



a Kendall Hunt Company

Third Sunday of Advent, Year A, Intermediate - RCLB Lectionary



Intermediate Session

Isaiah 35:1-6,10

Matthew 11:2-11

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world.

Help us to be a light for others.

In the name of Christ our Lord we pray.

Amen.



Opening Life Reflection

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On this Third Sunday of Advent our focus is the gift of prophecy. To begin invite the children to send a message about the birth of Jesus by creating a Christmas card to send. Provide card stock paper, thin markers, pencils and crayons. Discuss:

- What message about Jesus would you like to spread throughout the world?
- How does celebrating Christmas spread the Good News about Jesus?
- Where do you hear about Jesus?

Allow time for discussion. John the Baptist was a very special prophet. This Sunday we remember the words of the prophets that came true in the birth of Jesus.

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Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading today listen to the prophet Isaiah bring God's message to the people.

Read Isaiah 35:1-6,10.
Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What is God's message for the people?
- How is God's message delivered?
- Does God's message bring the people hope?

In today's Gospel listen to find out what John the Baptist learns about Jesus.

Read Matthew 11:2-11.

Allow for silence.



- Where is John the Baptist?
- What does John learn about Jesus?
- What does Jesus tell the people about John the Baptist?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings.

The Old Testament reading today gives a joyful account of Israel's redemption. The prophet's message is "fear not" because God will come and save. Today's passage was written to let the people who were sent into exile know that they would be brought back into their own land. The people will be helped on their journey by the saving power of God. Today's Old Testament reading ends with a message of gladness and hope--the Lord will come and bring the people everlasting joy.

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Today's Gospel focuses on the arrival of the Messiah who brings healing and life and who brings good news to the poor. Jesus' response to John the Baptist's question about whether or not he is the Messiah is one that tells what kind of Messiah Jesus is. This Messiah's reign is one of mercy.

This gospel passage goes on to describe John the Baptist. John is identified as a prophet, a messenger sent by God with the highest mission, to prepare for the coming of Jesus. Like all prophets John the Baptist is a model of faithfulness. The Gospel reminds us to be faithful and spread the good news about Jesus throughout the world today—a world in need of healing and mercy.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- How do these readings help us to celebrate Advent?
- Why is John the Baptist a great prophet?
- How does listening to the prophets help us to be faithful?

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

RCL Benziger
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Doctrinal Discussion Starters

The Charism of Prophecy

We see in the Old Testament Scriptures that a prophet is one called by God to speak in God's name. The prophet Isaiah tells the people about God's future kingdom, which will be accomplished through the coming of a messiah. The prophets in the Old Testament challenge the people by speaking God's truth. They also bring God's message of hope. Prophets let the people know of God's promise of mercy and faithfulness in times of fear and confusion. The prophet's message was frequently unwelcome, and often they were persecuted for following God's call.

Catholics consider John the Baptist to be the last great prophet in the Old Testament line. He called for the people to turn away from sin and he pointed the way to Jesus, the Messiah.

After the time of the Old Testament and John the Baptist, people continue to be called by God



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to speak God's truth. In the New Testament scriptures Paul names prophecy as a charism, or gift of the Holy Spirit. By our baptism, all Christians share in Christ's identity as priest, prophet, and king. We are called to listen for and speak God's message in the world.

- What is a prophet?
- Why are prophets often persecuted?
- Who are some modern day prophets?

The Gospel in Life

How can you spread God's message of peace and love as you get ready to celebrate Christmas?

Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 24

Grade 4, page 243 parish and page 353 school and chapter 23

Grade 5, page 243 parish and page 353 school and chapter 9

Grade 6, page 243 parish and page 353 school and chapter 3

