



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

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Children's Liturgy of the Word

1st Sunday of Advent, Year B: Waiting with Hope

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Theme: Waiting with Hope

Summary

The Gospel of Mark was written to a persecuted community who saw the battle of good versus evil in the world and thought that the end of time was near. Mark urges them to remain vigilant but wait in Hope. He tells them that though they are expecting the end times, we don't know when that time will come and that the best attitude is to be ready for it and live in Hope. The future, Mark tells them, is in God's hands and beyond our control.

For Christians, Advent is a time of waiting and expectation. What are we waiting for, and what are our expectations? The Church celebrates the Second Coming of Christ on the First Sunday of Advent. We do not know when the Second Coming will occur—only God knows, which is why we should always be ready for the end times. The Gospel from the First Sunday of Advent reminds us to stay awake and Keep Alert for when Jesus returns at the end of time.

Objectives

- † Help children understand that Advent is a time of waiting and preparation.
- † Nurture in children a sense of the virtue of Hope.

Leader's Preparation:

- † Pray the Lectionary readings.
- † Review the background.
- † Reflect upon the reflection questions.
- † Prepare the Environment and Materials.

Environment and Materials

- † Two screened adult leaders.
- † Liturgical space; the liturgical colour is **PURPLE or VIOLET**
- † Violet cloth, a Lectionary, a candle, and an Advent Wreath. Light one purple or violet candle.
- † Place the Bible in a prominent location for the children to see.
- † Select volunteers (older children or adults) to proclaim the readings.
- † Display the responsorial psalm refrain lyrics, if possible and desired.
- † Display the Creed, if possible and desired.

Background

- † The Gospel today tells us that we don't know when the waited-for event of the end of time will happen. We are told to always be on our guard and expect the end of things as we know them.
- † There are some things that we can keep on growing in our lives while waiting.
- † Think about the Hope that comes from believing that God has blessed us with the gift of our faith and how, when we appreciate the virtue of Hope, we grow as Christian daughters and sons of an all-loving God.
- † The Holy Spirit nourishes us with Hope, and we respond to the Holy Spirit's initiative by making Hope active in our lives. It is the source of our missionary outreach.
- † Hope is the light in us that attracts others to our way of life.
- † Unless we live as people of Hope, we prevent others from seeing our faith through Christ's teachings.

Images from the Readings

Always be ready.

Be on your guard!

God will bless you with peace.

Believe in Jesus.

Thank God always.

Insight:

Israel wanted a messiah, a liberator who would free them from foreign domination. This descendant of David would establish a throne to which all knees would bend.

Most of Israel did not recognize Jesus as the fulfillment of their hopes.

Born into the family-line of David, Jesus also was the Son of the Most High. The Messiah did not overcome Roman authority but triumphed over death.

Keep your eyes open.

The Liturgy

Procession from the main Church

After the opening prayer, when all are seated, the leaders come forward and stand facing the altar.

Priest: Dear children, Advent is a time of year when we prepare for Jesus. Listen to today's Gospel and where God is already present in your lives. Go in peace.

One of the leaders carries the Book of God's Word, held high for all to see. The second leader assists by directing the children. When most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the place of the celebration. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the location of the celebration, the leader places the book on the prepared table.

Welcome.



The leaders assist the children to sit and prepare. Begin with the Sign of the Cross. Help the children think about and connect their actions as they touch their foreheads, shoulders, and stomachs. The Sign of the Cross can be made while seated. It is a liturgical opportunity of itself to help children think about God. The leader may say the following prayer in these or similar words.

O God, help us to understand your Word with open hearts and increase our faith. Through Christ our Lord.

Invite the children to listen to the Gospel.

Gospel

The children stand for the Gospel. The leader proclaims the Gospel.

✠A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

All respond: Glory to you, Lord.

All sign themselves on the forehead, lips and breast.

Jesus said to his disciples:

'Beware, keep Alert, for you do not know when the time will come.

