

Getting Ready for Jesus

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 21, Kindergarten

Lesson 21 Goal

- Your child will explore the concept of preparing for the coming of Jesus Christ.

Key Points

- Saint John the Baptist taught people and told them to get ready for Jesus.
- We should make ourselves ready to hear Jesus—in Mass, at home, and in the world.



Parent Reflection

We have many distractions in our daily lives, from material concerns to media noise, to the hectic schedules we often keep in our families. It's important to take time to slow down, quiet down, and make our lives ready to hear the voice of our Savior. Here are some steps we can take to accomplish this:

- Spend a few moments each day in quiet reflection, prayerfully asking God to prepare you for what he would have you hear.
- Before attending Mass, read and reflect on the readings that will be proclaimed (you can find the readings online at usccb.org/bible). Ask yourself what God wants you to hear that day. It may be something in the music, a line from Scripture, something from the homily, or a thought that comes to you as you pray after Communion.
- Celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. This sacrament is a source of grace to overcome all sin and anything that might stand between us and God.
- Ask God to help make you aware of anything that needs to be done to help you prepare to fully receive Jesus. Are there relationships that need to be repaired?

Making ourselves ready for Jesus takes some time and effort, but it's worth it. He will surely speak to us if we are ready to listen.

Reflection Question

What more can I do to help make myself ready for Jesus?

Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- adult scissors (adult use only)
- yellow yarn or yellow paper
- felt
- glue
- toilet paper roll
- wooden clothespin
- soft instrumental music or appropriate Advent music
- music player
- candle or Advent wreath

- Activity Master #2 – Saint Page (Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Make sure your child has a copy of Activity Master #2 (included with this lesson).
- Precut the toilet paper roll in half, lengthwise.
- Cut one 4" x 2" felt square to make a blanket
- Cut several yellow pieces of yarn to resemble hay.

Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

Say the following or similar words: “Now that we are in this prayerful space, let us find the quiet in our hearts so we can talk with God.”

Sit together for several seconds of shared silence.

Say, “For four thousand years, many people waited for Jesus to be born. Mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, great-grandparents, and great-great-great-great-grandparents hoped and waited for the one that God would send. It is said that they waited in darkness. This doesn’t mean it was always dark where they lived. It means a world without Jesus in it seemed sad and lonely. We will pretend to feel this darkness.” (Darken the room.)

“We were born after Jesus came, but still each

year, we wait for Christmas, when we celebrate that God the Father did send Jesus. This waiting time is called Advent. For our Advent prayer today, we will wait in silence. We will listen to music, look at our candle, and pray quietly to ourselves.”

Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Begin playing soft instrumental music or Advent music. Model this stillness prayer until you sense your child getting anxious. Stop or lower the music and conclude with the following: “*Lord, our hearts wait patiently for you. We wait in joyful hope for your coming. Amen.*”

Discovering

Jesus Is Coming. Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Saint John the Baptist's message.

Ask your child, "How can we prepare for Jesus' arrival?"

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the "Ask Me!" questions and review the answers.

Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child's understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic faith.

1. Advent Calendar. Turn to the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child crayons or colored pencils. Explain the activity to your child and have him or her complete it.

2. Prepare a Place for Jesus. Have your child draw a face on the tip of the clothespin to make a face depicting Baby Jesus, then invite him or her to wrap "Jesus" on the felt "blanket" and glue in place. Say that you will set this aside until Christmas. Give your child one half of a toilet paper roll and have him or her decorate it as a manger for Jesus. Next, give your child several pieces of yarn or yellow paper to create hay. Invite your child to place one piece of yarn in the manger whenever he or she does a good deed throughout Advent. Place the Jesus clothespin in or near your manger on Christmas morning.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint John the Baptist. Show your child the picture of Saint John the Baptist on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint John the Baptist to your child (see below).

Ask your child:

▶ "When John grew up, how did he become a 'prophet and go before the Lord to prepare his way'?" (*He told people to get ready for the coming of Jesus.*)

▶ "How can you get ready for Jesus?" (*by being still and quiet and also by doing what Jesus asks*)

Have your child write and draw about Saint John the Baptist using Activity Master #2.

Sending

Pray the Hail Mary with your child. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud with your child.

Children are excited during Advent. Grownups are excited during Advent. Just like the baby did when he leaped for joy in his mother, and just like Elizabeth did when she greeted Mary and the baby Jesus, we look forward to meeting Jesus at Christmas!

Invite your child to repeat each line of the Hail Mary after you.

*Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.*

Saint John the Baptist

Ready for Jesus

When reading this story, point out that the baby named John that you will read about grew up to be John the Baptist, who worked to get people ready for the coming of Jesus.

Elizabeth and Zechariah were holy people. They had one great sadness: they had no children. They prayed, asking God to bless them with a child.

One day, the Angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah! This scared him! Gabriel said, "Don't be afraid. God is giving you and Elizabeth a baby boy. Name him John. He will be great because he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even when he is a baby!"

Now Zechariah was having a hard time believing all this, and he began questioning Gabriel. Gabriel said, "God sent me to tell you this great news. Since you doubt my words, you will not speak until the baby is born." Poor Zecha-

riah! He had the most exciting news of his life and he couldn't tell anyone!

When Elizabeth was close to having the baby, her cousin visited her. The cousin was Mary, who was expecting Baby Jesus! Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit so she knew that Mary was carrying God's son.

And so did the unborn baby John! He made a big movement inside his mother.

"Blessed are you, Mary, and blessed is your baby!" Elizabeth cried. "And how happy my baby is! He jumped for joy inside of me!"

After Mary went home, Elizabeth soon had baby John. Suddenly, Zechariah was able to speak. This is what he said.

"Blessed be the Lord! You, my child, will be a prophet and you will go before the Lord to prepare his way."

DRAW



**Saint
John the
Baptist,
pray for us!**