

## **Birth of Saint John the Baptist**

Today's readings deal with the reality of being prophets. Those called are to serve the community. Like rings in a pond, the movement is ever outward – from prophet to people.

The first reading is the second servant song. The suffering servants are those who heed God's word to leave exile and go to a new life in Israel. Prophet means service.

Being designated from his mother's womb, he describes the calling; through him will God show his glory, through him will Jacob be brought back, through him will Israel's survivors be restored. His vocation includes the Gentiles.

Despite God's protection, he is afflicted and discouraged over what he considers a wasted ministry. The reminder is there that he should judge by God's standards and not by man's standards.

But he is confident that God will sustain him in his trial with his enemy. "my reward (is) with my God."

In the second reading, Paul speaks to Jews outside of Israel and Gentiles who have not totally accepted the Mosaic Law. He proclaims the Good News.

In the Gospel, Luke explains God's plan as it leads from Israel to the Christian Church. John acknowledges his whole career is to prepare the way for the Messiah. Prophetic title means prophetic service.

These readings draw away from an ego-centered idea of prophetic ministry to one of communal service. Family members who minister to each other exemplify their prophetic title. They contribute to the common good through prophetic service.