

Set out the Advent Wreath and the Nativity characters in the brown bag. Also the tall angel, to use for the General Intercessions. Purple cloth.

(1. Dismissal from the Assembly)

2. Light 2 purple candles on the Advent wreath.

3. The Advent Wreath Song #17 on the CD "Sing With Joy"

Sitting with my brothers,  
Sitting with my sisters,  
Sitting by the Advent wreath....

Waiting with my brothers,  
Waiting with my sisters,  
Waiting by the Advent wreath....

Why are you waiting, boys?  
Why are you waiting, girls?  
Who are you waiting for?

(All stand) Stand up and sing!  
He is the King!  
He is the Lord of Lords!  
That's who we're waiting for.  
That's who we're waiting for.

4. Proclamation of the Gospel (Green children's lectionary, page 5 Mark 1:1-8)

This is the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Isaiah, the prophet, wrote: "I am sending my messenger to prepare the way for you. He will proclaim, 'Prepare the way for the coming of God! Make a straight path for our God!' And so, John the Baptizer came, telling everyone to change their lives and be baptized so their sins would be forgiven. Many people around Jerusalem went to the desert to see John. They confessed their sins, and were baptized in the Jordan River. John wore clothes made from the hair of camels, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. When he preached, he always said, 'Someone else is coming after me. He is more powerful than I am. I am not even worthy to undo his sandals. I am baptizing you in water, but he will baptize you in the Holy Spirit.'"

5. Reflection time: Explain to the children that the gospel story is telling us about John the Baptizer, or John the Baptist, who was Jesus' cousin. John preached about God and he baptized people in the river. Some questions for discussion...

- a) What else do you remember about John the Baptizer, that you heard in the gospel I just read: (Refer back to the gospel if the children can't remember. John wore clothes made from the hair of camels/ he wore a leather belt around his waist./he ate locusts/ he ate wild honey./when he preached, he always said, 'Someone else is coming after me.')
- b) Who do you think John was talking about when he said "Someone else is coming after me. He is more powerful than I am?" (John was talking about Jesus.)
- c) John said "I am baptizing you in water, but Jesus will baptize you in \_\_\_\_ (what?) (The Holy Spirit)
- d) What do you think is more special about Jesus than John the Baptist? (Jesus is God)
- e) Is the Holy Spirit God also? (Yes)
- f) There are three persons in God: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Let's all say that: (all repeat)
- g) When you were baptized, Father poured water on you and said, "I baptized you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Let's all say that and make the sign of the cross. (All repeat while making the sign of the cross)
- h) John the Baptist was a messenger from God. He came to help people prepare for Jesus to come. During Advent, we are preparing for Jesus to come. How did John the Baptist say we should prepare? (Change our lives/make a straight path for God/be sorry when we sin/be nice to people/pray/etc.

## 6. Celebration of the gospel message

Let the children take turns being John the Baptist and pretend they are baptizing someone in the River Jordan. (Pour imaginary water over another child's head and say, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.")

## 7. Creed (Note: Larger font version of this creed on separate sheet in the notebook.)

(Leader asks question. Children respond "Yes, I do.")

- 1) Do you believe in God the Father; who created everything? Yes, I do.
- 2) Do you believe in Jesus His Son, who came from the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary? Yes, I do.
- 3) Do you believe that Jesus died on the cross to save us? Yes, I do.
- 4) Do you believe God raised Jesus from the dead on Easter? Yes, I do.
- 5) Do you believe that Jesus will come again, and we will all be raised from the dead, and God's kingdom will have no end? Yes, I do.

**8. General Intercessions:** Pass the angel around the group, mentioning that angels are also messengers, like John the Baptist. Each child may offer a petition and then pass it on, or just pass it on if they don't have a petition.

**9. Closing prayer** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Come, Lord, Jesus. Help us to prepare for Christmas by listening to the messengers that you send! Hail Mary, full of grace, ...(pray the Hail Mary very slowly and the children will join in on the words they know.) In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Leader:** The Lord be with you.

**All:** And with your spirit! (Do this a few times until they seem to know response.)

10. Return to the Assembly **with a handout to take home**