



IDAHO SUPPLEMENT

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St. John's Day

This month we Masons will celebrate St. John the Baptist's Day, a festival day celebrated around the summer solstice. In Freemasonry, this day should be used to renew and strengthen the ties between Brothers. This day falls on or near the Summer Solstice where the sun is at its zenith marking the shortest night of the year and the start of summer.

John the Baptist belonged to the Jewish tribe of Levi. His father was a Temple priest named Zechariah and his mother was named Elizabeth, who was cousin to the Virgin Mary. John the Baptist was born 6-months before Jesus Christ and, like with the Virgin Mary, the archangel Gabriel announced to Elizabeth the coming of her son, John. John lived in the mountains between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea. John was a very religious man who had his own ministry. His ministry became so popular many began to wonder if he was the Messiah prophesied, but John declared Jesus the "Lamb of God" and when he baptized him. After the Baptism of the Christ, these two never met again on Earth. John was murdered by King Herod after he had criticized the king's sinful life. When Jesus was informed of the Baptist's death he responded by saying, "John was a lamp that burned and gave Light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his Light." The Baptist is best remembered for his baptism of Christ and his zealous virtue in keeping God's laws. In some sects of Christianity, John the Baptist is sometimes referred to as the Precursor or Forerunner.

In Freemasonry it is strange that that the Holy Saints John were selected as the Patron Saints of Freemasonry rather than St. Thomas

who is considered the Patron Saint of Masonry. Masonic scholars state that these two were selected as St. John the Baptist represented the faith and zeal that should actuate every Mason while the Evangelist represent how our passions and actions should be tempered through reason and knowledge. Take together they represent the path towards enlightenment. In the Ahiman Rezon, the Constitution of the Antients it states, "the stern integrity of Saint John the Baptist, which induced him to forego every minor consideration in discharging the obligations he owed to God; the unshaken firmness with which he met martyrdom rather than betray his duty to his Master; his steady reproof of vice, and continued preaching of repentance and virtue. make him a fit patron of the Masonic institution."

Bro. Gregory Stewart from California argued that St. John the Baptist was alchemically represented by the inverted pyramid, the symbol for the Element of Water, which he states represents spiritual and emotional love, as well as reminds us of the Baptism of Jesus Christ which St. John the Baptist presided over.

This day and the Holy Saints John also remind us of the Masonic symbol the Point Within the Circle which represents the two saints on either side of a circle representing their place at each of the sun's orbit; two milestones in the astronomical year. This symbol is powerful and much more will be explained in a future article. For the present, it is necessary that this symbol is introduced in the Entered Apprentice degree and Masons are reminded to study astronomy (one of the 7 liberal arts and science) in the Fellow Craft degree. It was through the study of the movement of the heavenly bodies that man was capable of understanding the habits of animals, best farming and harvest practices, even opportune times for warfare, and, finally, the creation of a calendar system.