

FAITH @ Home

8 DECEMBER 2024 | YEAR C: 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Diocese of Waterford & Lismore

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

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION ALSO AVAILABLE

Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:

Baruch 5:1-9

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 125 (126)

Second Reading:

Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

Gospel:

Luke 3:1-6



PREPARE

"PREPARE A WAY FOR THE LORD..."

image: Canva

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](#).

Pray



In the Gospel today we hear about the call of John the Baptist, a voice in the wilderness proclaiming the coming of the Messiah as prophesied in the Book of Isaiah.

Take some time to reflect on the key message of this week's Gospel. Think about the following:

- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do Jesus' words resonate with you personally?
- Luke gives a very specific time frame for John's mission and ministry. Each of us are willed by God and have a mission and a call to serve Him and build up His Kingdom in our own time and place. Do you ever find yourself wishing for a different life or think it would be easier to be a witness somewhere else? **Ask God to bless you in all your interactions with others this week, and thank Him for the concrete path to sainthood He has provided for you!**

Family Prayer



Lighting 2nd Advent Candle: God of power and mercy open our hearts in welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy so that we may share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen

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Talk



John the Baptist was a courageous voice in the wilderness, calling people to convert and prepare for the Messiah. He was calling people to change, and change is not always easy.

Discuss the following as a family:

- Have you ever gone cycling or hiking, and had to go up and down hills and valleys? Is it easier to cycle or walk on straight paths or hills?
- Have you ever had news that you were so excited about you wanted to tell everyone? John the Baptist was like that - He wanted everyone to know about the coming of the Messiah, Jesus, and to make sure they were ready.
- How can we make our path to Jesus smoother (and less hilly!) this Advent? What kind of things block us from seeing Jesus properly? What kind of things make it hard for us to pray on our own or as a family? How can we prepare a way for the Lord as a family?

Family Challenge!



Prepare the way for the way: 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 OF THE LORD!

This week and next, our Gospel readings invite us to consider John the Baptist and his relationship to Jesus. John the Baptist appears in the tradition of the great prophets, preaching repentance and reform to the people of Israel. To affirm this, Luke quotes at length from the prophet Isaiah. John baptizes for repentance and for forgiveness of sins, preparing the way for God's salvation.

The three Synoptic Gospels—Mark, Matthew, and Luke—attest to the importance of the baptism of John in preparing for Jesus. Only the Gospel of Luke, however, extends the connection between these two men to their birth. The first two chapters of Luke's Gospel contain the Infancy Narrative, which tells about the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. These stories set the stage for the beginning of Jesus' public ministry in chapter 3.

The evangelist Luke is the author of the Gospel that bears his name, and he also wrote the Acts of the Apostles as a continuation of the story of Jesus and the Church. In these two works, Luke's sense of time and history emerges. He identifies three epochs of salvation history: the time before Christ, the time of Christ, and the time of the Church and the Holy Spirit. In today's Gospel reading, as elsewhere, John the Baptist is presented as the figure who bridges the time before Christ and prepares the way for Christ's own ministry.

In today's Gospel we also note Luke's attention to political and historical detail. Luke shows that salvation is for all people and situated in world events. Therefore, Luke lists the political and religious leaders at the time of John's appearance in the desert. Salvation is understood as God's breaking into this political and social history.

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, we too are called to prepare ourselves for Jesus' coming. We respond to John's message by repentance and reform of our lives. We are also called to be prophets of Christ, who announce by our lives the coming of the Lord, as John did.

adapted from Loyola Press: Sunday Connections

Check
this
out

ONLINE ADVENT CALENDAR



Online Advent Calendar available by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference. Advent marks the beginning of the new calendar year for Christians. The digital Advent calendar offers a distinctive and spiritually enriching way to journey through this holy season. Based on the Jubilee Year's theme of #Hope, the 2024 calendar offers prayers and resources designed to guide individuals, families and faith communities to reflect on the hope that Christ brings to the world, while also preparing for the upcoming Holy Jubilee Year in 2025.

<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/adventcalendar/>



CARLO'S CORNER

Advent: 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.

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!



• [Confession is a place of victory \(Fr Mike\)](#)



• [Prepare the Way \(Charlie Hall\)](#)

To the Heights Youth Resource also available

EVENTS

Live Crib

Glencomeragh House, Kilsheelan, Co. Tipperary: 15th December, 3 - 6pm. Christmas Carols, Hot Chocolate, prayers in the chapel, a special guest appearance from Santa.

Live Crib

St Mary's Parish Church, Cahir, on Sun 21st Dec from 4 - 8pm. Music, hot chocolate, adoration, confession.

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