

Chancellor's Reflections, January 2022

After the Seasons of Advent and Christmas, and before Lent, we will soon start the Liturgical Year of "Ordinary Time". A time that, although named as such, is far from Ordinary in any sense. It is a time of teaching when the Old Testament Readings continue nearly week-to-week and in "Year A" an almost complete reading of the Gospel of Matthew to allow Father Michael to give us the depth of what the words are teaching us in our real life today.

I'll follow these teachings as the year unfolds; but, tonight let's reflect upon the soon closing of not only the Christmas Season but particularly of the past Advent Season and the **two people** woven into the Heralding of the coming of the Messiah.

First, John the Baptist. John was a miraculous gift from God to Elizabeth and Joachim very much as Jesus was to Mary and Joseph. John was only six months older than Jesus and Catholic Tradition believes that his ministry started well before the traditional age of 30. That Jewish tradition allowed you to read scripture but not able to Comment and Teach from the readings in the Synagogue until the age of 30. Thus, believed to be the reason as why he was preaching in the desert in an open format and to both the "Learned" and the "Simple" populations in Judea.

We all know of the God-given task and life of John; however, I would like to recant what Jesus said about John. (1) **"John was the most important human that ever existed on Earth"** and (2) that **"John would be of the least of those in Heaven"**. This seems strange until we remember what we have been discussing over the last few months – mainly – the degree of perfection required to see God. Perfection achieved outright on earth by few humans such as Elijah, Mary, and Jesus Himself; plus, those who are ultimately purified in Purgatory.

Now we should not stress ourselves too much in believing that perfection is impossible (and giving-up in any way) – noting that the Bible tells us that even Moses died and was buried; but, later we then see that he had been purified enough to stand, Body & Soul, with Elijah in conversation with Jesus at the Transfiguration of Christ. That's why we believe in Purgatory and our Catholic Faith is "Light-Years" ahead of any other religion. The same is true for John the Baptist in being an "Instrument" of God here on earth to preform "God's-Will"; yet, awarded later with

a place in Heaven. A place identified for John in the first century AD --- and for us today.

Second, Mary the Mother of God. With Jesus being the Son of God and both God and Man, Mary would be the only “True-Human” born on earth since the fall of Adam and Eve to be born without sin. Perfect in every way and although the Book of Revelation describes her as “**a virgin about to give life in front of the dragon and in the ‘pangs’ of birth**”, she was likely exempt from that part of Original Sin (pain in childbirth) as well. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) tells us that God Loves and holds an Intimate Relationship with each of us. God is also the God and King of the entire Universe and known to not intercede with the natural order here on earth on a regular basis. Jesus is also God and the King of the Earth through the working of His Holy Catholic Church. The Church through which he and His Father rule over mankind through the intercession of the Holy Spirit as one Holy Trinity.

Mary is quite different, she was totally human; yet, as Elijah and Jesus, taken to Heaven in Body and Soul into full sainthood. In Heaven where, like Elijah, Mary does not “Rule” in any way but is allowed to interface directly with mankind. Notably in famous Marian Apparitions such as:

- In 1531, Our Lady of Guadalupe
- In 1830, Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal
- In 1846, Our Lady of Salette [Sal` let]
- In 1858, Our Lady of Lourdes
- In 1871, Our Lady of Pontmain [Pont` main]
- In 1917, Our Lady of Fatima
- In 1932, Our Lady of Beauraing [Bear` ring] and Bannex [Ban` nex]

Likewise, Mary performed documented Interventions through the “praying of the Rosery”. There have been major documented interventions throughout history, such as the “Intervention of Our Lady at the Siege of Czestochowa [Cest o cov a]”, the Japanese Catholics saved during the Atomic Bombings in Japan, and many other large and small interventions throughout History and even today. These Interventions have been made possible all through the act of praying directly to a Saint in Heaven – here -- the praying of the Holy Rosary. Catholic Teaching represents that a Saint’s “Job #1” is continue to “Praise” God; however, afforded enough time to answer the prayers of the faithful on earth. Yes, through Mary, we can obtain “Wondrous-

Things” from the greatest of all the Saints. As confirmation, we can remember the words that Gabriel responded to Mary’s question of *“How can this happen to me ...?”* that answer was then and today *“...nothing is impossible with God”*. Words --- to live by!

