

Faith Lesson Plan and Faith Activity

Chapter Advent - A Time for Preparation

Resource - Our Sunday Visitor

Grades 7 & 8

Doctrinal Content

- Identify the importance of our personal ministry in preparing for Christ's coming
- Explore how the Fruit of patience helps moderate the need for self-gratification
- Describe how to cultivate patience in specific situations

Invite - Let Us Pray

Invite the young people to gather in the prayer space and make the sign of the Cross. Read aloud the leader's prayer. Proclaim the verse from Psalm 85:9-10 together. Have the youth move out of the prayer space and back to their seats.

Let Us Pray

Leader: Let us praise the Lord God,

“ . . . surely he will speak of peace . . .

Near indeed is his salvation for those who fear him;
glory will dwell in our land.” **Psalm 85:9-10**

All: Near indeed is his salvation. Amen.

Say: Waiting is a common human experience—no matter how old we are. When we are waiting for something unpleasant or unknown, we long for the expected event to occur so that we will be relieved of our anxiety. When waiting for something joyful, we may pray for patience to help control our excitement. During the Advent season, the Church celebrates waiting—hard as it may be—so that during the Christmas season, we can celebrate joy beyond all expectation. The readings we hear on the Sundays of Advent focus on the expectation of the coming Messiah, and God's covenant relationship with his People. The prophets held out hope for the people of Israel by describing what the world would be like when the Messiah came. They spoke of peace and of everyone having enough to live a life of dignity. In Jesus, the prophets' words were fulfilled beyond anything anyone could imagine. God took on human flesh and dwelt among us to reveal the unimaginable depth of his love for each of us. During Advent we wait patiently with high hopes and expectations for Christ to come and live among us again. During Advent we are called to be prophetic voices

challenging ourselves and others to be Gospel people. Let us listen to God's Word describing how John the Baptist prepared the way for the coming of Christ. "

Guide the young people through the process of the Scripture reflection below.

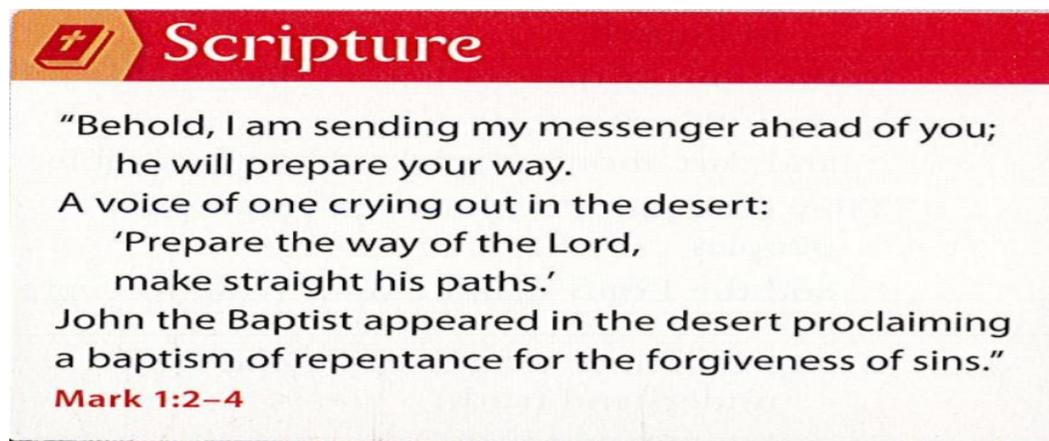
Invite them to close their eyes, be still, and open their minds and hearts to what God is saying to them in this passage.

Proclaim the Scripture.

Maintain several moments of silence

Display and Read the following.

Read: Mark 1:2-4

A graphic with a red header containing a white cross icon and the word "Scripture" in white. Below the header, on a white background, is the text of Mark 1:2-4 in black. The text reads: "Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way. A voice of one crying out in the desert: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.' John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." The reference "Mark 1:2-4" is written in red at the bottom.

