

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Second Sunday of Advent, Year C
8 December 2024
Luke 3:1-6

Catechist Background

The figure of John the Baptist is presented as the last in the line of Old Testament prophets, and his presence provides a bridge to the new, messianic age. "Messianic" is the adjective of the noun "Messiah" which is in itself a Hebrew term meaning "God's chosen/anointed one". The Greek word "Christ" also means "the anointed one". Christians believe that Jesus is the "Messiah", the "Christ". The passage from Isaiah that Luke quotes originally referred to the return of the Jewish exiles to Jerusalem after their captivity in Babylon.

Setting the Scene

Before Mass begins, set up a centrepiece with a crooked 'path' possibly made out of skipping ropes if space allows, or a smaller one made out of ribbon/yarn/etc if you are limited for space.

At the beginning of the Children's Liturgy, it may be worth reminding the children about the meaning of the season of Advent.

We Say Sorry

Leader: You come for us when we have strayed, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You lead us along the right paths, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Your love conquers all, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

We Pray (1)

God in heaven, remove the things from our lives that make it difficult to understand who we were created to be. Help us to wait joyfully for Jesus' return. Amen.

Gospel Introduction

As John the Baptist features centrally in this Gospel reading, make sure the children know who he is, either by asking if they know anything about him, or by giving a brief explanation.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

Reflecting on the Gospel reading with Children

- Point out the 'path' you have made out of the ropes/string.
- Ask the children what might be a quicker way to get from the beginning of the path you have set up to the end of the path you have set up?
 - Hopefully, a child will point out that a less zig-zag path would be quicker.
- Get a child to help 'make the path straight.'
- Point out that Jesus didn't come into the world to give us road construction tips. (The Romans were already quite good at that.)
- What did John the Baptist *mean*? What (or who) did Jesus really come to find?
 - Hopefully some children will give an answer of 'people' or 'us' at some stage.
- What can we do to make the 'road' to our hearts straight?
- What can we do to make it a 'smooth road'? Suggestions might be to be generous, friendly, to share, to pray, to be thankful, etc.

Response

- Ask the children to choose one thing that they are going to try especially hard to do in the next week to make the path between them and Jesus straight.
- Then invite the children to walk the now-straight path you have created, one at a time, remembering the task they have set themselves for the week ahead.

We Believe

Relating the Creed to what you have shared with the children, ask these questions and invite the children to reply, 'I do.'

- Do you believe in God the Father, who made the world and everything in it?
- Do you believe in God the Son, who came to show us who God is?
- Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit, who is with us now to help us live our lives?

We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying, 'God, we ask for your help in making straight paths as we pray...'

Leader: We pray for the Pope, bishops, and priests, that they may be especially helpful in leading people to you. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray that all leaders in governments make laws that show us a good way to live. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for anybody who doesn't have enough to eat or a safe place to sleep. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the people of this parish, that we may follow your ways more closely. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, we know you hear our prayers. Help us to follow what you want us to do.

All: Amen.