Marian Apparitions of Our Lady

Our Lady of Guadalupe - In Mexico City (Tepeyac Hill), in 1531, came, averted holocaust, stopped the merciless sacrifices of innocents to a blood-thirsty pagan god, and created a Church Family.

Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal - In Paris, in 1830, She came to a little postulant and gave her and us hope for the world - *“Come to the foot of the Altar, great graces will be poured out to those who ask for them.”*

Our Lady of La Salette - In 1846, She wept and prophesied what disaster would come to pass if we did not convert.

Our Lady of Lourdes - In Lourdes, in 1858, Mother Mary came and introduced Herself as the Immaculate Conception, affirming Her son - Blessed Pope Pius IX - and his dogma of the Immaculate Conception, which dispelled the heresy of Pantheism.

Our Lady of Pontmain - In Pontmain, in 1871, She came to end the Franco-Prussian War; She gave us hope. In Knock, in 1879, She spoke volumes: Protect the Eucharist. If you destroy the Eucharist; you destroy the Church. Protect the Word, which is in danger. If you destroy the Word, you destroy the Church. Protect the family; if you destroy the family, you destroy the Church and destroy the world.

Our Lady of Fatima - In Fatima, in 1917, Our Lady warned that unless we convert, Russia would take over the world. As said later by Pope John Paul II, without Her, this growling bear would have done just that. In Fatima, She warned us that unless we change, many souls would be lost; and that unless we pray and sacrifice many would go to hell.

Our Lady of Beauraing - In Beauraing, Belgium, in 1932, Mary asked the children, "Do you love my Son?" To which they responded "Yes!" She then asked, "Do you love Me?" Again, they responded "Yes!" She turned to them and said, "Then sacrifice yourself for Me." Our Lady was telling us to sacrifice, because She knew that it is only through prayer, fasting and sacrifice can we overcome the onslaught of the devil and his cohorts. Twelve days after Our Lady said good-bye to the children in Beauraing, Our Lady came to Banneux, fifty miles from where She appeared to the children in Banneux. Our Lady came and pleaded: *“Believe in Me and I will believe in you.”* Our Lady, 16 years after Fatima, appeared in Belgium and again warned us. Mother Mary went to Belgium and warned us; and in less than a month, the path to total world

domination was paved. The world had not listened to Mother Mary and the table of contents of the devil's book to hell was getting near full. Hitler became chancellor to Germany and began his conquest or scorch campaign. World War I was supposed to be the war to end all wars, and here it was, and another World War was on the horizon. World War II was upon us, before we knew it. Everything moved so fast. People were not praying, not yet. They thought the answer was accommodation and compromise. Powerful countries compromised smaller nations. After all, it was not them the enemy was not threatening them, all of a sudden, it was their turn.

When did the ministry of John the Baptist begin?

The public ministry of [John the Baptist](#) began somewhere between the years AD 27-29.

Scholars base these dates on the detailed information in [Luke 3:1-2](#), where Luke tells us that John's ministry began in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar, during the time when Herod Antipas and his brother Phillip were tetrarchs, and while Annas and Caiaphas were High Priests. Tiberius Caesar began his reign in AD 14 (though certain factors in the transition of leadership during the last years of Caesar Augustus prompt some scholars to contend that Tiberius' reign can be counted from as early as AD 12).

This would put his fifteenth year at AD 29 (or possibly 27). Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea from AD 26-36. Herod Antipas and Phillip were sons of Herod the Great (who was in power at Jesus' birth) and began reigning as Tetrarchs over portions of their father's kingdom the year of his death in 4 BC, and reigned until AD 39 and 34, respectively. Annas was officially High Priest from AD 6 to AD 15 when Roman authorities removed him from office. His son-in-law, Joseph Caiaphas, served as High Priest from AD 18-36. However, Annas continued to exert his authority in Judea and through the High Priesthood, and in addition to Caiaphas, had five biological sons who would at one point or another hold the office in his stead.

Luke, therefore, is justified in listing the Priesthoods of Annas and Caiaphas somewhat collectively. Taken together, The Gospel of Luke's data is consistent. The year(s) he gives us based on Tiberius reign fall well within the years of the other figures he lists.

This information allows us to place the ministry of John the Baptist precisely in history, and to have a much clearer picture of the world in which he prepared the way for the coming of our Lord.