

FROM THE PASTOR

My brothers and sisters,

The Gospel today begins by telling us that John the Baptist was arrested. John had had a very successful ministry (from the world's perspective) – people were flocking to him, changing their lives, and embracing his message. The test of his integrity, though, came when he knew he had to speak the truth to someone who did not want to hear, and had the power to “shut him up” – King Herod. We probably all remember the rest of the story: how John is eventually beheaded by Herod after a rash promise made to his step-daughter (see Matthew 14:3-12). John did not shy back from preaching the truth, even when it was inconvenient and even dangerous. The Church looks on his life and sees the heroic virtue he had, and says that he is a Saint, sharing in the life of God.

So many times, it is easy to be Christian when there are Christians around us. It is easy to do what is right, when the people around us expect it. What about when we are alone, with no one watching? What about when the people around us don't want to see “the right thing” because it will make them feel guilty because of their choice for “the wrong thing”? Do we have the courage to stand up for what is right even then?

Every year, I go to the March for Life in Washington with 100,000s of others who are standing up for what is right – that we respect life, that we want the most vulnerable in our society to be protected. We march not to condemn anyone (in fact, we so desire for those who have had abortions to receive God's endless MERCY!). We march not to make people feel guilty. We march to PROTECT the most innocent – the preborn children! We are not a popular group of people in Washington when we are there, yet for 40 years, people have been going out in the cold, the rain, the snow, the ice, to stand up for what is right.

Through the intercession of St. John the Baptist, may we all always have the courage to stand up for what is right.