

## The Faith of Our Fathers

All power rests in Christ. Do not ignore but welcome Him.

Neither let Him pass on by nor look for another. For God has resolved that this Man should be all in all. Whoever comes to Him will find redemption from sin, death, and hell. So He is the way, the truth, and the life. Through Him alone all patriarchs, prophets, and apostles from the beginning of the world have been saved. John the Baptist knows this well. Therefore, he steers people away from himself to the Christ, so that they will not ignore so great a treasure. Furthermore, this is why the Lord God sent John the Baptist. For He knows that we are always trying to save ourselves. But John points to Christ Jesus as our only way and salvation. (Blessed Martin Luther) ❧❧❧

We are incapable of discovering the Word became flesh, and how the Life of the World came to life within the womb of His Mother. The sandal-straps of His shoe are therefore the seals of a mystery. John the Baptizer was not worthy to untie Our Lord's shoe, because he was unable to search into the mystery of His Incarnation. It is as though he were to say, "I am unable to comprehend the Mystery of Christ's birth." Behold John, filled with the Spirit of prophecy, shines with knowledge. Yet he plainly declares that as to this mystery he knows nothing. (St. Gregory the Great) ❧❧❧

From our own way of speaking you know that first the voice sounds, and then afterward the word can be heard. John declares that he is the voice because he comes before the Word. He is the forerunner of the Lord's coming and so he is called a voice since the Father's Word is heard through his ministry. He cries out in the wilderness because he makes known to an abandoned and forsaken Judea the consoling news of its redemption. As for the subject of his proclamation, John says that the Lord's way to the heart is made straight when we listen humbly to the words of Truth. (Gregory the Great) ❧❧❧

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This Lamb of God is John the Baptist's consolation. He considers it a singular privilege to be but the voice. So he cries out to men to prepare the way of the Redeemer. In this way, St. John is the type of the Church and of all who seek Jesus. St. John is full of joy because the Savior has come. But the men around him are as indifferent as though they neither expected nor wanted a Savior. Is your heart excited by the great tidings told by the Church, that the Messiah is near at hand? Are the crooked ways being made straight, and the hills being brought low? Are you seriously engaged in removing from your heart the love of riches and the love of sensual pleasures? There is no time to lose: the Lord is nigh! (Gueranger) ❧❧❧

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For *Rorate Coeli*, the *Fourth Sunday in Advent*. These excerpts are intended as meditative pieces for the Day's pericopes. They have been edited and abridged for style, sense and space.

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