

# Read

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8,  
8-9, 10

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

John 1:29-34

## LIVING THE WORD

### Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 19, 2020



#### REFLECTION

John the Baptist, the great forerunner of Christ, once again highlights his true purpose of revealing the Son of God. John's discipleship was never about himself. Rather, he constantly points to the one who is to come. John understood that his entire purpose or mission was directed toward proclaiming the presence of Christ.

Like John the Baptist, we too have the opportunity and obligation to remember that our purpose in the Kingdom of God is not about us. As Christians, all we do is rooted in and directed to the Son of God. Our words and actions at school, on the courts, in our workplaces, and everywhere in between must point toward Jesus. As with John, this is only possible if we build a deep relationship with the living, loving God. We cannot bring others closer to God if we ourselves do not know God. We cannot share the love of God with others if we ourselves have not first experienced the incredible love of God. We cannot proclaim the Good News of God if we ourselves have not heard it first.

The old saying, "You can spot a fraud a mile away," is especially true with our faith. Like John the Baptist, we must first know and love God before we can share God with others.



#### ACTION

How often do we point our finger at someone else? Often times we can be quick to judge, condemn, or ignore others, and our pointing is not directed at the goodness or God-ness in another. Instead, our pointing is used to criticize, demean, and demoralize. As you strive to follow the example of John the Baptist, be especially mindful of the way you point to others today. Does your pointing affirm others, or is it used for other purposes?

*"If you judge people,  
you have no time to  
love them."*



—St. Teresa of Calcutta

#### ? QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ How do you testify that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?
- ❖ What do you think when you pray, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world," before you receive Eucharist?



# Introduction to **ORDINARY TIME** during Winter



## **The Season**

The brief period of Ordinary Time during winter seems a liturgical breather between the seasons of Christmas and Lent. It is much more than this, however. While short in duration, this season bridges the Incarnation with the ministry, teaching, passion, death, and Resurrection of the Lord. Through key Gospel narratives, we hear the stories of Jesus' first miracles and teaching and we learn that not everyone is open to his message. These are important lessons for us, particularly teens, as we consider the call of discipleship and its consequences in our lives.

For many, the months of January and February are colder outside; the days are shorter, and the pace of life is perhaps a bit slower. It is appropriate, then, to take this winter time as a gift in which to reflect on our own encounter with Jesus, through reflection on the Sunday readings and prayerful consideration of our openness to the message of Christ.

## **Celebrating Ordinary Time during Winter with Teens**

While the pace of winter may be a bit slower for some of us, for teens, classes, activities, athletics, and relationships continue in their normal routines. This produces an opportunity through which to help your teens develop a regular rhythm of Gospel reflection, prayer, and application of faith in their daily lives. Winter is the perfect time to encourage youth to take the Gospel to heart day by day, week by week. The Gospel passages for this season seem perfect to help teens to take on appropriate faith-driven attitudes and action in their lives.

## **Preparing the Liturgical Environment**

Even though we return to green for this brief season, our environment will often be a bit more sparse, reflecting the shortness of daytime sun, and the dormancy of many plants. Consider using a few stems of evergreen or a small evergreen plant in your prayer environment, reminding your teens that Christ's life and love are eternal.



January 19, 2020

## SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### LECTIONARY #64A

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

John 1:29-34

## Prepare for the Word

*The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.*

### Leader's Context

As we shift gears and enter into Ordinary Time, we have a major figure from Advent and Christmas Time who is front and center in today's Gospel reading. John the Baptist encounters Jesus and testifies to his significance and recounts his own experience of witnessing Jesus' own baptism.

**Q FOCUS:** *To testify to Christ.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

We are now back in the season of Ordinary Time, which counts and keeps holy the space in between the great seasons of our liturgical year. Help the teens to find today on the liturgical calendar. See if they know what liturgical color is used on Sundays during Ordinary Time (the color is green).

### Church Teaching Connection

"The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged . . . to be actively engaged in evangelization. . . . Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus" (*Evangelii gaudium*, 120).

## Hear the Word

*Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.*

### Gospel Acclamation

*Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.*

Alleluia, alleluia.