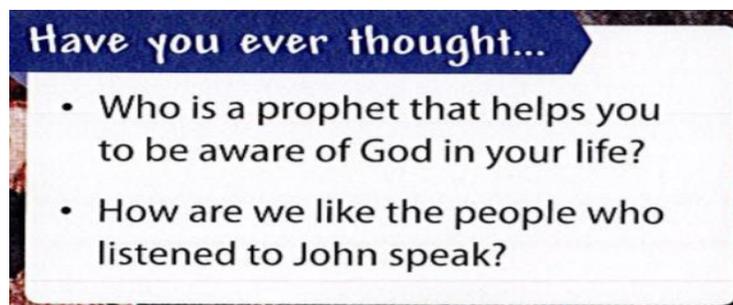
Scripture

"Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;
he will prepare your way.
A voice of one crying out in the desert:
'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths.'
John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming
a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."
Mark 1:2-4

Ask: What did you hear God say to you in the Sacred Scripture reading? Engage the young people to respond.

Say: During Advent, the words that we proclaim open our hearts to waiting and watchfulness.

Ask: What else have you ever thought about God's Word and what it means to you today? Engage the young people to respond to the questions below.

A graphic with a dark blue header containing the text "Have you ever thought..." in white. Below the header, on a white background, are two bullet points in black text.

Have you ever thought...

- Who is a prophet that helps you to be aware of God in your life?
- How are we like the people who listened to John speak?

Video Time

Say: Take a few minutes and reflect on what Advent means to you. Hold onto your thoughts. Let us watch a video called “Advent.”

Play the video clip. Video Link: <http://youtu.be/WcravEG2ATE>

Ask: Now that you have the video, what does Advent mean to you?

Discover (1)

Objectives:

Display and Read

“Living as Prophets”



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Living as Prophets

John the Baptist is sometimes called the “last of the prophets of Israel,” but that is not completely accurate. In a certain way, we are called to be prophets, too.

Through Baptism, we are commissioned to share in the three-fold ministry of Jesus— Priest, Prophet, and King. We are priests because we serve God’s people. We are kings because, as adopted sons and daughters of God, we share in the royalty of Christ. We are prophets because we proclaim God’s Word. During Advent, the words that we proclaim are those of waiting and watchfulness.

The Gospel according to Mark begins with Baptism, as did our own faith journey. In the opening lines of the Gospel, John the Baptist brings the faith of the Old Testament into the New Testament by revealing to the

Judean people that another person, God’s Son, will arrive soon. John says that Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit.

We have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. In Advent, the first season of the Church year, we are called to renew our baptismal commitment, to be prophets of the Second Coming.

During Advent, the Church is decorated in purple, and the priest wears purple vestments. In this season we prepare our hearts, our homes, and our world for Jesus’ Second Coming, we look happily forward to the upcoming Christmas feast, and we pray for a change of heart and for God’s forgiveness, and for those in need.

- How are you a prophet?
- In what ways can you prepare for both Christmas and the Second Coming of Christ?

Say: When we are baptized when are baptized in a three-fold ministry. They are:

- Priests: We share in the “common priesthood of all the faithful.” Our works, prayers, activities of family life, apostolic endeavors, sufferings, and setbacks “become spiritual offerings pleasing to God when united to the sacrifice of Christ.”
- Prophets: We witness to and teach God’s Word. “A real prophet, by teaching and good example, leads others to faith.”
- Kings: We share in Christ’s kingly mission of offering ourselves in service to others. “Servant leadership is the responsibility of all God’s people within their differing roles and responsibilities.”

Ask: What message of Advent - waiting and watchfulness does the world need to hear?

Ask: How did John prepare the way for Jesus?

Ask: How are you a prophet?

Ask: In what ways can you prepare for both Christmas and the Second Coming of the Christ?

Live: Our Catholic Life

Display and Read

“Preparing through Patience”



Preparing through Patience

Looking toward the future, to a feast several weeks away, requires patience. Looking even further into the future, to the end of the world, requires even more patience. Advent helps us to develop one of the Fruits of the Holy Spirit—patience.

Patience is steadfastness in the face of adversity or provocation because we trust God is with us and will somehow make

things good and right. During Advent we have so many things to do, and we make timetables for accomplishing them. When we are delayed, we become impatient.

What may help us grow in patience is to look at the source of the delays. Perhaps you find it difficult to get to school on time. Consider what will solve the problem, perhaps including getting your clothes and homework ready the night before.

