



a Kendall Hunt Company

Baptism of the Lord, Year B, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

Mark 1:7-11

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Spirit of Life, deepen our faith and fill us with love.

Help us to make your love visible throughout the world.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The focus for today is the Holy Spirit. To begin invite the young people to create Spirit signs to help inspire teens to be their best selves. Divide into small groups and provide each group with a large sheet of white paper and markers. Have each group create a "Spirit Sign" with a message to inspire teens. Invite one person from each group share their sign with the large group. Discuss:

- Where do you find inspiration?
- What helps encourage you to be your best self?
- Where do you find strength and support?

Allow time for discussion. The Holy Spirit helps us to grow in God's Love. At Baptism, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading listen to how God's Spirit will help bring justice on earth.

Read Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- How is the Spirit of God sent to bring justice on earth?
- How is God's servant described?
- What will God's servant do?

In the gospel reading listen to how the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus.

Read Mark 1:7-11.

Allow for silence.



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- What does John the Baptist proclaim about Jesus?
- What happens when Jesus is baptized?
- How does the Spirit descend upon Jesus?

Scripture Background

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

Today's celebration of the Baptism of the Lord brings the Christmas season to an end. Jesus' baptism marks the beginning of his public ministry.

The first reading from Isaiah tells of a chosen one who will save God's people. God's Spirit-filled servant will bring justice upon the earth. God's servant will remain faithful. Today's passage is one of the "Servant Songs." The Christian tradition has found reference here to Jesus' ministry and to his suffering and death.

At the baptism of Jesus in today's gospel we find reference to the servant that God has promised. The Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus and God announces him to be "my chosen one." Jesus is sent, by God, to bring healing and justice upon the earth. At his baptism in the Jordan, Jesus is revealed as God's beloved son.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- What can cause people who work for justice to become weary or discouraged?
- How does the Holy Spirit help to bring justice upon the earth?
- How does our baptism help us to faithfully follow Jesus?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

The Holy Spirit

Today we hear that the Spirit was powerfully visible at the baptism of Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to us at our baptism as well.

We believe that by the power of the Holy Spirit Jesus Christ, the eternal Word of God came down from heaven and was born into the world. The Holy Spirit was sent to the Virgin Mary to bless her womb and fill it with life. Jesus Christ is truly God and truly human.

On the day of Pentecost the Spirit was poured out upon the apostles and the Church was born. Through the Spirit, God's love is made visible in the world through the Church. The Church continues the work that Jesus gave to the apostles. The Holy Spirit helps us to live our faith today.



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- What do we believe about the Holy Spirit?
- What do we celebrate on Pentecost?
- How does the Holy Spirit help you?

Sacrament Connection

The Holy Spirit comes to us at Baptism. We are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In Baptism we are welcomed into the Church.

The Gospel in Life

How can the Holy Spirit help you to make God's love visible in the world this week?

