***LSW***

children

Year C

### Second Sunday in Advent

**Images**

Emerging from the dessert with a message of hope

**Points to note**

This is the season of Advent, which is technically a penitential season. In times past, as it still is among Eastern Christians (including Eastern Catholics), Advent is treated as a 40-day long Nativity Fast. In the Western Catholic church, this penitential nature present in the other preparatory season in the liturgical calendar, Lent, but is now replaced for Advent, by the crass commercialisation of shopping for Christmas revelry and binge of gift-anticipation.

While it is likely asking too much for this session to expect the children to associate Advent with penitence as readily as they would for Lent, perhaps we can make a start for them (and for us) to start to think about it. What does it mean to say we are preparing for the coming of Jesus and who is this Jesus we are inviting to our homes and into our hearts?

**Liturgy**

Acclamation before the Gospel

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prepare a way for the Lord,

make his paths straight,

and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia!

## Gospel

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And also with you.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Luke

*All:*  Glory to you O Lord

(Lk 3:1-6)

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar’s reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrach of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,

make his paths straight.

Every valley will be filled in,

every mountain and hill be laid low,

winding ways will be straightened

and rough roads made smooth.

And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**Discussion**

###### Who is this person in this reading? *John the Baptist.* Where did he lived? *In the desert. Discuss what the desert is and whether it is a place anyone would like to live. Discuss how John the Baptist lived in the desert – he was dressed in clothes made from camel hair and ate locusts & raw honey (Mt 3:4).*

###### What other stories in the Bible is there about a desert? *There are two stories: the people of Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years and Jesus withdrawing into the desert after his baptism for 40 days to be tempted by the devil*

###### *Explain that the people of Israel wandered about the desert for 40 years because they were not faithful to God. So, John the Baptist came out of the desert to offer the people God’s forgiveness for their sins. Isn’t that great that John’s baptism can help people clear out the sins for which their ancestors wandered about in the desert for 40 years. So, John the Baptist’s message was one of hope because people thirst for forgiveness*

###### *Explain also the Jesus went into the desert to pray, the same desert that John the Baptist emerged. Jesus went in there to pray. In very much the same way many people go into a kind of desert when they are troubled. It is not a real desert but a kind of retreat where they withdraw from the world for a short time to think about what troubles them. It could be just a simple locking themselves away for an hour in their room or some people may go away somewhere for a few days.*

###### *Link it up with what we discuss last week about Advent being a time of waiting and preparation.*

###### *Explain that Advent is a time for us for us to wait for Jesus. Waiting for Jesus means to wait in hope – without hope why would you wait? So, Advent is a time we repent and wait for our forgiveness, which Jesus will give us when he comes. In the meantime, we may need to think a little bit about what troubles us so that we can lift up our being sorry to Jesus.*