

Jesus Is Coming

Allelu!

Growing and Celebrating with Jesus

Lesson 11, ages 3-4

Lesson 11 Goal

- Your child will learn about John the Baptist and how he helped people get ready for Jesus' coming.

Key Points

- John the Baptist helped people get ready to hear Jesus.
- We should also make ourselves ready to listen to Jesus.



Parent Reflection

As parents, we are charged with handing on the Word of God to our children. But we cannot hand on that which we do not have. It's imperative, then, that we make ourselves ready to hear God's Word and allow it to take root in our lives. How can we "prepare the way of the Lord"?

First, we should be sure there is nothing in our lives to prevent or distract us from hearing God's Word clearly. Sometimes bad habits, competing priorities, and sinful behavior can cloud our vision and ability to discern God's voice. Frequent examinations of conscience and celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation helps us clear any obstacles to receiving and living out God's Word.

We also need to make sure we give ourselves ample opportunity to hear what God might be saying to us. Do we spend time with Scripture and in prayer? Do we practice silent reflection so that God may speak to our hearts?

Reflection Question

How can I prepare myself to better hear and receive Jesus? What might God be telling me right now?

Lesson Preparation

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

Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons or colored pencils, including green, purple, pink, and orange or yellow
- paper plate
- safety scissors
- white cardstock or construction paper
- glue or stapler for adult use (to attach candles to wreath)
- Lesson 11 Activity Master – Saint Page

(included with this lesson)

(Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

Preparation Steps

- Cut out four thin rectangles and four candle-flame shapes from white construction paper, to represent the four candles on an Advent wreath.
- Cut out the center of a paper plate (to form a wreath).

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.

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.”

Pray together: *“Thank you, God, for sending Jesus. Help us to get ready and to meet him. Amen.”*

Discovering

John Says, “Jesus Is Coming!” Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about Saint John the Baptist.

Ask, “How can you get ready for Jesus to come?”

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. Who Is Ready to Hear about Jesus? Turn to the drawing in 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 and have your child complete it.

2. Advent Wreath (ongoing for four weeks of Advent). This activity can be used with Lessons 11–14. Have your child color the wreath-shaped paper plate green. In this session, he or she can color the first purple advent candle and attach a colored flame. Then, in each of the next three sessions, have him or her color and add another candle to the wreath. The color sequence is as follows: the first two purple, the third week pink or rose, and the last week purple. Keep this ongoing project until the final Sunday before Christmas. Help your child by stapling or gluing the candles upright on the wreath.

3. The Communion of Saints: Saint Francis Xavier. Show your child the picture of Saint Francis Xavier on the Family Activity page and

read about him. Then read more about Saint Francis Xavier to your child (see below).

Ask your child, "Have you ever heard someone speak in a different language? If so, did it make sense to you?"

Have your child draw about Saint Francis Xavier using the Lesson 11 Activity Master.

Sending

Pray 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:

"Dear Jesus, we are ready and waiting for you. Amen."

Saint Francis Xavier

A Teacher for God

Francis Xavier paused and thought for a moment. There was so much that he wanted to say about God. But he knew that he had to find just the right words.

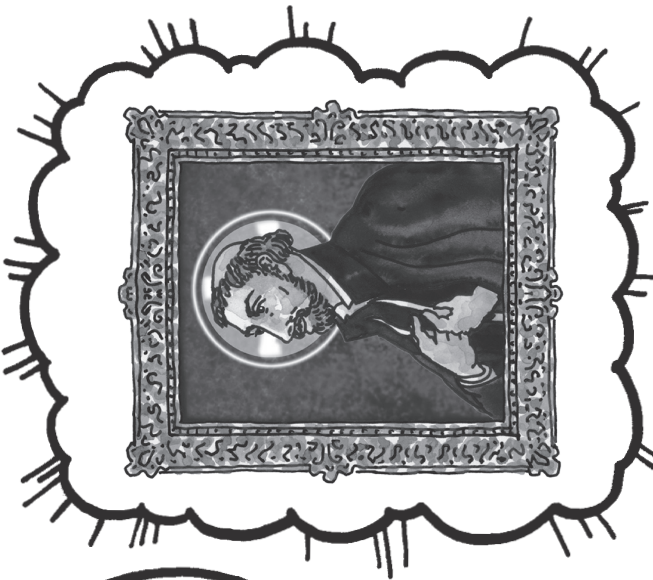
When Francis Xavier was younger, he thought he was going to be a professor. A professor is a teacher for people who are almost grown up. But his friend knew that he was very good at explaining God's ideas to people from other countries. He suggested that Francis Xavier use his talent to go to countries that had not yet learned about God.

So, Francis Xavier became a missionary. He started his work in India, in a city that had

many hungry children. Every day he walked around the streets, ringing a bell. The bell told the children that it was time to learn about God. And they came! So many came!

Francis Xavier went to many other cities too. He traveled to Japan, Italy, and the East Indies. He helped people who were sick and had no friends. He cared about the safety of other people and about treating them fairly. And he worked to make their lives better. Most important, Francis Xavier baptized them. This means that he taught them to love God with all their hearts. He helped them to know that they were Christian.

DRAW



**Saint
Francis Xavier,
pray for us!**