

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

Preparing the worship space

Colour: purple or rose/pink

Song suggestions: Give me joy in my heart (722, Laudate)

Welcome: Today we listen to Jesus say that he came to heal the sick and to bring good news to the poor. We are going to think about how we can be that good news and help to change the lives of others around the world.

Opening prayer: God of hope, you sent your Son Jesus to bring good news to people who are poor. Help us to be that good news, so that all people around the world can make a better life for themselves and their families. Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10

Psalm: Ps 145:6-7, 8-9a, 9b-10

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

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

John the Baptist heard in prison about the things that Christ was doing and he sent some of his disciples to him. "Tell us," they asked Jesus, "are you the one John said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?"

Jesus answered, "Go back and tell John what you are hearing and seeing: the blind can see, the lame can walk, those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are brought back to life, and the Good News is preached to the poor. How happy are those who have no doubts about me!"

While John's disciples were leaving, Jesus spoke about him to the crowds: "When you went out to John in the desert, what did you expect to see? A blade of grass bending in the wind? What did you go out to see? A man dressed up in fancy clothes? People who dress like that live in palaces! Tell me, what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes indeed, but you saw much more than a prophet. For John is the one of whom the scripture says: 'God said, I will send my messenger ahead of you to open the way for you.' I assure you that John the Baptist is greater than anyone who has ever lived. But the one who is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than John.

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

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from the reading?

John the Baptist, who we heard about last week, wants to make sure that Jesus is really the special person that he has been waiting for, so he sends some friends to check.

Jesus answers them by telling them that he is the one who has come to heal the sick and to bring good news to the poor. This answer tells John that Jesus really is the person for whom he has been waiting.

We are all part of one family, God's family, and God asks us to love each other and care for each other.

But what does it mean to bring good news to people who are poor? Do you have any ideas?

What can we do to help other people, either our friends, family, or people in other countries whom we have never met? People who are sick or who have hurt themselves? People who are hungry or thirsty? People who are poor?

CAFOD works with people who are poor all around the world. In times of emergencies, like an earthquake or flooding, that can mean giving people food or shelter, but more often it means helping them to help themselves. For example, giving people seeds and tools means that they can grow enough food for their families and enough to share with others. This is very good news!

Around the world lots of people have all been working for a long time to make the world a better place and to help all the people in our global family to live a good life. And there is some good news to share:

- 9% of people were living in extreme poverty in 2020. This is down from 16% in 2010 and 36% in 1990.
- 74% of people have safe water to drink – up from 61% in the year 2000.

(Statistics taken from the Sustainable development goals website:
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>)

This is all really good news. But there is still more work to be done. We can all still do something to change the world for better and to help those who are in need.

How will you try to be like Jesus, helping others and bringing good news to people who are poor in the next week?

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

Jesus shows us an example of how to live. Together we pray for help from God, so that we can follow that example:

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

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We pray for our brothers and sisters around the world who are poor: that with our support and help they may make life better for themselves and their families. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all children around the world: that they may have the chance to go to school, learn many things and have a bright and happy future. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, our families and our friends: that we may always try to help other people, even those we have never met and who live far away. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Generous God, we thank you for all the good things that you have given us. Help us to follow the example of Jesus, to care for others and to bring good news to people who are poor. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Share the accompanying activity sheet with the children. Ask them to colour in the illustration of the children helping someone in the playground and to think of other ways that we can help others, both here and overseas. Ask them to do the other activities on the sheet either now or at home later.

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about during the liturgy. Ask them to do one thing in the next week to help other people either here or in another country so that they can bring good news to others.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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