### Gospel

John 1:29-34

**Reader:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

**All:** Glory to you, O Lord.

*All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.*

John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, 'A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.' I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel." John testified further, saying, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will

baptize with the Holy Spirit.' Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

**Reader:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*Everyone may be seated.*

## Reflect on the Word

*When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:*

► **When you hear the name John the Baptist mentioned, what comes to mind?**

John was an important figure during the early days of Jesus' public ministry. We have been hearing a lot from John the Baptist during the past number of weeks. We witnessed John "prepare the way" for Jesus' coming during the season of Advent. Just this past week, we heard from Matthew's account of Jesus' baptism, presided over by John, in the Jordan River. And now, today, we hear a testimony from John the Baptist, as recorded in the Gospel according to John.

► **What is John testifying to in this account?**

► **What is important about what John is saying in today's reading?**

John is recalling his own experience of first preparing the way for Jesus to come after him and then his actual experience of baptizing Jesus in the river. Let us first look at the beginning part of today's Gospel reading, the part where John reflects upon his own encounter of and preparation for Jesus. John sees Jesus coming toward him, and immediately he calls Jesus "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29), and John recognizes that Jesus is the one whom saves the world from its own sin.

► **In what ways has Jesus taken away sin in your life?**

► **How would John have known that Jesus would have the power to take away the sin of the world?**

It is directly connected with the prophecy that John was living into by proclaiming Jesus as the one who ranks ahead of him.

► **What does John mean by saying that Jesus existed before him?**

Earlier in John's account of the Gospel, we read that "In the beginning was the Word, / and the Word was with God, / and the Word was God / . . . And the Word became flesh, / and made his dwelling among us." (John 1:1 and 14). Jesus is the Word made flesh, the Word who was with God as God in the very beginning. John is correctly identifying Jesus for who he truly is; John recognizes that Jesus is the reason that he was baptizing with water and preaching about the one who was following him.

John continues his testimony about Jesus by recounting the actual event of Jesus' baptism.

► **What is the main detail that John focuses on in telling about Jesus' baptism?**

John talks about the Holy Spirit coming down upon Jesus in the form of a dove.

► **What are some other images or metaphors that you can think of that represent the Holy Spirit?**

► **Why do you think that the Spirit's descent upon Jesus in the form of a dove is important in this particular passage?**

John declaration of his experience of Jesus' baptism continues as John shares that a major part of his mission was to not only baptize the one greater than he, but also to testify to the reality that that person was indeed the Son of God.

► **What do you think John means when he says that "he [Jesus] is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit?" (John 1:33).**

John was the trailblazer who paved the way for the coming of the Christ and helped inaugurate Jesus' earthly public ministry and the unfolding of God's Kingdom.

## Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 120.

In what ways can you offer testimony to Jesus Christ in your life?

Who are people who are role models for you for sharing the Good News?

Who are people in your life who need to hear about Jesus?

## Act on the Word

### A Renewal of Baptismal Promises

The questions below are from "The Renewal of Baptismal Promises" at the Easter Vigil, as found in The Roman Missal. You may want to have these questions prepared on a board or newsprint (or printed on copy paper) ahead of time, as it may assist the youth in their reflection.

This activity is an opportunity for us all to reflect upon our baptismal promises. Enter into discussion using the following initial questions as a conversation starter:

- ✧ When you think of the Sacrament of Baptism, what images come to mind?
- ✧ Have you ever given much thought to the promises that either you made or your parents and godparents made for you right before you were baptized?
- ✧ When was the last time that you renewed these promises?

Every year at Easter, the Church gathers and we have the opportunity to renew our baptismal promises.

- ✧ Have you given much thought as to what these promises truly mean?

Allow for some time to explore these initial questions. Then, turn the conversation to an exploration of the questions posed at the Easter Vigil (and often on Easter Sunday).

- ✧ Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?

- ✧ Do you renounce the lure of evil, so that sin may have no mastery over you?

- ✧ Do you renounce Satan, the author and prince of sin?

And now, the actual promises of Baptism:

- ✧ Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

- ✧ Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

- ✧ 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?

Guide the discussion with the young people so that they have the opportunity to explore each of the questions in depth. Invite them to think about how their response to each of these questions reflect how they are to live in the world. Delve into any hesitations that they may have with any of the questions. Finish the discussion with an invitation to all of them to be more conscientious of how they integrate their baptismal promises into their everyday lives.

### Closing Prayer

*Lord Jesus Christ,  
you are the Lamb of God,  
you are the source of forgiveness,  
you are the source of freedom,  
you are the source of life.  
May we turn to you at all times  
and trust in your mercy and love.  
You live and reign for ever and ever.  
Amen.*

### For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at [www.ltp.org/lwgr](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.