

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

Preparing the worship space

Colour: purple

Props: candles, coloured paper, stickers or glitter glue.

Welcome: Today we hear some more about John the Baptist, who came to tell everyone to get ready for Jesus who is the light of the world. Let's think about what that means.

Song suggestions: *Christ be our light* (891, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Opening prayer: God of light, you sent your Son into the world to guide us and show us how to live. Help us to follow his example by loving and caring for others. Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11

Psalm: Luke 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54; 1

Gospel acclamation: everyone stands and sings 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: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from today's reading?

At the beginning it talks a lot about the light. The light is another name for someone very special. Can you think who that might be?

Jesus is the light of the world. This reading says that John the Baptist came to tell everyone Jesus was coming.

Why do you think Jesus is called the light of the world? - Jesus is the Son of God and he shows us how we should live – he is a shining light in the darkness for us to follow.

Make the room as dark as possible and light a candle.

See how much light one small candle gives out. This is like Jesus – shining his light for all to see.

Give all the children candles and light them from the first candle and from each other (explain that they will be hot and not to touch the flame and make sure that all the candles have candle holders.)

But if we share the light we can see so much more! If we share the light of Jesus we can light up the whole world.

How do you think we can share the light of Jesus with others?

We can be kind. We can be generous. We can share with others. We can be friendly. We can help people who are poor, or sick, or hungry.

[USE AS NEEDED: This is what the organisation called CAFOD does. They are part of our Church and they help people in the poorest countries get things like clean water, enough to eat, a safe place to live, or a chance to go to school.]

CAFOD tries to share the light of Jesus by helping people who are poor so that they can have a brighter future.

Imagine life without electricity. No lights when it gets dark, no fridge, no computer games or TV tonight at home! What a shock! Over one billion people in our world don't have electricity in their home. 90 million children in Africa have no electricity in school, and can't study at home after dark. Everything has to happen in daylight, or by using really smoky and dangerous lights like candles or paraffin lamps. If you can't study, you don't have the chance to be the best you can be. You can't make your dreams come true for what you want to be when you are grown up.

CAFOD is helping people in poor countries to use the power of the sun and the wind to make their lights shine or their fridges work. This kind of power is free, and it doesn't run out. You can put a solar lamp out in the sun during the day, and it will shine at night so you can read a book or draw a picture. This can help children light up their hopes for the future.

How will you share the light of Jesus in the next week?

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

John came to tell us about Jesus, light of the world, and so we pray together that we may share that light with others:

We pray for world leaders: that they may be guided by the light to do what is best for the people in their countries. Lord, in your mercy....

We pray for people who are poor, sad, hungry or lonely: that they may find light in their darkness and hope for a brighter future. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that through our actions others may see the light of Jesus shining. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Jesus, light of the world, help us to be shining examples of your love and light to all members of our global family. Amen.

Activity suggestions

1. Ask the children to colour in the illustration and draw or write on the back how they will share the light of Jesus over the coming week.
2. Make a paper lantern with the children.
 - Cut a 1cm wide strip from the short edge of your A4 piece of coloured paper. This will be your hanging loop.
 - Now cut a square 20cm x 20cm and fold in half.
 - Cutting inwards from the folded edge of the paper, snip flaps that finish approximately 3cm from the top of the paper. Each flap should be spaced about 2cm apart. It may be easier to mark the lines first with a pencil.
 - To make the lantern shape, unfold the creased edge and roll the paper to form a tube with the slits standing vertically. Glue the edges of the tube together to form a round lantern, then gently press downwards so that the slits splay out slightly.
 - Glue the ends of the hanging loop to the top of the lantern.
 - Decorate the lantern however you wish.
3. Get the children to decorate candles with stickers or glitter glue.
4. Print out the prayer below on A4 paper (or ask older children to write their own prayer on a sheet of paper). Ask them to decorate it as well if you have time. Roll it up and make a candle shape. Stick some tissue paper flames to the top to make a paper candle. Ask them to say the prayer at home during the coming week.

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to try to do all that they can to share the light of Jesus through their actions in the coming week.

Prayer for the light of the world

God of light, shine brightly,
show us how
to bring hope to others.

God of mercy, help us
to comfort people and
to share in their joy.

God of hope,
help us this Advent,
to share your light with others.

Amen.