



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

700 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 1C7



Children's Liturgy of the Word

Readings

First: Isaiah 61:1-2

Gospel: John 1:19-28

3rd Sunday of Advent – Year B—Joy!

Joy is the word of the day. Rejoice. Give thanks. Gaudete Sunday.

In our first reading, Isaiah tells us how God calls us to respond to the Lord's coming. The reading is like a hymn of rejoicing. Our baptism has called us to respond with joy as instruments of a Joyful God. We sing our thanks and praise to God, particularly in our responsorial Psalm! We pray with, through and in Jesus before God, who has enabled this to happen. We are full to overflowing with Joy and Hope.

We hear about John the Baptist again this week, a person sure of purpose and mission. We can pray to God and ask God to give us Hope and Joy to be like him, sure of the path God wants us to walk. If we are unsure or have gone our way a bit, what better time is there to find the path once more and set our feet back on it with renewed resolve?

The single pink candle on the Advent wreath reminds us of a pink sky before sunrise that a new day is upon us. Advent reminds us that we are awaiting the day when Jesus comes.

Objectives

- † To present John the Baptist as a model to follow as a disciple of Christ.
- † To recognize that the Advent candle is a sign of Joy in the coming of Christ.

Leader's Preparation:

- † Pray the Lectionary readings.
- † Review the background.
- † Reflect upon the reflection questions.

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 **two purple** or violet candles and **one pink** 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.

Images in the Readings

- † Witness for the light
- † Baptize with water
- † Anointed
- † Pray constantly

Background

First Reading: Isaiah

- † Isaiah is speaking one who is announcing good news.
- † God created a jubilee year, which occurs every 50th year.
- † Property and debts are forgiven, and God sends Jesus to obtain forgiveness for our sins.
- † What do we do to help people feel comfort and release from hardship?

Gospel: John

- † John the Baptist lived in the desert and told people to change their lives so they would be ready for someone more important than he was.
- † The gospel proclamation focuses on John the Baptist's testimony.
- † The Jewish people anxiously awaited the Messiah and hoped that John the Baptist was the Messiah they sought.
- † John's testimony makes the truth crystal clear about who the Messiah is.
- † An important point to make today is to always point to Jesus with Joy!

Leader's Reflection Questions

- † Why do we rejoice on the Third Sunday of Advent?
- † Why does John point the way to Jesus?
- † Where do you find Jesus in your daily life?

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: My dear children, today we are halfway through Advent. We call this day Gaudete Sunday or Joy Sunday. God wants us to rejoice in Jesus! Soon, Christmas will be here. Rejoice and go in peace.

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 in 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.

First Reading

A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah.

The Spirit of the Lord has come to me
because he has chosen me.

The Lord has sent me to tell the oppressed the good news,
to heal the brokenhearted,
and to announce freedom for prisoners and captives.

This is the year when the Lord God
will show kindness to us and punish our enemies.

The Lord has sent me to comfort all who mourn.

The Word of the Lord.

Gospel

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

All respond: Glory to you, Lord.

All sign themselves on the forehead, lips and breast.

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

The Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and temple helpers to ask John who he was.

He told them plainly, "I am not the Messiah."

Then, when they asked him if he was Elijah, he said, "No, I am not!"

And when they asked if he was the prophet, he also said, "No!"

Finally, they said, "Who are you then?

We have to answer the ones who sent us.

Tell us who you are!"

John answered in the words of the prophet Isaiah,

"I am only someone shouting in the desert:
make the road ready for the Lord."

Some Pharisees had also been sent to John.

They asked him, "Why are you baptizing people if you are not the Messiah, or Elijah or the Prophet?"

John told them, "I use water to baptize people.

But here with you is someone you do not know.

Even though I came first,

I am not good enough to untie his sandals."

John said this as he was baptizing east of the Jordan River in Bethany.

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 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.

An excellent place to begin is the question:

What did you hear?

Parents (Moms and/or Dads) and grandparents teach us a lot about Jesus.

What are some things they have taught us?

Allow the children to share.

Why do we believe them?

Allow the children to share.

We also learn about Jesus when we come to Mass and listen to the Gospel as we did a few minutes ago. Sometimes, certain people in the Bible also teach us essential things about Jesus. Today's Gospel tells us that John the Baptist knew that Jesus is God's Son.

What did John the Baptist tell the Jewish leaders when they asked about him?

John said he was not the Messiah, Elijah, or the Prophet.

John said this about himself and Jesus because he knew Jesus was the Son of God. He told the people that Jesus was among them even though they did not recognize him. The people who came to see John the Baptist believed his words. We believe John the Baptist because he proved himself trustworthy and knew Jesus.

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.



Children's Liturgy of the Word

Today's Readings

Isaiah 61:1–2
John 1:19–28

We Pray

O God, as we draw closer to the birth of your Son, may we be worthy to welcome him into our lives. Amen.

The Word of God

Get Ready for the Lord!

Jewish leaders sent people to ask John the Baptist if he was the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet. John said, "No. I am only someone shouting in the desert, 'Get ready for the Lord!'"

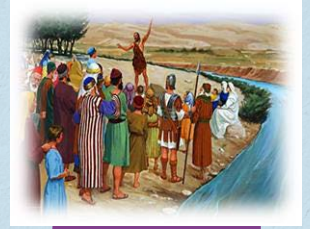
Pharisees asked why he was baptizing people if he was not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet. John said, "I baptize with water, but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."



Activity

John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus' light to shine. We use candles to remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World.

Color the candles of the Advent wreath. Color three of the candles purple, and one candle pink. Decorate the wreath.



Jesus Is Our Light!

Family Corner

FAITH FOCUS

John the Baptist, referring to the prophet Isaiah, told those who asked that he was a "voice in the wilderness." He called their attention to someone far greater than he. Though they did not recognize him, that "someone" was already among them.

John's mission was to prepare the people for Jesus, the Light of the World. John reminds us all to shine our lights toward Jesus. And Jesus is among us, too!

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Encourage your family to let Jesus' light shine through their words and actions. Gather one evening, turn the lights low, and pass a flashlight from person to person. In turn, while holding the flashlight, tell how your own actions can shine the light of Jesus to others. Tell about a time when you could see Jesus' light shine through the words or actions of someone else.

