

JOHN THE BAPTIST – PREPARE THE WAY

DLY5- (Based on: Isaiah 40:3-5; Luke 3:2-6, 10-16; John 1:6-8, 15, 19-23)

YOU WILL NEED

- Basket, Bible, book stand, candle
- Beige felt underlay
- RE Online for Mountain felt template
- Brown felt strip - road
- Blue felt strip - river
- Labelled prophet cards - Elijah, Joel, Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah, Micah, Ezekiel (see cards below to laminate)
- Small scroll (with Is 40: 3-5 written on it)
- 3D Figures of:
 - Isaiah
 - John the Baptist
 - Crowd
 - Tax collector
 - Soldier
 - Priest
 - Levite

PREPARATION - Invite the children to enter the storytelling space, have them seated in a semicircle, ready to listen to the story. Ensure that all materials are prepared in a basket and that a Bible is in close proximity, elevated off the floor on a book stand.

TELLING THE STORY - Story is a key part of our faith tradition. Young children, with their capacity for intuitive learning, are particularly able to find meaning through story.

Hold the Bible in your hands...

This story comes from our Sacred Scripture, the Bible. We find this story in the Old Testament in the Book of Isaiah. It also comes from the New Testament, in the Gospel of Luke and John. Because this story is from the Bible we will light the candle as we listen to the story.

Place the Bible back on the stand.

Prepare storytelling space. Unroll beige underlay. Place mountains and straight road onto the underlay.

Throughout the long history of the Bible right up to today there have been prophets: people who listen to God and speak for God. In the Bible we can read the words of many of the prophets.

Place the Elijah card near to the mountains.

Prophets have always reminded the People of God to be faithful to their covenant with God. People didn't always like their messages. Sometimes the prophets brought messages of warning,

Place other prophet cards near to the mountains (Joel, Amos).

Sometimes they called the people to repent of their sins and change their ways,

Place more prophet cards (Hosea, Jeremiah)

other times they brought messages of great hope and comfort.

Place more prophet cards near to mountains (Micah, Ezekiel).

Prophets are sent by God. Point to each of the prophets.

Some of the prophets helped prepare the way for God's Son Jesus, who came as the light for the whole world.

Place figure of Isaiah near to the road.

Long ago, a prophet named Isaiah brought this message of hope to the People of God. He said:

Unroll scroll and read

A voice cries out:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,

make straight in the desert a highway for our God

Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' (Isaiah 40:3-5)

Place scroll next to Isaiah.

Isaiah was telling the people to get ready because someone was coming, someone chosen by God.

Place figure of John near road.

Many years later a prophet named John was born.

John was the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth. He was a man sent from God and he came to be a witness to the light so that all would come to believe.

Place river onto the underlay and place figure of John next to it.

John went into the area around the River Jordan, calling people to repent of their sins and to be baptised.

Place crowd figure near to John.

The crowds asked him, 'What should we do? John replied, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.'

Add tax collector figure to scene.

Tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' John said to them, 'Collect no more than is owed to you.'

Add soldier figure to scene.

Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do? He said to them, 'Do not threaten people for money, and be satisfied with your wages.'

The people began to wonder whether John might be the promised Messiah.

John said to them, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'

Place figures of a priest and Levite.

Some priests and Levites from Jerusalem came to ask him, 'Who are you?' 'Are you Elijah or one of the prophets?'

Point to prophet cards.

John answered, 'No, I am not.' They asked, 'Are you the Messiah'? 'No', he replied.

Place figures of priest and Levite a little distance from John.

Then they said to him, 'Who are you?'

Move John near to road.

So John replied, 'I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: make straight the way of the Lord.'

Trace hand along the length of the road.

WONDERING - Following the story, "I wonder" statements engage children with the story and invite reflection. Wondering together teaches the art of dialogue, of listening to others, accepting and learning from others' ideas and contributions.

Sit back, pause for a moment, look up at students, and then wonder about the story together.

I wonder....

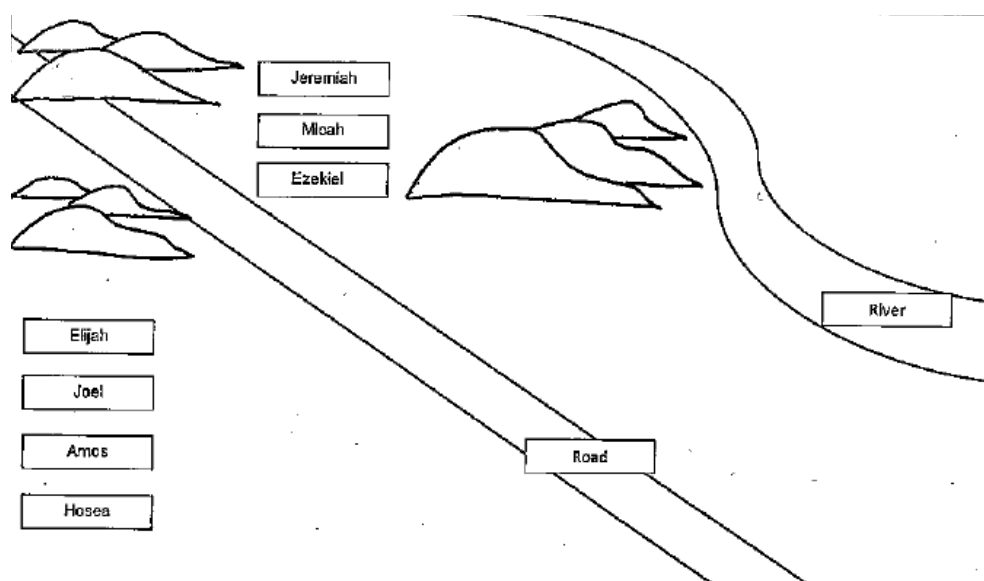
- how John knew he was sent by God.
- what it is like to be spoken to by God.
- what it would be like to be called to bring a message from God to others.
- if there are still prophets today. I wonder what their message is.
- how you would prepare the way for the Lord.

Carefully pack the story materials back into your basket. Ensure that children are watching so they know how to pack the materials away should they choose to engage with the story during exploring.

EXPLORING - Provide an opportunity for individual/small group exploration in order to respond to the story. This provides students with time to focus on and explore the story or aspects of it, which have significance for them. For this reason, students choose from a variety of materials and types of work. This is an opportunity for students to respond to what they have heard in whatever way they choose, it should be seen as a prayerful opportunity for dialogue between the student and God. The 'work' itself is often an expression of the child's experience or feelings. Children may share their 'work' only if they wish.

PRAYER - Conclude the session with prayer. Children come closer to God through the experience of prayer. Teachers help students to pray by praying with them, providing a variety of prayer experiences. These may include laying of hands over students' works, spontaneous prayer, prayer related to the Scripture, prayers found in KWL, informal or formal prayers, or a hymn.

Carefully pack story materials back into your basket. Ensure that children are watching so they know how to pack the materials away and where to find them.



PROPHET CARDS FOR USE IN JOHN THE BAPTIST STORY
(laminare for use)

Ezekiel

Elijah

Joel

Hosea

Jeremiah

Amos

Micah