


ADVENT 2: MARK 1: 1–8



John the Baptist, cousin of Jesus, dressed in camel's hair and lived off the land, driven by the message he has heard from the prophet Isaiah, "Prepare the way of the Lord." "Stop," John is saying. "Look at yourself and your life. Make a fresh start. Begin again. Come, be baptized. Someone is coming to lead the way. My job is to point to that someone."

PREPARE THE WAY

Reflection Questions:

Young Children

John the Baptist was baptizing people, getting them ready for Jesus to come. Has anyone seen a baptism?

- **What happens at a baptism?**
- **Does anyone have a story about their own baptism?**
- **What does the priest do with the water at baptism?**
- **John baptized people in the river as a way of getting them ready for Jesus' coming.**

Reflection Questions:

Older Youth

I wonder what stood out for you in today's reading?

- **What do you understand the role of John the Baptist to be?**
 - **How is he preparing the way?**
 - **To what in today's world would you compare the wilderness of Judea?**
- What is wilderness for you?**
- **How do you understand repentance and forgiveness? Can one be forgiven even before repenting?**
 - **What does baptism mean to you?**

ACTIVITIES

1. Model a baptism: Set out a bowl and the pitcher and pour some water in the bowl. Explain when they were baptized the priest said this:

"(Child's name), you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own forever.

Amen." THEN, invite your children to dip their fingers in the water and make the sign of the cross on their foreheads and repeat the above phrase with you. Be sure to make the sign of the cross on your own head and repeat the phrase, also. If a child has not been baptized, tell the child that someday if they are baptized, they will get to have this done for them.