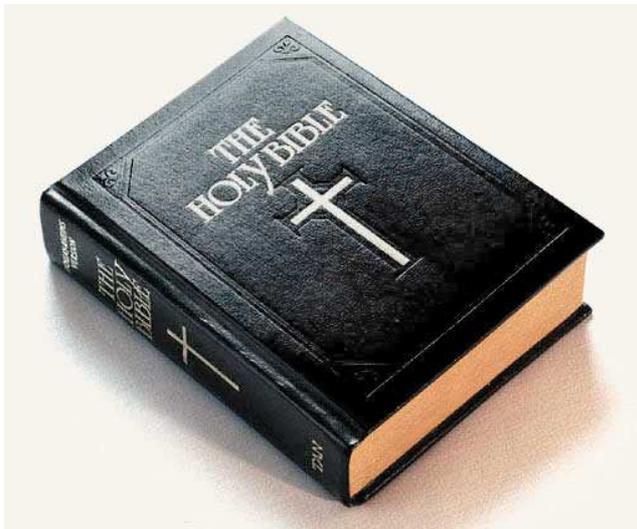


CHILDREN'S PACK

SPECIAL PARAGRAPH

Then, when it was almost time for the saviour to come, God sent the last prophet. He was St John the Baptist. St John was the cousin of Jesus. He lived and prayed in the desert. He told people to be sorry for their sins. St John baptised people if they were sorry for their sins. This baptism was not the Sacrament of Baptism, but it helped people to prepare for the Saviour. St John told the people that the Saviour would come very soon.

THE STORY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST FROM THE BIBLE



The spirit of God came upon John in the wilderness; "repent," he said, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He travelled all over the country around Jordan, announcing a baptism whereby men repented to have their sins forgiven. It was written many hundreds of years ago in the writings of the Prophet Isaiah, "There is a voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, and straighten out his paths. Every valley is to be bridged,

and every mountain and hill levelled, the winding roads are to be made straight and the rough pass made into smooth paths, and all mankind is to see the saving power of God.'"

John wore clothes made of camel's hair with a leather belt about his waist, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. Many people went into the wilderness to see John, and he baptised them in the River Jordan, while they confessed their sins. Many of the leaders of the people came to be baptised; and when John saw them he asked, "Who was it that taught you brood of vipers to flee from the

vengeance that draws near? Come, repent; do not presume to say in your heart, "we have Abraham for our Father"; I tell you, God has power to raise up children to Abraham out of the very stones. Already the axe has been taken to the root of the tree, so that every tree which does not show good fruit will be chopped down and cast into the fire."

And the people asked him, "what then, are we are supposed to do?"

John answered them, "The man who has two coats must share with the man who has none; and the man who has food to eat must also share."

And some tax collectors also came to be baptised; "Master," they said to him, "What are we to do?"

John said, "do not take more money than you are entitled to."

Even the soldiers on guard asked him, "and what of us? What are we to do?"

He said to them, "Do not treat men roughly, do not tell lies about them; be satisfied with your pay."

And now the people were excited; all had the same question in their hearts, was John the Christ. But John gave them their answer by saying publicly, "As for me I am baptising you with water for your repentance; the one who is yet to come is mightier than I. I am not worthy to bend down and untie of straps of sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. He is ready with his winnowing-fan to separate the wheat from the chaff; he will gather up the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will consume with fire that will never be quenched." This and many other warnings John gave to the people.

At this time, Jesus came from Nazareth and appearing before John at the River Jordan, asked to be baptised by him. John wanted to stop Jesus; "It is me," he said, "who should be baptised by you. Why do you come to me instead?"

But Jesus answered and said, "Let things remain as they are for now; it is good that we should keep this good tradition."

So John gave in to Jesus and Jesus was baptised. And when Christ came out of the water and stood there praying, suddenly heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in bodily form, appearing like a dove, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."

Name _____

St John the Baptist

St John the Baptist was the last prophet. He said, "Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand." He baptised people with the baptism of repentance in the River Jordan. He baptised Jesus.



CATECHISM QUESTIONS

Q. 21

What are the commandments of God?

The Commandments of God are the moral laws that God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church 2056)

ADVENT ANGELS

Many families have a tradition of exchanging names at the beginning of Advent and secretly doing something kind for the person they choose, either weekly or daily. Sometimes this person is called by the secular name of a secret Santa or a Kris Kringle. This exercise helps to instil the attitude of giving, instead of focusing only on receiving. It also emphasises that Advent is a season dedicated to preparing for the coming of the saviour, as Lent is a season dedicated to preparing for the Saviour's Resurrection. It is important to actively observe Advent, and acting as an Advent angel is a good way to do this.