It is like a man going on a journey when he leaves home, puts his workers in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch.

Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, at midnight, at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly.

And what I say to you, I say to all: Keep awake."

The Gospel of the Lord.

The leader concludes the Gospel with The Gospel of the Lord. All respond: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ. The children sit to listen to the reflection.

Reflection

The leader may offer either of this reflection in these or similar words. Please consider the amount of time available to return to the main assembly. The leader may wish to reduce the number of questions.

What did you hear in the Gospel?

Give the children an opportunity to respond. Then begin a general discussion, building on these responses.

If someone important is coming to visit you, how do you prepare for their coming?

- Tidy your room and the rest of the house;
- Dust and clean;
- Prepare something to eat, or maybe the guest room?

Is it easier to prepare for visitors when you know the time to expect them?

Allow the children an opportunity to respond.

What happens if they show up early?

Allow the children an opportunity to respond.

Is keeping everything neat and tidy as it should be more difficult if you do not know when your visitor is coming?

Allow the children to answer.

What did Jesus tell us to do?

To keep ourselves ready for when he will come again.

How can we do this?

Allow the children to answer.

Advent is a period to clean our lives. We polish the good things, clean up our room and make them shine. We clean out some bad habits so we can grow as Jesus wants. By living each day as Jesus taught us, filled with goodness and love, we will be ready to welcome him when he comes again.

Let us stand and pray together.

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess our faith.

Recite the Creed or use the sample below to ask the children to respond.

The Creed

Depending on the time, a simple profession of faith may be made (see below).

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?

All: We do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, who became our brother and gave his life for us?

All: We do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and gives us everlasting life?

All: We do believe.

Leader: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it.

Prayer of the Faithful

Invite the children to think of the needs of others and to announce their petitions. The leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. It may be necessary for the leader to repeat and/or paraphrase the petition and conclude it with the cue for the response: For this, we pray. All respond to each petition by saying: Lord, hear our prayer. Sample intercessions are below.

Leader: We listened to God's Word and now pray to our God who loves us. The response is: Lord, hear our prayer.

- † That the Church finds ways to reach out to those who need help.
Let us pray to the Lord. R Lord, hear our prayer.
- † That God helps us care for people who need our assistance.
Let us pray to the Lord. R Lord, hear our prayer.
- † That God will heal the sick and give compassion to those who care for them. Let us pray to the Lord. R Lord, hear our prayer.
- † *The leader may invite other intercessions from the children or add intercessions based on the Church's current needs, the world, or the local community.*
- † That our family and friends who have died may know God's eternal happiness.
Let us pray to the Lord. R Lord, hear our prayer.

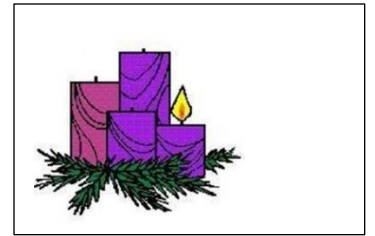
Leader: In your goodness, O God, you sent Jesus as our Shepherd. We offer you our prayers and for the grace to help our neighbours in need.

The leader may invite other intercessions from the children or add intercessions based on the Church's current needs, the world, or the local community.

Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and perhaps think about what they have heard and are now doing.

Be mindful of children having difficulty finding their families.

First Sunday in Advent



Advent is a good time to become better followers of Jesus! It is a time to polish up the good habits in our lives and make them shine brighter, and to clear out some of our bad habits so we can make a fresh start. It is a time of Hope!

By living each day as Jesus taught us, filled with goodness and love, we will be ready to welcome Jesus when he comes again.

Hope in Jesus always!

What do you think Jesus wants you to do this Advent to prepare?

What helps you do what Jesus expects?



Prayer for this week

**God of Wonder,
Help us prepare our hearts for you.
Give us Hope and guide us in Your way.
Fill us with Your love.
We pray in Jesus our Lord.
Amen.**