

JANUARY 18, 2016



FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD



ISAIAH 42:1-4, 6-7 OR
ISAIAH 40:1-5, 9-11

PSALM 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10 OR PSALM
104:1B-2, 3-4, 24-25, 27-28, 29-30

ACTS 10:34-38 OR TITUS 2:11-14; 3:4-7
LUKE 3:15-16, 21-22 OR LUKE 3:15-16, 21-22

REFLECTION

John the Baptist prepared the way for the Lord. He was the fulfillment of the Old Testament reading from Isaiah, "In the desert prepare the way of the LORD! / Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!" (Isaiah 40:3). After Jesus was baptized, the Spirit descended upon him and proclaimed that Jesus was the Son of God. Today we are reminded of our own Baptism. At our Baptism, we were dedicated to God. With our Baptism came a call from God to be disciples of Christ. We too can prepare the way for the Lord. We can clear a path for our God. We start by preparing the way within our own hearts for God to dwell. Are we taking time out for God in prayer? Do we listen to the Word of God and take it to heart? Once we make room for God in our lives and in our hearts, the next place we pave the way is through our actions. Do our actions reflect Jesus to the world? The best way to prepare the way of the Lord is to live it out in our own lives. When we do, then we become living examples of the light of Christ. We don't need to preach the Gospel telling others what to do—we need to live the Gospel. A very wise teacher of mine in college told us that we become what we surround ourselves with. If we surround ourselves with the love of God, then we can become that love of God to all we meet. The love of God becomes an easy highway to travel through the wasteland. If we make room for God now, then when life gets really tough, we recognize that God is already there and we can make it much more easily through our toils.



RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

[www.catholic.org/prayers/
prayer.php?p=1653](http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=1653)

ACTION

- Renew your baptismal promises by reading through them and answering out loud your responses.
- Make time for God this week and prepare the way of the Lord in your heart and in your life.

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- How can you make more room for God in your heart?
- How does your life reflect the presence of God?
- Who in your life has helped prepare the way of the Lord for you? How did they do that?