

John the Baptist. Bridge between the Old and New Testament



Who Was John the Baptist?

- Cousin of The Virgin Mary, son of Zechariah and Elizabeth. Miraculous birth
- Approximately 3 years older than Jesus
- Announced to the world of the presence of God's son, the Messiah
- Spent years in the desert to learn self-discipline. He was an Essene – separated from the community and lived in desert
- Baptized penitents in the Jordan River
- Resigned ministry after baptism of Jesus
- Beheaded for speaking out against King Herod Antipas



Baptism of John

- A baptism of repentance
- A sign of the people's desire to repent of their sins
- It prepared people for the Good News

Sacrament of Baptism

- It washes away man's sin (original and actual)
- Pours grace into the soul
- Jesus preached of the sacrament of Baptism

John the Baptist in Art

- Wears a garment made entirely of hair or fur
- Carries a staff and scroll with the words “Ecce Agnus Dei” or “Behold the Lamb of God”
- The Carob Tree
- Lambs
- The “John Gesture”
- The Serpent of Wisdom



The “John Gesture”



- Commonly accepted to reference God, Heaven or Spirituality
- A more acceptable definition would be: “I foretell the coming of the one from above.”

The “John Gesture”



**Leonardo da
Vinci**

***John the
Baptist***

**The Louvre,
Paris**

Woman?

Leonardo da Vinci

Man?



Adoration of the Magi

**By Leonardo
da Vinci**

- The Carob Tree
- 'Clawing' at Jesus and Mary
- No Gold (kingship) being offered
- Eye Gaze?
- Leonardo





Van Eyck's *Adoration of the Lamb of God*

Van Eyck's *Adoration of the Lamb of God*

- Ghent Altarpiece- no depiction of Jesus at all.
- Center of worship is a lamb
- One central panel devoted to John the Baptist
- John's index finger is touching a templar cross
- Other characters appear to be worshipping the Johns.
- Panel named "Knights of Christ," another name for the Knights Templar.
- "Serpent of Wisdom" is present

