

FAITH



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Diocese of Waterford & Lismore

Celebrating and supporting faith, hope and love in the heart of the family!



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Year A SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION ALSO AVAILABLE

Sunday Mass Readings

FIRST READING:

Isaiah 11:1-10

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Psalm 71(72): 1-2,7-8,12-13,17

SECOND READING:

Romans 15:4-9

GOSPEL:

Matthew 3:1-12

"A voice cries in the wilderness:
Prepare a way for the Lord, make his
paths straight.""



Hear

Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one? No worries, you can find this week's readings online [here](#).

Check out [this video](#) on the readings for children.

Pray

- In the Gospel today we meet John the Baptist, preaching repentance.
- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do these words resonate with you personally?
- John is a striking character, unusual in the way he dressed, lived, ate and preached. His message was as striking as his life. What do you think his message, "Prepare a way for the Lord" means for you this Advent? How can you prepare your heart for Jesus?
- John's message was one of repentance: is there anything you need to repent of this Advent time? Is the Lord putting anything on your heart to bring to Him in confession? Make a sincere examination of conscience and entrust yourself to His merciful heart.

Talk

- In today's readings we hear John the Baptist preach about the need to turn back to God.

Discuss the following as a family:

- What kind of preparations do we make as a family for Christmas? What are the most important traditions we have?
- Do we make enough space for Jesus in our homes at Christmas? How do we show that through our actions and prayers?
- How can we make sure we prepare to welcome Jesus into our hearts and homes all year round, not just at Christmas time?

Family Challenge!

Prepare the way for the Way, the Truth and the Life - Jesus! Give up one thing this week that can keep you from seeing Jesus, and fill that gap with Him instead - a TV show, the snooze button, complaining, too much screen time.... you choose!

PREPARE THE WAY

In this week's Gospel Reading and next week's, our Advent preparation for Christmas invites us to consider John the Baptist and his relationship to Jesus. In this week's Gospel, Matthew describes the work and preaching of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist appears in the tradition of the great prophets of Israel, preaching repentance and reform to the people of Israel. In fact, the description of John found in this reading is reminiscent of the description of the prophet Elijah (2 Kings 1:8). In this reading, John directs a particularly pointed call to repentance to the Pharisees and Sadducees, parties within the Jewish community of the first century.

John marks the conversion of those who seek him out with a baptism of repentance. Other groups in this period are thought to have practiced ritual washings for similar purposes, and John's baptism may have been related to the practices of the Essenes, a Jewish sect of the first century. John's baptism can be understood as an anticipation of Christian baptism. In this passage, John himself alludes to the difference between his baptism and the one yet to come: "I am baptizing you with water, for repentance . . . He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." (Matthew 3:11).

In this reading, John makes very clear that his relationship to the Messiah yet to come (Jesus) is one of service and subservience: "... the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals" (Matthew 3:11). In the context of Matthew's Gospel, today's passage is followed by Jesus' baptism by John, an event that is attested to in all four of the Gospels and appears to have been the start of Jesus' public ministry.

John's preaching of the coming of the Lord is a key theme of the Advent season. As John's message prepared the way for Jesus in the first century, we, too, are called to prepare ourselves for Jesus' coming. We respond to John's message by our repentance and reform of our lives. We are also called to be prophets of Christ, who announce by our lives, as John did, the coming of the Lord.

Loyola Press Sunday Connection



"Confession is a place of victory!"
Fr Mike Schmitz

PREPARE WELL

In this Gospel passage, we hear about Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, who lived a radical and unconventional lifestyle in response to a personal call by God to prepare the way for the Messiah. John understood that a genuine conversion of heart would be necessary to really accept the Messiah' message. He wanted people to repent and believe, to prepare a way for the Messiah. Can you imagine how someone like John the Baptist would be viewed in today's world? Do you think his message is still relevant today?

In the Catholic tradition, one of the most beautiful and healing sacraments is the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession. It is a chance to take stock of our lives, see what is going well and not so well, see what is hindering us from drawing close to God and what we need forgiveness for. God's mercy is freely available to us. He doesn't just offer to mend our broken hearts: He puts a new heart in us each time we go to confession, and strengthens us so we can follow the path to Heaven again!

Take some time over the next few days or weeks to make a good examination of conscience. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you try to remember any areas of your life where you failed in your relationship with God, others or yourself; times where you failed to show love or deliberately ignored God's will or guidance for your life. Find out when your local church has confessions and decide to go. you can pray for the priest in advance too!



Confession is a place of Victory
(Fr Mike Schmitz)
Prepare the Way (Charlie Hall)

To the Heights Youth Newsletter available also.



