

Children's liturgy – Second Sunday of Advent (Year B)

Preparing the worship space

Colour: purple

Props: materials to make a Jesse tree or nativity frieze, pictures of people around the world preparing for Christmas, a small crib

Welcome: Today we hear about how John the Baptist prepared people for the coming of Jesus by baptising them. How do we prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas? How do people around the world prepare? Let's find out today...

Song suggestions: O come o come Emmanuel (522, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Opening prayer: God of truth, help us to prepare for the coming of your Son and to share the message of your love with others. Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Psalm: Ps 84:9-10, 11-12, 13-14; 2

Gospel acclamation: *Everyone stands and sings the gospel acclamation together.*

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

This is the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It began as the prophet Isaiah had written:

“God said, ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you
to clear the way for you.’

Someone is shouting in the desert,
‘Get the road ready for the Lord;
make a straight path for him to travel!’”

So John appeared in the desert, baptizing and preaching. “Turn away from your sins and be baptized,” he told the people, “and God will forgive your sins.” Many people from the province of Judea and the city of Jerusalem went out to hear John. They confessed their sins, and he baptized them in the River Jordan.

John wore clothes made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. He announced to the people, “The man who will come after me is much greater than I am. I am not good enough even to bend down and untie his sandals. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below)*

Gospel reflection: Today we hear about John the Baptist and how he was a messenger for God, preparing people for the coming of Jesus. What do you remember about John in this reading?

What does he wear? What does he eat? What does he do in the river?

How do we prepare during Advent?

We put up a Christmas tree and decorate it. We buy presents for other people and we wrap them up.

When John the Baptist began to prepare the way for Jesus, it wasn't just for his friends and family. His message was for everyone who would listen.

When we prepare for Jesus we can also remember people who are part of our worldwide family.

Do you know how people prepare during Advent in any other countries around the world? Have you ever been to another country during Advent or for Christmas?

Rosana lives in Colombia, a country where there has been a lot of fighting. But Rosana believes that young people can help to build peace in their country.

She told us about how to prepare for Christmas, families come together to chat, sing and dance.

And how they have the "Day of the little candles" which is celebrated on 7 and 8 December to honour the Virgin Mary. Thousands of people light candles with their family on that day and they pray for a blessing and a wish.

We can prepare for Jesus by being kind and generous to other people. And by saying sorry for all the things that we've done wrong. We can say sorry in prayer to God, and also we can say sorry to the people we have hurt by our actions.

We can get ready to welcome Jesus by making sure our hearts are full of love and care for other people and by not doing things that hurt others. Whether that's not saying unkind things or making sure we share. We can also make sure that we don't hurt others by taking care of the world so that it's a nice place for everyone to live. We can make sure that we only buy what we need so that there is enough for others. And we can make sure we pay a fair price so that those who grow our food, or make our clothes, or our toys, can earn enough money for themselves and their families.

Can you think of other ways we can prepare for the coming of Jesus?

When you are preparing for Christmas this week, why not think about all the other people around the world who are also getting ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Maybe you could say a prayer for them this week.

For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

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Intercessions: *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

John the Baptist asks us to get ready for Jesus and so we pray together for God's help:

We pray for all people around the world who are preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus: that we may not forget those who need our help at this special time. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for all people who are poor, hungry, sick or alone: that they may be filled with the joy and peace of Christ. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish community, family and friends: that we may be kind and generous to others as we prepare for the coming of Christ. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Generous God, as we prepare for the coming of your Son Jesus, help us to remember all our brothers and sisters in our global family and to share your love with them. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Share the accompanying activity sheet with the children and encourage them to complete it either during the liturgy or afterwards.

Cut large letters out of paper and stick them to some card, making a sign that says: 'Jesus is coming'. Ask the children to decorate the letters and to write or draw how they are preparing for Jesus on the poster. This can be carried by the children when they process back into the church.

Make a Jesse tree or nativity frieze that the children can add to each week with the characters that they hear about in the gospel readings, for example this week they could add John the Baptist.

Invite the children to share all that they have talked and thought about during the liturgy at home in the week. Encourage them to pray together at home during the next week for all the members of our global family who are preparing for Christmas at this time.

Follow our Advent calendar for families throughout the season at **cafod.org.uk/familyadventcalendar**

*Gospel passage taken from:

Good News Translation® (Today's English Version, Second Edition)
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