



**THEME: PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE LORD**

**GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12**

John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said:

*A voice of one crying out in the desert, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.*

John wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist.

His food was locusts and wild honey.

At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him

and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees

coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.'

For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones. Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand.

He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

**ENTERING AND WELCOMING**

\*Make the children to stand in a circle and hold their hands together.

\*Bring to their mind that Jesus is standing in middle of the circle. Wish Him. Prompt them to close eyes for talking to Jesus in prayer.

\*Say a prayer in children's own words or do 'Our father' and 'Hail Mary' together

\* **The Sorry Prayer: (Optional)**

Ask the Children to reflect on the past week and reflect on whether they would like to say sorry for anything they have done or said to someone, that must have hurt Lord Jesus.

*(After each prayer, respond: Lord have mercy.)*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**WELCOMING THE GOSPEL: ALLELUIA**

**A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW**

**ST. MATTHEW 3:1-12**

*Response: Glory to you, O Lord*

**READ THE GOSPEL (given in the side)**

*The gospel of the Lord*

*Response: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.*

### **ACTIVITY: Blind Fold**

Blind Fold children after showing them the point that they must reach, give them an option that whether they need help, one of the teachers will help them by giving directions/holding hands. Let the game start. Kids will find it difficult to reach the destination alone. Hence give help. Ask them, which was easy, relying on self or seeking help? Finally, message is given that, allow Lord Jesus to come into our hearts and let Him lead our way. With Him we can overcome this world. Prepare way for Him.

### **Or Baptismal Promise Renewal**

V. Do you reject Satan?

R. I do.

V. And all his works?

R. I do.

V. And all his empty promises?

R. I do.

V. Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

R. I do.

V. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

R. I do.

V. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

R. I do.

V. God, the all-powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and forgiven all our sins. May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

## **GOSPEL REFLECTIONS**

Last week, Jesus was alerting us that the time is very near for the coming of Jesus, hence we must stay awake and be prepared to accompany Him.

In today's gospel, we see a special person John the Baptist. Do you remember what his outfits was?

**Prompt the Children to speak about the outfits.**

Yes, he lived in desert and his outfits was peculiar.

What did he preach? why do you think he appeared?

Yes, he was preaching 'prepare the way for the lord'

when do you think John the Baptist appeared?

Yes, he came before Jesus and he came to prepare the way for Jesus.

what was he doing? many people of Jerusalem and Judea and region of Jordan followed him. he told them to REPENT for the kingdom of God is at hand/very near to you. Do you know what it mean to 'REPENT'?

REPENT means a change of direction from our own self living to God. It means turning away from wrong, saying sorry to all wrong we have done and turning to God.

When we do this, we are opening our heart to lord, so that His kingdom can come in us. that is why John the Baptist was asking all who came to him to repent to receive the king (Jesus) to open and prepare Heart of people to receive Jesus.

what was he doing? All those who came to John was baptized by him in the river Jordan as they said sorry for the old ways of selfish living without thanking Lord or thinking of Lord and the fellow beings.

There were few people who were proud of themselves and their status of forefathers. Yes, they were the Pharisees and Sadducee's. What did John say to them? not to be proud that they had great ancestors. But to repent and live a new life producing the fruits of repentance. if they are not changing their old life after repentance and receiving Johns Baptism, they will be cut off by the powerful one who is coming after John.

John says that the one who is coming after him is most powerful one. he is going to baptize the ones, who repented truly, cleansed and prepared their heart , by Holy Spirit and fire. He is

also going to separate the one bearing good fruits of repentance from the ones not.

so what is the fruits of repentance? a changed way of living in Jesus by his Spirit. a life which is full of peace, joy, patience, self-control, goodness, humbleness, sharing, sacrificing, concerned about good of others rather than being selfish and thanking god for everything and leading a life according to Gods will by His grace.

So, what does this gospel applies to us in this time of advent? Do you remember that you are too Baptised.

**Prompt the Children to speak about their baptism, photos of baptism, or baptism of their sisters or friends**

Was it the baptism of John that you received? we received Baptism after Jesus died for us, rose again and showered Holy spirit in us and is dwelling in us. this is the Baptism we got when we were young. We get washed in the name of Holy Trinity and cross, the sign of salvation is traced on our forehead. We are anointed by holy oils and our god fathers and mothers do Baptismal promises for us. Finally, we receive the light of Christ. So, after baptism, we are just like Jesus. we must live as HE lived according to the Gospel.

But as we grow, we do wrongs. isn't it? so what we will do? yes, once we did wrong. Who will remind us about what we did and our helper? yes, the holy Spirit. He will remind us of everything that God wishes through us. with the help of holy spirit, say sorry to Lord and if possible, to the person whom you did wrong and pray for god's help not to repeat it again. older children may have done Confession. this is where we reflect on our actions by the help of Holy spirit and feel sorry about it and say it to priest.

so through today's gospel, Jesus reminds us to repent, prepare way for His second coming and for us to be seen just as He wishes to see us when he come again by producing true fruits of repentance in our Life.

the one who have received Jesus and believes in Him is a new creation, he/she gets divine help not to sin as he/she acknowledges their wrong actions in true repented heart and shows true desire and pray for grace-the divine help to say no to Sin and yes to Lord. Let us prepare...

## **VERSES TO REMEMBER (WRITTEN ON THE WHITE BOARD):**

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*'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.'*  
*"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"*  
*Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance-*  
*(Matthew 3:2-3,8)*

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## **INTERCESSION PRAYERS:**

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If children have any personal prayer intentions, we pray for them.

And in response we pray: **Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers.**

**In this month of December let us pray for all to prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus.**

## **FINAL PRAYER:**

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**Dear Jesus, thank you for Saving us and giving us your power through Holy Spirit to live as you say. Strengthen us, by this divine Grace to live a life defeating the Sin, producing the true fruits of repentance trusting in You alone. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.**

**Children re-join the Holy Mass.**