

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

Preparing the worship space

Colour: purple

Song suggestions: On Jordan's bank, the Baptist's cry (Laudate, 94)
O come o come Emmanuel (111, Laudate)

Welcome: We are still in the special time of Advent when we get ready for the coming of Jesus. Today we are going to look at our lives and try to change them for the better, so that we are ready for Jesus.

Opening prayer: God of love, help us always to try to do the right thing, even when we find it hard, so that we are ready when Jesus comes. Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalm: Ps 71:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17

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

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

At that time John the Baptist came to the desert of Judah and started preaching. "Turn away from your sins," he said, "because the Kingdom of heaven is near!" John was the man the prophet Isaiah was talking about when he said:

"Someone is shouting in the desert,
'Prepare a road for the Lord;
make a straight path for him to travel!'"

John's clothes were made of camel's hair; he wore a leather belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. People came to him from Jerusalem, from the whole province of Judea, and from all the country near the River Jordan. They confessed their sins, and he baptized them in the Jordan.

When John saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to him to be baptized, he said to them, "You snakes — who told you that you could escape from the punishment God is about to send? Do those things that will show that you have turned from your sins. And don't think you can escape punishment by saying that Abraham is your ancestor. I tell you that God can take these stones and make descendants for Abraham! The axe is ready to cut down the trees at the roots; every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown in the fire. I baptize you with water to show that you have repented, but the one who will come after me will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. He is much greater than I am; and I am not good enough even to carry his sandals. He has his winnowing shovel with him to thresh out all the grain. He will gather his wheat into his barn, but he will burn the chaff in a fire that never goes out."

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

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

Today we heard a story about John the Baptist. John told everybody that Jesus was coming and that they needed to get ready.

What did you hear about John in this reading? (desert, locusts, honey etc)

John warns the people coming to be baptised that they need to say sorry for the things that they have done wrong and change their lives for the better. This will help them to be ready for Jesus.

Do you think there are things in your life you could do better? Are you always helpful? Do you always share? Do you listen when someone is upset and try to cheer them up? Do you let everyone join in your games?

Say sorry quietly to God now in prayer, for the times you have done things that you know you shouldn't have.

Pause for a few moments to let the children pray.

John the Baptist lived at the time of Jesus. He had great faith and set an example for everyone of how to live a good life.

Saint Oscar Romero is another great example of how to live a good life. He lived in El Salvador and stood up for poor communities. In El Salvador at the time some families were very rich, but most people were poor. Saint Romero saw that this was unfair and he spoke out against it. He is remembered for his courage, faith and love for the poor.

Ronaldo, who lives in El Salvador, says: "Oscar Romero was a very good man. He was very good to people. He helped to rescue people. We should be like him. I want to be brave like Romero."

Saint Oscar Romero wanted to change people's lives for the better. His example can show us how we can help others too.

You could share this [animation about Saint Oscar Romero](#) with the children to explain more about his life.

When we say sorry, it means that we will try to do better next time. If we change our lives for the better and try to do the right things, we can help to make the world a happier place for other people too.

How are you going to change your life for the better this Advent?

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

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Can you speak up when you see something that is unfair? Can you help others when they are in need? Can you share?

What will you do for others so that you are ready when Jesus comes?

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

John the Baptist warned people that they needed to change their lives to be ready for when Jesus came. Together we ask for God's help as we prepare this Advent:

We pray for all world leaders: that they may use their power wisely and to make life better for their people. Lord, hear us...

We pray for the work of CAFOD: that it may continue to help people who are poor around the world to make a better life for themselves and their families. Lord, hear us...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may take a look at our lives and change them for the better so that the world is a happier and fairer place for all people. Lord, hear us...

Closing prayer: God of life, we give thanks for all those people who are kind to us. Help us to be the best people that we can be as we wait for the coming of your Son Jesus. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the illustration of children changing their lives for the better by helping others on the activity sheet. And to do the other activities on the sheet either in the liturgy or at home later today.

In pairs, ask the children to act out an example of sharing, helping someone, including/welcoming someone, or speaking up against something unfair to help them to think about the different things that they could do during Advent.

As the children are leaving, remind them what they have thought about during the session and ask them to share this with the people at home. Ask them to do one thing during the next week to help others, so that they can show they are trying to get ready for the arrival of Jesus by changing their lives for the better.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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