

ADVENT CANDLES

FOURTH WEEK
OF ADVENT

The Archangel Gabriel prophesied to St. Zachary that he would have a son, who *"shall be great before the Lord; and shall drink no wine nor strong drink: and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And he shall convert many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias; that he may turn the hearts of the incredulous to the wisdom of the just, to prepare unto the Lord a perfect people"* (Luke 1:15-17). St. John the Baptist, though he was the son of a priest and could have grown up to live the comfortable life of a priest, spent much of his life in the desert, away from the world, doing penance, praying and preaching.

Jesus Himself praised John, saying to the crowds: *"What went ye out into the desert to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went you out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Behold they that have expensive clothing and live delicately, are in the houses of kings. But what went you out to see? A prophet? Yea, I say to you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written: 'Behold I send My angel before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before Thee.' For I say to you: Amongst those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist"* (Luke 7:24-28)

St. John the Baptist is represented by the fourth candle because he was born after Isaias, St. Joseph and Our Lady. Purple is the color that symbolizes penance, and St. John both preached and practiced penance to a high degree.

*St. John
the Baptist*