Family Prayer

Dear Jesus, you entered our world on Christmas as the Prince of Peace. This Advent, as we strive to become the-best-version-of-ourselves, fill us with a deep and abiding peace. Help us share that peace with everyone we encounter, especially those who need it most. Amen.

www.dynamiccatholic.com

EVENTS

Advent Reflections in the Diocese:

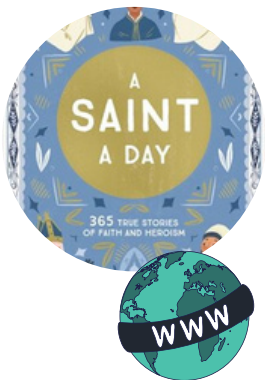
- Park Hotel Dungarvan, 7.30pm, 5 Dec, 'Journeying with Advent Hope', Frances Rowland
- Minella Hotel Clonmel, 7.30pm, 12 Dec, 'Waiting through Advent, with Mary' - Gemma Mulligan

Youth 2000 Christmas Retreat: 9 - 11 December, Newbridge, for young people aged 16 - 35. Donation only. Book online at www.youth2000.ie

Advent Family Day at Holy Family Mission. Sunday 4th December, 10am - 3pm. Booking is essential: email info@holymission.ie

REnewal Rosary Making Workshop for RE Teachers. Practical workshop on how to make twine rosaries with your students, plus other rosary resources, 25 Feb, 11am - 1pm. For more info email events@waterfordlismore.ie Register before Dec 15th to facilitate ordering of materials.

CHECK IT OUT: A SAINT A DAY: 365 STORIES OF FAITH & HEROISM



"Teach your child to walk in faith, act justly, and lead with kindness and humility with this 365-day devotional for kids. A Saint a Day includes fascinating historical stories as it introduces young readers to over 300 saints who did extraordinary things for God. This daily devotional for kids is: An ideal gift for First Communion, Confirmation, or Advent. As you journey through this year long devotional, your children will grow in their understanding of Church history and better understand how they can love and serve God." Book by Meredith Hinds: available at Easons

Have you subscribed yet to our Diocesan newsletters and events bulletin? Receive them direct to your inbox!

Click the Subscribe Button OR go to www.waterfordlismore.ie/resources

- Faith@Home Newsletter (faithathome@waterfordlismore.ie)
- "To the Heights" Youth Newsletter (youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie)
- Check it Out! Diocesan Events Bulletin (events@waterfordlismore.ie)

WEEKLY
WEEKLY
FORTNIGHTLY





Let's dive in!

FAITH
@Home Activities for Children!

www.waterfordlismore.ie



Let's Learn!

Check out this video from Kids Catholic Media on this Sunday's readings.

Puzzle

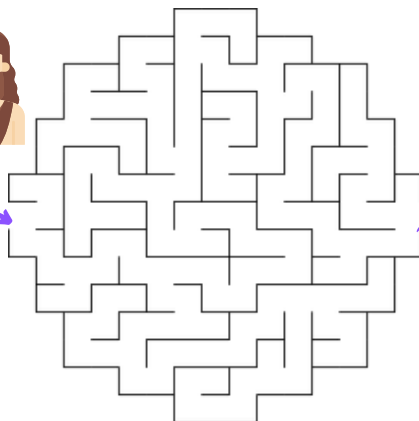
Can you find these words from the Gospel in the wordsearch?

Baptist
camel
fruit
Jesus
John
prepare
sins
way

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T | Z | T | W | S | S | L | W |
| W | S | X | Z | I | U | E | S |
| S | A | I | C | N | S | M | H |
| Q | M | Y | T | S | E | A | X |
| P | C | G | C | P | J | C | S |
| U | P | R | E | P | A | R | E |
| T | I | U | R | F | Y | B | K |
| I | O | H | Y | N | H | O | J |



Start here!



Find your way
through the maze
with John the
Baptist to get to
Jesus!



My Saint Friend



St Juan Diego
9 December

Celebrate the Seasons!

What colour is the priest's chasuble today?
Colour it in!

Tick the box for the correct liturgical season!

Advent ☐ Christmas ☐ Lent ☐
Easter ☐ Ordinary Time ☐



Let's Sing!

Waiting
for
Christmas
(Advent
Song)



Let's PRAY



Lord Jesus, help me to prepare my
heart to welcome you at Christmas
time! Amen



Let's act!



Today we light
our second Advent candle -
that means Christmas is
getting closer! What can you
do to prepare for Jesus this
week? Can you do an extra
chore to show your family
you care? Or say sorry if
you hurt someone? Or smile
at people!

Prepare the way of the Lord!

Word of God



Colour this image of John the Baptist!



Image by Lambsongs: FreeBibleImages.org