

The Savior Is Jesus, the Son of God

Keep these ideas in mind as you study *Chapter 24*.

❖ Elizabeth and Zechariah were the parents of John the Baptist. Through his mother, he was also Jesus' cousin. Because they were quite old, Zechariah and Elizabeth doubted they could have a child. Zechariah was unable to speak until the baby was born, and his first words were the child's name. The words that Zechariah spoke after his son's birth were later included in the Morning Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours.

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❖ Isaiah predicted the coming of John the Baptist when he spoke of a voice in the desert preparing the way of the Lord. John the Baptist prepared himself for his mission by training in the desert.

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❖ John the Baptist may have belonged to a religious group called the Essenes. They had many strict rules and rites, and their way of life was one of self-discipline. The Essenes had a bathing rite, or baptism, that they used as a sign of repentance. John may have gotten his idea of baptism from them.

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❖ The Holy Spirit came to John to tell him it was time to leave the desert and begin preparing the people for the Messiah. John did as the Holy Spirit urged. He left the desert and began teaching, telling people to repent because the kingdom of heaven was near.

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❖ During the season of Advent, we look forward with hope and anticipation of the coming of Christ. We hear many Gospel readings featuring John at this time.

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❖ Jesus came to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. Although John felt that Jesus should baptize him, he did as Jesus asked. John then told his disciples to follow Jesus.

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❖ The Messiah had been promised by God and predicted by the prophets. The Messiah would be the one who saved the Chosen People from sin. Mary was called to be the Mother of the Messiah, and she freely agreed. In Mary's special prayer of praise, the Magnificat, she thanks God for all that he has done and for all that he will do through Jesus.

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