



Second Sunday of Advent

Matthew 3: 1-11

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'"

Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.

And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Some things to think about...

- John the Baptist is spending this time preparing people for Jesus' coming.
- Think about a time where a big event was coming up. What did you, your family or community do in preparation for this event?

Activities

- Pretend you are John the Baptist trying to prepare everyone for the Lord's coming. Following on from the Gospel reading, what else would you say to get people excited for the arrival of Jesus?
- Make a poster to put up in your school with a Christmas theme that is designed to get everyone excited and prepared for the birth of Jesus Christ.

Teacher's Note

(You may wish to use an alternative translation for this reading e.g. the Good News Bible)

Just as John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, Advent is a time of preparation, just like we prepare for special sacraments and events in our lives.

There was a lot of excitement, nervousness and anticipation about the Lord's arrival. The message was shouted, heard and passed along. This is just like the excitement of us preparing for Christmas now when we sing Christmas carols and decorate our homes.

Encourage the children to think about what they could give to those in need for Christmas - whether it be the gift of time, of company, or physical gifts.

Encourage thoughtful prayer at the same time as thinking about and giving gifts as this is just as important and valuable to those in need.