

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

Preparing the worship space

Colour: purple

Props: candles, coloured paper, stickers or glitter glue.

Welcome: Today we hear some more about John the Baptist, who came to tell everyone to get ready for Jesus who is the light of the world. Let's think about what that means.

Song suggestions: *Christ be our light* (891, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Opening prayer: God of light, you sent your Son into the world to guide us and show us how to live. Help us to follow his example by loving and caring for others. Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11

Psalm: Luke 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54; 1

Gospel acclamation: *everyone stands and sings together.*

Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

God sent his messenger, a man named John, who came to tell people about the light, so that all should hear the message and believe. He himself was not the light; he came to tell about the light.

The Jewish authorities in Jerusalem sent some priests and Levites to John to ask him, "Who are you?"

John did not refuse to answer, but spoke out openly and clearly, saying: "I am not the Messiah."

"Who are you, then?" they asked. "Are you Elijah?"

"No, I am not," John answered.

"Are you the Prophet?" they asked.

"No," he replied.

"Then tell us who you are," they said. "We have to take an answer back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

John answered by quoting the prophet Isaiah:

“I am ‘the voice of someone shouting in the desert:
Make a straight path for the Lord to travel!”

The messengers, who had been sent by the Pharisees, then asked John, “If you are not the Messiah nor Elijah nor the Prophet, why do you baptize?”

John answered, “I baptize with water, but among you stands the one you do not know. He is coming after me, but I am not good enough even to untie his sandals.”

All this happened in Bethany on the east side of the River Jordan, where John was baptizing.

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

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from today’s reading?

At the beginning it talks a lot about the light. The light is another name for someone very special. Can you think who that might be?

Jesus is the light of the world. This reading says that John the Baptist came to tell everyone Jesus was coming.

Why do you think Jesus is called the light of the world? - Jesus is the Son of God and he shows us how we should live – he is a shining light in the darkness for us to follow.

Make the room as dark as possible and light a candle.

See how much light one small candle gives out. This is like Jesus – shining his light for all to see.

With older children you could perhaps give them candles and light them from the first candle and from each other (explain that they will be hot and not to touch the flame and make sure that all the candles have candle holders.)

But if we share the light we can see so much more! If we share the light of Jesus we can light up the whole world.

How do you think we can share the light of Jesus with others?

We can be kind. We can be generous. We can share with others. We can be friendly. We can help people who are poor, or sick, or hungry.

[USE AS NEEDED: This is what the organisation called CAFOD does. They are part of our Church and they help people in the poorest countries get things like clean water, enough to eat, a safe place to live, or a chance to go to school.]

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

CAFOD is the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and part of Caritas International. Charity no 1160384 and a company limited by guarantee no 09387398

CAFOD tries to share the light of Jesus by helping people who are poor so that they can have a brighter future.

Can you imagine what life would be like without electricity? Are there some things you wouldn't be able to do?

Without electricity there would be no lights when it gets dark, no fridge, no computer games or TV tonight at home! What a shock!

Oum and her family live in a rural area of South Sudan. Their village has no electricity. Oum and her family use firewood, kerosene and candles for lighting and cooking in their home. The smoke from these fuels hurt their eyes and can make it hard to breathe.

Oum was very pleased when she received a solar lamp for her home. She was really pleased for her children who can now do their homework at night without her having to worry about their health. She hopes that by being able to work at night they will do better at school.

Oum said, "Before I received my solar lamp my house was always dark. Now it is well lit. I never dreamt of having solar lamps in my house. I am thankful that CAFOD has brought this great change to me."

You can also share the light of Jesus by helping others, by loving and caring for the people that you meet.

How will you share the light of Jesus in the next week?

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

John came to tell us about Jesus, light of the world, and so we pray together that we may share that light with others:

We pray for world leaders: that they may be guided by the light to do what is best for the people in their countries. Lord, in your mercy....

We pray for people who are poor, sad, hungry or lonely: that they may find light in their darkness and hope for a brighter future. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that through our actions others may see the light of Jesus shining. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Jesus, light of the world, help us to be shining examples of your love and light to all members of our global family. Amen.

Activity suggestions

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

CAFOD is the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and part of Caritas International. Charity no 1160384 and a company limited by guarantee no 09387398

Share the activity sheet with the children and encourage them to complete it either during the liturgy or afterwards. Invite them to draw or write on the back how they will share the light of Jesus over the coming week.

Buy a *Solar lamp World Gift* for someone you love for Christmas and help share the light with someone like Oum and her family. The full range of World Gifts can be found at worldgifts.cafod.org.uk

Print out the prayer below on A4 paper in landscape (or ask older children to write their own prayer on a sheet of paper). They could decorate it as well if you have time. Roll it up and make a candle shape. Stick some tissue paper flames to the top to make a paper candle. Ask them to say the prayer at home during the coming week.

Make a paper lantern with the children. There is a template and instructions at cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to try to do all that they can to share the light of Jesus through their actions in the coming week.

Prayer for the light of the world

God of light, shine brightly,
show us how
to bring hope to others.

God of mercy, help us
to comfort people and
to share in their joy.

God of hope,
help us this Advent,
to share your light with others.

Amen.

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

CAFOD is the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and part of Caritas International. Charity no 1160384 and a company limited by guarantee no 09387398