



## Ask, Father James:

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### John the Baptist's role in God's plan

The second Sunday of Advent is usually about John's role in revealing God's plan to the world. He was the last prophet of the Old Testament. All the earlier prophets had prophesied and predicted the coming messiah, but it was John who finally revealed him: "Repent; The Kingdom of heaven is near." For some thirty years Jesus had waited in Nazareth. Working. Studying. Praying. Waiting for the moment to come and the summons to sound. This was the moment. This was the summons and the secrecy shrouding the messianic secret was lifted and John has this role of the herald of this good news. In today's text, John himself is shocked and surprised that Pharisees and Sadducees rushed to come to him at the Jordan when they received this announcement. It was an indication that they, the religious leaders knew that Israel has "lost its way" and that the status quo (the Jerusalem temple and tradition of the elders) is insufficient to lead anyone to salvation. The past was past. The future beckoned. There was need for a New Covenant – The New Testament. John's message speaks to us too today, in this season of Advent, asking us to embrace Jesus lovingly. We light the LOVE candle this Sunday, indicating our loving acceptance of the one who comes.

#### Our Lady of Peace Parish



425 Broad Street North  
Regina, SK S4R 2X8



306.543.5355



frjowolagba@gmail.com



[www.ourladyofpeaceregina.com](http://www.ourladyofpeaceregina.com)

