

JUNE 24, 2021
Solemnity of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist
Luke 1: 5-17

“THE FINGER POINTING TO JESUS!”

There was a beautiful woman who became famous because of a kiss in a film. She had some Catholic upbringing is known as “Dolores Hart who followed in the footsteps of her parents by becoming an actress. In 1957, she acted in a supporting role as the love interest of Elvis Presley in the movie “Loving you.” In that movie, they kissed and it was Elvis’ first on-screen kiss. Dolores became an instant star and she was so natural and effortless as an actress and she was hot in demand. From that time onwards, she had super-star status, she had the lime-light on her, she had million-dollar movie contracts, she had everything. But by 1958, she felt fatigued and a friend suggested that she take a rest at the Abbey of Regina Laudis, a Benedictine monastery. At first she scorned at the idea of going to a place where there are nuns, but the friend told her that the nuns won’t talk to her because they are contemplative nuns. So she arrived at the monastery in a studio limousine, and she immediately loved the quiet and the simplicity, and found her inner peace. At that time, she was also preparing for the wedding to Don Robinson, a Los Angeles architect. But there at the monastery, it hit her that she was in love with God. Well in the end, Dolores Hart gave up the lime-light, a promising movie career, fur coats and expensive gowns, and even the man she was supposed to marry. She gave up all that, and at 23 years-old, she entered the Benedictine monastery where she found her peace and her love for God. Everyone in the show biz, and also the nuns, thought she was nuts. In fact, the nuns thought she was a “lightweight” and that she won’t stay long. Even Dolores herself thought she was nuts. She felt like as if she leapt off a 20-storey building. (Now, she is still staying in the same monastery for 60 years) But just as John the Baptist leapt for joy in his mother’s womb, Dolores Hart leapt into the gracious and tender hands of a loving God.”¹

¹ www.stories4homilies.co

John the Baptist had a significant role in the history of salvation, the salvation of God's people. He was the bridge between the Old and the New Testament, he the last prophet, the precursor of Jesus. His mission was to prepare the way of the Lord, proclaim His coming and be the 'supporting' actor and recognized himself not the Messiah but a man who pointed out to Jesus as 'the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world.'

His birth made his parents and other people wondered. His life was dramatic and not just an ordinary matter: "When his father, Zechariah, the priest of the Temple, was told by the angel Gabriel that his wife Elizabeth would conceive a child even though she was advanced in age and considered barren, Zechariah was skeptical and cynical. For that he was struck dumb. And then when Mary visited Elizabeth, the baby leapt in her womb. That must be really dramatic for Elizabeth. As if that was not dramatic enough, then comes the naming of the baby. Elizabeth and Zachariah insisted that he be called "John" and then Zechariah regained his power of speech and he praised God. The neighbours were awed and with so much drama, they wondered what would this child turn out to be."²

My brothers and sisters, we are called by the Lord to be like St. John the Baptist: full of missionary zeal, courageous, productive, and humble in every works he did. It is not him who was the star and the center of attention but he was the finger who pointed to Jesus as the Savior. All his works, preaching and life were pointed towards the Messiah, he only prepared the way but he is not the Way. Let us ask, therefore, St. John the Baptist to help us by our way of life to live in clearing a path which will draw people closer to knowing and experiencing Jesus Christ. Let us be the finger who points to Jesus as our Lord and Messiah. May St. John the Baptist intercede for us. Amen.

² ibid