

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Second Sunday of Advent, Year B
10 December, 2023
Mark 1:1-8

Catechist Background

Elijah was a prophet from the Old Testament who was expected to return at the end of the world. John the Baptist is presented as a 'new Elijah,' both by his peculiar attire and diet and by his prophetic message. A new era has definitely begun! John the Baptist is also a precursor to Jesus.

In Mark's Gospel, the first we hear of him is his baptising and preaching repentance, and at the end of his life his followers have left him and he suffers a humiliating execution; so too with Jesus.

Setting the Scene

For the activity described below you will need a length of string, and two stones (or other objects) to represent God and a person.

We Say Sorry

Leader: Lord Jesus, you came to bring peace.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You come to us in your Word to make us strong, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: You will come in glory with salvation for your people, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

We Pray (1)

Dear God, remove the things from our hearts that keep us from being open to your love. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel Mark 1:1-8

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- Why were people coming out to John in the desert?
- Who was the person that John said would come after him?
- How do you think people would have prepared their lives for Jesus' coming?
- How do you think we, in 2023, should prepare for Jesus' coming again? How do you think we can 'prepare a way for the Lord?'

Response

Show the children the two stones, one that represents a person and the other that represents God. Place the stones on the ground. What is the most sensible way for one to reach the other? By going straight, of course. But sometimes the way between people and God gets blocked; sometimes people turn away from God's love. Place the string, crumpled up, with the two ends at the stones, representing the winding way that sometimes exists between God and a person.

Earlier, examples were given to show how to prepare a way for the Lord in our lives today. Encourage the children to come up in turns and imagine that they are the stone representing the person, and straighten the string connecting them to God, boldly saying, 'I am making the path straight!'

We Believe

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

- Do you believe in God the Father who loves us more than we can possibly imagine?
- Do you believe in Jesus, who was announced by John the Baptist to bring us back to God?
- Do you believe in Holy Spirit, who helps us to repent and turn back to God's love?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'John the Baptist reminds us that you are coming, and so we now pray...'

Leader: We pray for all people who preach the Good News of Jesus Christ. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for leaders of countries, that they may create laws that make it easier for people to serve God. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for people who do not have a warm place to sleep as the weather gets colder. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for each other, that we may show kindness and forgiveness in the week ahead. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us to be true to our word and make the path straight between us and you. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

