrmuring sóund of the hárp.

Your déeds, O Lórd, have made me glád;\*  
for the wórk of your hánds I shout with jóy.  
O Lórd, how gréat are your wórks!\*  
How déep are yóur desígns!  
The fóolish man cánnót knów this\*  
and the fóol cánnót understánd.

Though the wícked spring úp like gráss\*  
and áll who do évil thríve:  
they are dóomed to be etérnally destróyed.\*  
But yóu, Lord, are etérnally on hígh.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,\*  
and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now,\*  
and will be for ever. Amen.

*Antiphon*

The Lord made my tongue a sharp sword; he hid me in the shadow of his hand.

*Antiphon 3*

John testified: He who is to come after me existed before me.

*II*

Sée how your énemies pérish; \*  
all dóers of évil are scátted.

To mé you give the wíld-ox's stréngth; \*  
you anóint me with the púrest óil.  
My éyes looked in tríumph on my fóes; \*  
my éars heard gládly of their fáll.  
The júst will flóurish like the pálm-tree \*  
and grów like a Lébanon cédar.

Plánted in the hóuse of the Lórd \*  
they will flóurish in the cóurts of our Gód,  
stíll bearing frúit when they are óld, \*  
stíll full of sáp, stíll gréen,  
to procláim that the Lórd is júst; \*  
in hím, my róck, there is no wróng.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, \*  
and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, \*  
and will be for ever. Amen.

*Antiphon*

John testified: He who is to come after me existed before me.

*VERSE*

He came to bear witness to the light.

— That all might believe through him.

*Sit*

*READINGS*

*First reading*

From the book of the prophet Jeremiah

*1:4-10, 17-19*

*The call of the prophet*

The word of the Lord came to me thus:  
Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,  
before you were born I dedicated you,  
a prophet to the nations I appointed you.  
“Ah, Lord God!” I said,  
“I know not how to speak; I am too young.”

But the Lord answered me,  
Say not, “I am too young.”  
To whomever I send you, you shall go;  
whatever I command you, you shall speak.  
Have no fear before them,  
because I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.

Then the Lord extended his hand and touched my mouth, saying,  
See, I place my words in your mouth!

This day I set you  
over nations and over kingdoms,  
To root up and to tear down,  
to destroy and to demolish,  
to build and to plant.

But do you gird your loins;  
stand up and tell them  
all that I command you.  
Be not crushed on their account,  
as though I would leave you crushed before them;  
For it is I this day  
who have made you a fortified city,  
A pillar of iron, a wall of brass,  
against the whole land:  
Against Judah’s kings and princes,  
against its priests and people.  
They will fight against you, but not prevail over you,  
for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.

*Responsory*

*Jeremiah 1:5, 9, 10*

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I consecrated you,

— and I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

I have placed my words in your mouth; I have set you over nations and over kingdoms.

— And I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

*Second reading*

From a sermon by Saint Augustine, bishop

*(Sermo 293, 1-3: PL 38, 1327-1328)*

*The voice of one crying in the wilderness*

The Church observes the birth of John as a hallowed event. We have no such commemoration for any other fathers; but it is significant that we celebrate the birthdays of John and Jesus. This day cannot be passed by. And even if my explanation does not match the dignity of the feast, you may still meditate on it with great depth and profit.

John was born of a woman too old for childbirth; Christ was born of a youthful virgin. The news of John's birth was met with incredulity, and his father was struck dumb. Christ's birth was believed, and he was conceived through faith.

Such is the topic, as I have presented it, for our inquiry and discussion. But as I said before, if I lack either the time or the ability to study the implications of so profound a mystery, he who speaks within you even when I am not here will teach you better; it is he whom you contemplate with devotion, whom you have welcomed into your hearts, whose temples you have become.

John, then, appears as the boundary between the two testaments, the old and the new. That he is a sort of boundary, the Lord himself bears witness, when he speaks of *the law and the prophets up until John the Baptist*. Thus he represents times past and is the herald of the new era to come. As a representative of the past, he is born

of aged parents; as a herald of the new era, he is declared to be a prophet while still in his mother's womb. For when yet unborn, he leapt in his mother's womb at the arrival of blessed Mary. In that womb he had already been designated a prophet, even before he was born; it was revealed that he was to be Christ's precursor, before they saw one another. These are divine happenings, going beyond the limits of our human frailty. Eventually he is born, he receives his name, his father's tongue is loosened. See how these events reflect reality.

Zechariah is silent and loses his voice until John, the precursor of the Lord, is born and restores his voice. The silence of Zechariah is nothing but the age of prophecy lying hidden, obscured, as it were, and concealed before the preaching of Christ. At John's arrival Zechariah's voice is released, and it becomes clear at the coming of the one who was foretold. The release of Zechariah's voice at the birth of John is a parallel to the rending of the veil at Christ's crucifixion. If John were announcing his own coming, Zechariah's lips would not have been opened. The tongue is loosened because a voice is born. For when John was preaching the Lord's coming he was asked: *Who are you?* And he replied: *I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.* The voice is John, but the Lord in *the beginning was the Word.* John was a voice that lasted only for a time; Christ, the Word in the beginning, is eternal.

*Responsory*

*Luke 1:76-77*

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,

— for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way.

To give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.

— For you will go before the Lord to prepare his way.

*Stand*

TE DEUM

You are God: we praise you;

You are the Lord: we acclaim you;

You are the eternal Father:  
All creation worships you.

To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,  
Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise:  
Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

The glorious company of apostles praise you.  
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.  
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

Throughout the world the holy Church acclaims you:  
Father, of majesty unbounded,  
your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,  
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.

You, Christ, are the King of glory,  
the eternal Son of the Father.

When you became man to set us free  
you did not spurn the Virgin's womb.

You overcame the sting of death,  
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

You are seated at God's right hand in glory.  
We believe that you will come, and be our judge.

Come then, Lord, and help your people,  
bought with the price of your own blood,  
and bring us with your saints  
to glory everlasting.

### CONCLUDING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God our Father,  
you raised up John the Baptist  
to prepare a perfect people for Christ the Lord.  
Give your Church joy in spirit  
and guide those who believe in you  
into the way of salvation and peace.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

— Amen.

*Acclamation*

Let us praise the Lord.

— And give him thanks.

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