

Resources for the Sunday Readings
Advent 2
Picture Reflection (p1), Five Question Bible Study (p2)
and All Age Activity (p3)

Picture Reflection – prepared by Brenda



What happens in the wilderness...?

Mark 1:1-8

- Spend a few minutes with the cartoon.... what would you put in a speech bubble above the head of the person?
- John the Baptist 'prepared the way' for Jesus to come into the story of God's good news...who prepared the way for you to meet Jesus in your life? Reflect on that blessing you received from that person or that group of people....
- What does the 'wilderness' mean to us today? Why might we feel that we are in a wilderness this Advent?
- How can the wilderness that we are experiencing help us to grow in faith?
- How can we help others who are sharing this wilderness experience as Advent leads to Christmas?

Five Question Bible Study prepared by Linda

GOSPEL - The Proclamation of John the Baptist Mark 1.1-8

Context:

Mark tells us that this is the 'gospel'. It is the God-talk of 'good news' about Jesus Christ. This story of misunderstanding, rejection and death will have a happy ending. Jesus the Messiah is the Son of God – but not in the way that most people expect. He will not be a military leader. He will not crush the Romans and set up a Jewish state. Jesus the Messiah will seem utterly defeated before he wins. John is dressed like Elijah – the prophet who lived 800 years before. He preaches in the desert. He baptises all who want to turn to God, and he is looking forward to the arrival of God's Messiah

1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God,

2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight",

4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **5** And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. **6** Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. **7** He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. **8** I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

1. *The word gospel is derived from the Anglo-Saxon term god-spell, meaning "good story," a rendering of the Latin 'evangelium' and the Greek 'euangelion', meaning "good news" or "good telling." Why do you think Mark starts the story in this way?*
2. *'I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way' From Elijah to Isaiah and all the other prophets who were messengers, what is different about John the Baptist?*
3. *Why do you think people were attracted to come out into the wilderness to be baptised by John at this time?*
4. *What role and position does John say he is playing in the story?*
5. *To baptise literally means to drench. How would you describe being drenched with the Holy Spirit?*

All Age Activity



Message in a Bottle

Write messages to think about how important a good message is

You will need: clean, empty plastic bottles; paper, pens, stickers and decorations.

Take your bottle and some paper. Think about how a good message makes you feel. It could come in a letter, email or text message. When did you last receive a message like this?

Now think of someone you would like to encourage and write them a 'good news' message. This could be an encouraging note or a positive statement about the person.

Then place your message in a bottle, and decorate the bottle using stickers and other decorations.

During the week, or as soon as you can, give your bottle to the person you want to encourage.