

Second Sunday of Advent

John the Baptist

INTRODUCTION

John the Baptist was the son of Elizabeth and Zechariah. He was chosen by God to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus. He told them that they must be sorry for all the things that they had done wrong, and try to live better lives. Today we will hear how and where he lived, and about the message he shared.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As we light our candles and sing our Advent Song, we try to prepare, like John the Baptist, for the coming of the promised one. Sing the Advent Song.

SORRY

Help us to be sorry for anything we have done wrong, and to try hard to be good.

Sing Sorry Song 4: *When we say that we are sorry.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel we sing Acclamation 5:
We have come to hear you Lord.

GOSPEL (cf Matthew 3:1-12)

John the Baptist went to live in the desert in Judaea. He wore a coat made from camel hair, tied around the middle with a belt. The desert was too hot and dry for many things to grow, so John lived on wild honey and locusts. God had told him that he was sending someone special to save the world. He wanted John to tell everyone that they must change their ways and try to become good. People came from far and wide to be baptised by John in the River Jordan. They wanted to say sorry for all their sins. One day John told them, 'I can wash you with water, but a very special person is coming who will baptise you with God's Spirit and wash away all your sins.'

DISCUSSION

Where did John the Baptist go to live? – In the desert in Judaea. (*Discuss what a desert is like. Show pictures if possible.*)

What did he wear? Do you think his coat was very comfortable?

Can anyone remember what John had to eat in the desert? – (*Make sure the children know what a locust is!*)

What was the message that God wanted John to tell the people and how should they prepare? –

God wanted John to tell all the people to change their ways and become good.

ACTIVITY

'Light' the second candle on the Advent wreath decoration. Photocopy the picture of John in the desert and ask the children to colour this in.

OR

In advance prepare a large picture of John the Baptist. Make copies of locusts and the honey pot. Using glue-sticks, glue John's coat, and encourage the children to sprinkle on sawdust, sand, porridge oats or any other material to represent the rough camel hair. Alternatively glue patches of coarse material or fabric into place. The remainder of the group can colour the honey pots and locusts which complete the picture.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare
the people for the coming of your Son.
As Christmas draws closer,
help us to prepare too,
so that we may be ready
for Christmas day.