LIVING FAITH

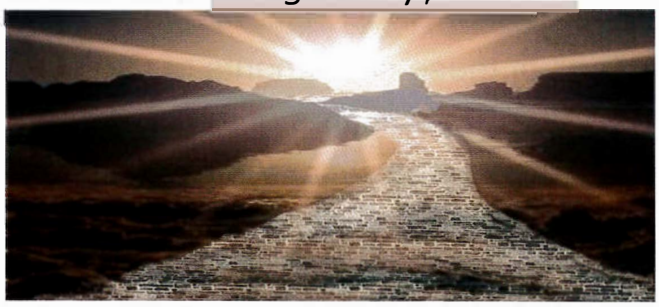
A RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 2ND, 2016

ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S

THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY—The Proclamation of John the Baptist
Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea,
proclaiming, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' This is the
one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,
'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight." '
... 'I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than
I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you
with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will
clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the
chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'



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

REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL

How are you a "John the Baptist" for today? With Advent, we begin a new Liturgical Year. At the beginning of the new year, many people have a custom of making new years' resolutions. It might be a good idea, as we start this new liturgical year, to think a bit about how we announce the good news of Jesus Christ through the way we live. We don't have to stand up on a soapbox and pound on a Bible. Most of us will never preach in a pulpit. But we proclaim the good news in our everyday actions. If we listen with respect and kindness to a person in trouble, the good news is proclaimed. If we sit in sympathy with a person who is grieving, just being there, the good news is proclaimed. If we offer a cup of coffee to someone who asks for one, the good news is proclaimed. Simple acts, but very unusual in some ways. When we make time for others, when we give of ourselves, we send a powerful message that people have worth and dignity. This is good news today.

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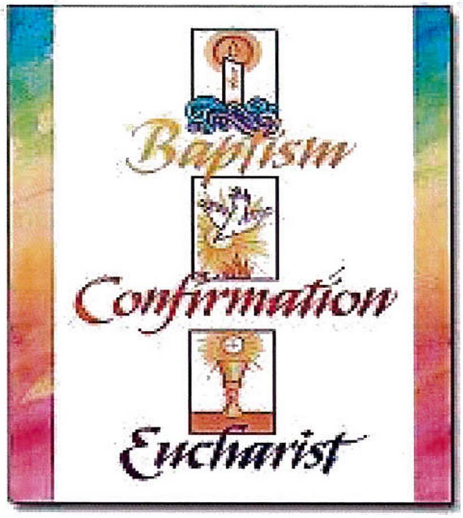
BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION AND EUCHARIST THE SACRAMENTS OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION



The sacraments of Christian initiation - Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist - lay the *foundations* of every Christian life. "The sharing in the divine nature given to all through the grace of Christ bears a certain likeness to the origin, development, and nourishing of natural life. The faithful are born anew by Baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation, and receive in the Eucharist the food of eternal life. By means of these sacraments of Christian initiation, they thus receive in increasing measure the treasures of the divine life and advance toward the perfection of charity." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1212)*

WHEN YOU WERE BAPTIZED, THIS PRAYER WAS PRAYED FOR YOU:

Dearly beloved, this child has been reborn in baptism.
He (she) is now called the child of God, for so indeed he (she) is.
In Confirmation he (she) will receive the fullness of God's Spirit.
In Holy Communion he (she) will share the banquet of Christ's sacrifice,
calling God his (her) Father in the midst of the Church.
In the name of this child, in the Spirit of God's children everywhere,
let us pray together in the words our Lord has given us:
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

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THE CHURCH TEACHES

Connections between Liturgy of the Word and the Church's Liturgical Cycle.

The Church has a three-year liturgical year model: Year A, B and C.

In each year there is a particular focus on one of the Synoptic Gospels: Mark, Matthew and Luke. These Gospels are called "Synoptic" because they are so similar in content, wording and structure that they can be set aside one another to provide a synoptic comparison of their content. The striking similarities between these Gospels have scholars study the literary relationships that exist between them. John's Gospel, written much later, is very different in content and structure.

When listening to the Gospels, it is important to keep in mind that the Gospels are not biographies of Jesus.

The Gospels are not biographies of Jesus in the same sense we would think about today. If not a biography, then what are they? One needs to reflect on the ***word Gospel*** *itself. Our word is derived from the Middle English,* ***Godspell*** *meaning* ***"Good News" or "Glad tidings."*** *The Gospels are testimonies of faith written by people convinced that Jesus was and is the Messiah. The writers of the Gospels are called Evangelist, which literally means "Proclaimers of the Good News."*

*There are three major steps in the development of the Gospels: the life and works of Jesus and the affect it had on his followers, the experiences of the early Church after the death and resurrection of Jesus, the oral traditions and stories told by the early followers of Jesus, and the actual writing of the Gospels by the evangelists who liked drew on the stories and collection of material gathered over the years by the Christian community. **

*A good resource for more on the Gospels: Zanzig, Thomas(1982): **Jesus is Lord, A Basic Christology for Adults.** Winona: St. Mary's Press.

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WALKING TOWARD CHRISTMAS

BUILD YOUR CHRISTMAS CRIB PIECE BY PIECE, AND SO PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS

advent week two

THE MANGER IS WAITING, ALL FILLED WITH FRESH HAY,
TO WELCOME THE CHRIST CHILD, WHO IS ON THE WAY.

In the empty stable that you placed in your home last week, put a manger (if possible, with some fresh hay or grass). A manger is a feeding trough for barn animals. It will become the bed in which the Christ Child is laid at Christmas.

In the manger below, write some ways that you feed others.
How do you want to be fed yourself?