

Second Sunday of Advent Year B – 10th December 2023

Introduction

Today is the second Sunday of Advent. What does Advent mean? It means “coming”. We are preparing for the birth of the baby Jesus on Christmas Day.

(A suggested activity for Advent is to prepare an Advent wreath to be used at Children’s Liturgy – a smaller version than the one used in the church. If you are not able to do this, then make a picture of an Advent wreath, by cutting out leaf shapes from green card and arranging them in a circle and sticking them to a sheet of card. Next draw and cut out four candles, three purple and one vibrant pink candle and stick these (one each week) onto the picture of the wreath. Each week of Advent we will describe the wreath and discuss its’ meaning. If you have a real wreath we will also light a candle each week. (If you have a picture stick a new picture of a candle on each week!)

As part of your weekly introduction during Advent ask the children to look at the wreath and explain or remind them of what it represents.

Firstly, the wreath is circular to symbolize that God’s love for us has no end. It is everlasting.

The leaves of the wreath are GREEN, the colour that represents hope.

There are four candles (three purple – repentance, and one vibrant pink – a symbol of joy for the third Sunday of Advent known as Gaudete Sunday).

The bright light of each candle represents Jesus our “light” the “light” of the world. We explain that we will light a candle on the wreath each Sunday in Advent. Today, as we light the first candle, we pray to Jesus asking Him to come into our hearts, that we may know and love Him and following His gentle example, become more like Him, that we may bring His “light” to the people in our lives.

Make the Sign of the Cross – a sign of the love God has for us. (This is optional, as we have already done this at the start of Holy Mass, but for young children it helps to demonstrate and practice how to do this correctly).

Light two of the purple candles on the Advent wreath (and light the candles on the table next to the Lectionary. An adult lights the candles).

Penitential Act

Ask the children to think about how they have behaved in the past week, and if they have been kind to each other, helpful to parents, brothers, or sisters, listened to their teachers etc. For the times when we have not behaved as we should we say sorry to God.

Lead the children in singing the “sorry song”.

We are sorry,
Truly sorry,
Heal us Lord, (sung to tune of Frère Jacques)
In Your love,
Help us to do better,
Help us to be kinder.
Forgive us,
Forgive us.

All stand to welcome the Gospel singing the **Gospel Acclamation:**

Alleluia, alleluia praise the Lord,
Alleluia, alleluia praise the Lord.
As we listen to the story,
Let us praise Him for His glory.
Alleluia, alleluia, praise the Lord. (1) (to tune of when you're happy
And you know it).

Gospel

Select the correct Gospel from the Children’s Lectionary. This week it’s on page 5 of “Sunday. Book of Readings. The Lectionary Adapted for Children.” (Year B)

Mark 1:1-8

“A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark”.

Explain and demonstrate – make three crosses: one on your forehead, one on your lips and one on your heart (in this way we think God’s word, speak God’s word and keep God’s word in our hearts) **as we say together “Glory to You, O Lord.”**

Read the Gospel aloud to the children. At the end say:

“The Gospel of the Lord”.

All reply: **“Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ”.**

Ask everyone to be seated.

Lead a Discussion on the Gospel

What was the name of the man in the Gospel today?
(John. You may want to explain that Zechariah and Elizabeth were John’s parents and that Elizabeth was the cousin of Mary the mother of Jesus)

Where did John live? (desert)

What did God tell John to do? (God told John to go and tell all the people to change their lives and turn back to God. He was to tell them that if they were sorry for their sins and were baptized that God would forgive them. God told John to baptize the people who were sorry and wanted God’s forgiveness.)

What other name does John have? (John the Baptist)

Where did John baptize the people? (River Jordan)

Why did he use water? (Water makes us clean. Water is essential for life... discuss with the children)

How do you think the people felt when John told them God wanted them to change their ways? (discuss some people might not listen, might be angry or annoyed so John had to be quite brave..)
John did not have an easy job to do, but he did what God told him. It’s not always easy for us to do the right thing, but we should trust in God just as John did.

What did John say that Jesus would do when He came?

He said that Jesus would baptize them with the Holy Spirit. (You may want to explain that we receive the Holy Spirit when we are baptized and also later in the sacrament of Confirmation).

John was preparing the people to meet Jesus. During this time of Advent, we also prepare to meet Jesus at Christmas!

Prayers of the Faithful (optional/ time dependent)

You may wish to prepare some of these yourselves or ask the children for their prayers. Here are some suggestions for today:

Dear Jesus, Help us we pray, to prepare well this Advent so that we are able to trust in You always and like John the Baptist, do what is right even when it is not easy.

Lord, in Your mercy.

All reply: **“Hear our prayer.”**

Dear Jesus, Help us we pray, to be **awake** to the needs of others by being thoughtful, kind and helpful.

Lord, in Your mercy.

All reply: **“Hear our prayer.”**

Closing Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, Help us to listen to Your word in the Gospel, and like John the Baptist, help us to be brave and do what is right and pleasing to You.

Amen.

Now ask for volunteers for the Offertory Procession. After the procession, children return quietly to sit with their families in church.

References:

1 The Complete Children's Liturgy Book. Katie Thomson, published by Kevin Mayhew. Page 194.