

Second Sunday of Advent, Year B, Intermediate

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Sun, 11/16/2014 - 19:00

Intermediate Session

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Mark 1:1-8

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, you are our light and our salvation.

Help us to be ready to welcome you when you come.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The topic for today is the Confession of Sin. To begin, invite the children to imagine that they work for a local news station as "Good News Announcers." Their job is to report good news to others. Divide into small groups of 4 or 5. Invite each group to write a good news announcement. Provide paper and pencils. Discuss:

- How do you learn about the latest news?
- What is it like to hear good news?
- What is it like to announce good news?

Allow time for discussion. John the Baptist announced the good news that Jesus was coming soon. During the season of Advent we prepare for the coming of Jesus.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading listen to the prophet Isaiah announce that the Lord is coming soon.

Read Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- How does Isaiah announce that the Lord is coming?
- How is God described in the reading?
- What is hopeful about Isaiah's message?

In the gospel, John the Baptist announces the coming of Jesus. Listen to find out how the people get ready.

Read Mark 1:1-8.

Allow for silence.

- Where did John the Baptist come from?
- What does John announce to the people?
- How do the people get ready for the coming of Jesus?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the **Catechist Background** section.

In the first reading, Isaiah brings a message of hope to the people. He tells them that they need to get prepared because something great is about to happen. This passage was written at the time of the Exile, when Israel's trust in the Lord was being tested. Isaiah proclaims that the God of Israel will come with might and gentleness to save the people. He announces that the glory of the Lord is revealed and all people are able to see how God saves Israel from her sins.

In today's gospel, John the Baptist announces that something great is about to happen. This passage begins with the words from the Book of Isaiah to show that Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise to send a savior. John the Baptist is sent to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus. John preaches repentance and the forgiveness of sins as the way to get ready for the coming of Jesus. To be prepared for the coming of the Lord, one must experience a change of heart, conversion and true repentance.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- How does listening to the message of John the Baptist help us?
- How can you ask for God's forgiveness?
- What changes do you need to make?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the **Gospel in Life**.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Confession of Sins

Advent is filled with hope for a world that is healed of all division. We await God's promise of life without hatred, violence, pain or loss. We look forward to the coming of Jesus Christ. Making room for Jesus includes making changes. Advent calls for personal change and a healing of the hatred and violence that exist in our own hearts. We are not perfect and we need God and God's grace to change our lives. Confessing sin brings us closer to God. Just as John the Baptist points to Jesus Christ, the confession of our sins points to the healing mercy of a forgiving God. The Catholic Church teaches that an essential part of the sacrament of Reconciliation is the confession of sin by the penitent to the priest. In this way, a penitent is opened to the healing of God's grace (CCC 1456).

During the Advent season we get ready for Jesus Christ, whose birth we prepare to celebrate and whose coming again in glory we anticipate.

- What can you do to be ready to welcome Jesus into your life?
- Why is it important to confess our sins?
- What does the Church teach about the sacrament of Reconciliation?

Sacrament Connection



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The Sacrament of Reconciliation celebrates God's forgiveness and mercy. This sacrament includes the confession of our sins to the priest. In this way, we are opened to the healing of God's grace (CCC 1456).

The Gospel in Life

What is one thing that you can do this week to make room in your heart for Jesus?

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