In other situations, we might not have control. Perhaps you need to do extra chores to help get ready for the holidays, or feel like you have no free time to be with friends. Use those moments to pray for patience. Advent is a good time to recognize that we are not always in charge, and that God is willing to help us learn to grow in holiness in any situation.

Fruits of the Holy Spirit

The twelve **Fruits of the Holy Spirit** are qualities that can be seen in us when we let the Holy Spirit work in our hearts. This season we are focusing on **patience**.

Say: Advent is a good time for cultivating patience, because we have the opportunity to learn to focus on the present moment in anticipation of what is to come.

Ask: What is Advent a good time for?

Ask: What is patience?

Ask: Who is a model of patience? Why do you think so?

Ask: What does it take for you to cultivate patience?

Faith Activity

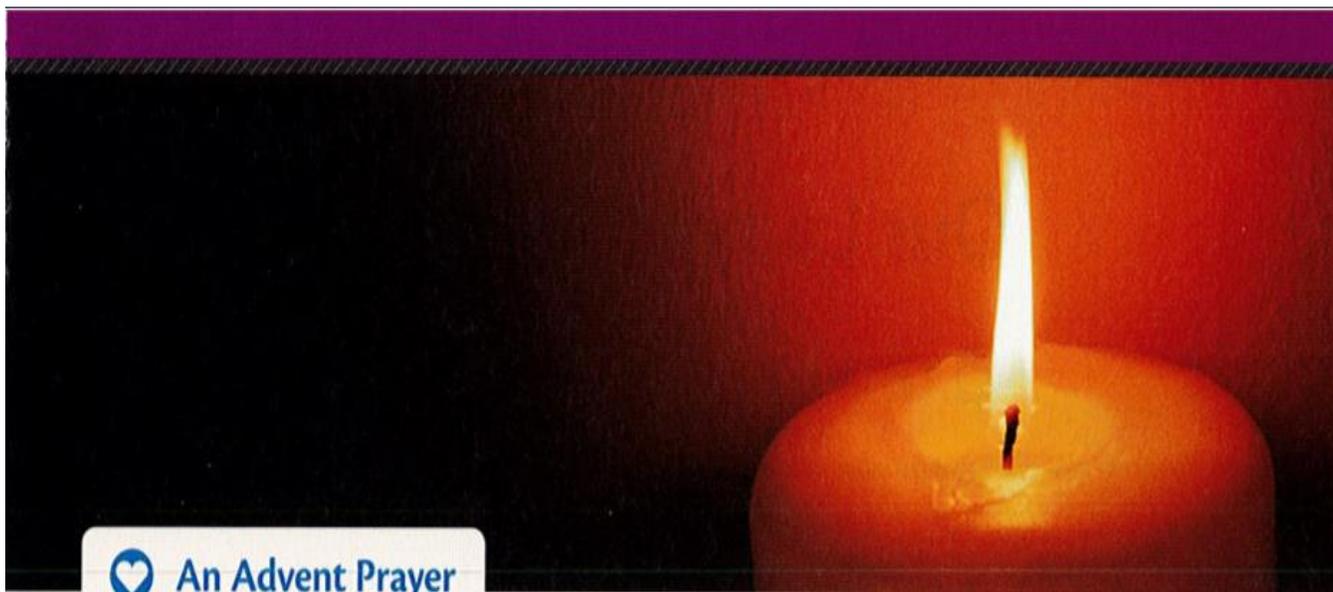
WRITE

On the lines below, write about some situations that make you impatient.
Briefly write about how you can use the situations to acquire patience.

Situations

My Plan for Patience

Advent Prayer



An Advent Prayer

Pray the Sign of the Cross together.

Leader: “But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day.”

All: Lord, help us to see that our minds are too limited to understand how limitless you are.

Reader 1: “The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard ‘delay,’ but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

All: Thank you for your patience with me, oh Lord. I am slow to change.

Reader 2: “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be found out.”

All: Lord, help us trust that you will come in love and judge us all with justice.

2 Peter 3:8–10

Leader: Now go forth to live in holiness, devotion, and patience, as we wait in joyful hope for the Lord’s coming again.

All: We shall live according to his promise. Amen.

