



# BREAKING OPEN THE WORD



June 24, 2012

Solemnity of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist



**Gospel Lk 1:57-66, 80**

When the time arrived for Elizabeth to have her child she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy toward her, and they rejoiced with her. 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." But they answered her, "There is no one among your relatives who has this name." So they made signs, asking his father what he wished him to be called. He asked for a tablet and wrote, "John is his name," and all were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God. Then fear came upon all their neighbors, and all these matters were discussed throughout the hill country of Judea. All who heard these things took them to heart, saying, "What, then, will this child be?" For surely the hand of the Lord was with him. The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the desert until the day of his manifestation to Israel.



**Spiritual Reflection:**

Do you ever think that it is kind of weird to venerate a person who lost his head? John comes onto the scene in today's Gospel with such promise but dies totally weak and powerless. John's value though does not come from how his life ended, or his work as a prophet. John's value comes from the same source as ours and that is that we are children of God. When each parent discovers that they are with child we should always respond in this way: "What will this child be?"



**Spiritual Questions**

1. What makes a person special?
2. How does following God's will lead to Zechariah's healing? How does it lead to healing in our lives?
3. Why does our society not see the specialness of each child?
4. How can you proclaim the specialness of each child?
5. How do you judge others?