

GOSPEL PEARLS

The head of John the Baptist

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03_08_2024

Herod the tetrarch heard of the reputation of Jesus
and said to his servants, "This man is John the Baptist.
He has been raised from the dead;
that is why mighty powers are at work in him."
Now Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison
on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip,
for John had said to him,
"It is not lawful for you to have her."
Although he wanted to kill him, he feared the people,
for they regarded him as a prophet.
But at a birthday celebration for Herod,
the daughter of Herodias performed a dance before the guests
and delighted Herod so much
that he swore to give her whatever she might ask for.
Prompted by her mother, she said,
"Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist."
The king was distressed,
but because of his oaths and the guests who were present,
he ordered that it be given, and he had John beheaded in the prison.
His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl,
who took it to her mother.
His disciples came and took away the corpse
and buried him; and they went and told Jesus.

(Mt 14:1-12)