

Children's liturgy – Second Sunday of Advent (Year B)

Preparing the worship space

Colour: purple

Props: materials to make a Jesse tree or nativity frieze, pictures of people around the world preparing for Christmas, a small crib

Welcome: Today we hear about how John the Baptist prepared people for the coming of Jesus by baptising them. How do we prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas? How do people around the world prepare? Let's find out today...

Song suggestions: O come o come Emmanuel (522, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Opening prayer: God of truth, help us to prepare for the coming of your Son and to share the message of your love with others. Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Psalm: Ps 84:9-10, 11-12, 13-14; 2

Gospel acclamation: Everyone stands and sings the gospel acclamation together. Options include: 'Change your lives and believe in him', Christopher Walker; 'Halle, halle, halle' (Caribbean) from 'Sing With the World', Alison Adam & John Bell; 'Celtic Alleluia' (traditional).

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

Gospel reflection: Today we hear about John the Baptist and how he was a messenger for God, preparing people for the coming of Jesus. What do you remember about John in this reading?

What does he wear? What does he eat? What does he do in the river?

How do we prepare during Advent?

We put up a Christmas tree and decorate it. We buy presents for other people and we wrap them up.

When John the Baptist began to prepare the way for Jesus, it wasn't just for his friends and family. His message was for everyone who would listen.

When we prepare for Jesus we can also remember people who are part of our worldwide family. CAFOD's World Gifts allow us to help people in other countries improve their lives through education, good health or finding ways to run their own business. One of the World Gifts choices is 'Chirpy Chickens' which helped Sreymom who lives in Cambodia.

For farmers like Sreymom, the droughts and floods that are common in this area can be disastrous. When Sreymom's crops fail due to poor rains or drought, she had no way to feed her three small children or send them to school.

CAFOD's partner, Srer Khmer, taught Sreymom how to breed chickens so she wouldn't be solely reliant on her crops to bring in money. Sreymom can now make money both from farming and from selling chickens, and can support her family even when there are floods and droughts. Her goal is to see her children educated and living in a safe and stable home is now within her reach. All because of the generosity of people like you who think of others at this special time of year.

We can prepare for Jesus by being kind and generous to other people. And by saying sorry for all the things that we've done wrong. Can you think of other ways we can prepare for the coming of Jesus?

When you are preparing for Christmas this week, why not think about all the other people around the world who are also getting ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Maybe you could say a prayer for them this week.

Intercessions: *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

John the Baptist asks us to get ready for Jesus and so we pray together for God's help:

We pray for all people around the world who are preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus: that we may not forget those who need our help at this special time. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for all people who are poor, hungry, sick or alone: that they may be filled with the joy and peace of Christ. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish community, family and friends: that we may be kind and generous to others as we prepare for the coming of Christ. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Generous God, as we prepare for the coming of your Son Jesus, help us to remember all our brothers and sisters in our global family and to share your love with them. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Have a look at Sreymom's story and her chirpy chickens at <https://cafod.org.uk/News/International-news/Poverty-at-Christmas> . Then take a look at our other gifts at <https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/> or in the World Gifts catalogue.

Cut large letters out of paper and stick them to some card, making a sign that says: 'Jesus is coming'. Ask the children to decorate the letters and to write or

draw how they are preparing for Jesus on the poster. This can be carried by the children when they process back into the church.

Make a Jesse tree or nativity frieze that the children can add to each week with the characters that they hear about in the gospel readings, for example this week they could add John the Baptist.

You could also set up a travelling crib – a bit like the one that Fidel, Marisol and Ronaldo have in their community. Have a bag which contains small crib figures within it or order a hand-painted Nativity scene from El Salvador from CAFOD Resources. (See details of how to order below.) Include the story of Fidel, Marisol and Ronaldo in the bag and a photo of them. You could also include some of the prayers from this or the other Advent children's liturgy resources in the bag for the children and their families to say at home together.



Give it to a different child to take home with them each week (remind them that it's very important to bring it back again the following Sunday so that someone else can have a turn). You could encourage the children to take it into school with them, so that the other children in their class can also think about who they are preparing for at Advent.

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have talked and thought about during the session. Ask them to pray together at home during the next week for all the members of our global family who are preparing for Christmas at this time.

*To order a hand-painted Nativity Scene from CAFOD Resources, price **£10**, call **0300 011 5680** or go to shop.cafod.org.uk. All UK orders are also subject to a £3.75 postage and packing charge.*