

I thought he'd be taller.
She looks younger on television.
The book is so much better than the movie.

Things are not always what we expect. Many times the reality of a situation falls short of our expectations.

Today is the Solemnity of the Birth of John the Baptist.

His parents, Zechariah and Elizabeth had no children, and were senior citizens. Nobody expected them to have a baby.

John's ministry was to prepare people for the coming of the Messiah – that is, for Jesus. Of course, the expectations in first century Palestine were that the Messiah would be a mighty warrior king who would drive out the Roman Empire and establish a glorious kingdom.

Expectations may be on-target or off-target. Sometimes we get what we expect. Sometimes we don't. In a way, expectations give us hope.

In the first reading and the psalm, we hear the prophet speak of God's calling him from before he is ever born. And this in turn applies to us. God called each one of us before we were ever born.

God's expectation for us is that we receive his love and return his love. God's plan for us is salvation. But even more, God's call for every one of us is to be his special child called in love.

Last Sunday we heard that God counts the hairs on our head. Today we hear that God has a plan for each one of us. The psalmist talks about God knitting each one of us. We aren't mass produced in some cosmic factory. Each one of us is hand made ... by the hands of God.

Let us pray to see ourselves as God sees us – unique, loved, called to glory. And that through the power of the Holy Spirit we may live that call as a light to the world for the glory of God.