

JOHN PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS

Our Lord Jesus Christ had a cousin named John. When John grew up, he learned that his job was to prepare people to listen to the Savior of the world.

John stayed near the Jordan River. People who were sorry for their sins came to John. They asked him to baptize them in the river. They did this so they could be closer to God.

John lived in the desert and wore rough clothing. He did not want anything fancy. He only wanted to serve God.

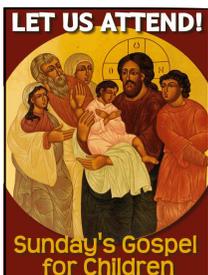
Some people saw how holy John was, and they thought he was the Savior. John told them that One would come after him who was much more holy.



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What was the name of Jesus' cousin?
2. What was his job?
3. John lived near a river. What was the name of the river?
4. What did people ask John to do?
5. Who did John serve?
6. We serve God when we come to church and receive Holy Communion.



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Pre-12



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This is the beginning of the good news about Our Lord Jesus Christ, God’s Son. Long ago, some very godly men told about the time when Jesus would come to earth. These men were called prophets because they were very close to God, and He told them about things that were going to happen, and later on those things really did happen! Here is what one of them wrote down: “God says, ‘I will send someone to get people ready. He will live in the wilderness. He will tell people to get ready to meet and follow God.’ ”

What the prophet said, came true! John the Baptizer lived out in the wilderness. He preached to everyone who came to hear him. He told them about being baptized if they repented and asked God for forgiveness of their sins.

A lot of people went to hear John – from all over Judea and from Jerusalem. After they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

John lived on what God provided for him, in the wild place where he was. He always dressed in camel hair. He wore a big leather girdle around his waist. His food was big bugs called locusts, and wild honey. But John’s different clothes and menu did not keep people away from him! People came to him and learned about God from him. They knew he was special and holy.

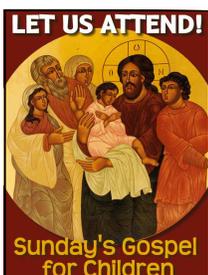
John told the people, “Someone much greater than I is coming. He is so amazing that I don’t even deserve to untie his sandals. I have been baptizing you with water. But He is so great that He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit!”



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. St. Mark starts his Gospel by talking about godly men who could tell about things that were going to happen. What is the special name for people who do that?
2. The prophets in this story said that someone would come to help people. What does it say that they would help the people to get ready to do? Is that good?
3. Do you think that St. John the Forerunner got people ready to meet and follow God? How did he do that?
4. What about you? You get to meet God a lot. You meet God every Sunday, when you take communion. You meet Him when you talk to others He has created. You meet Him when you hear His words in the Bible and in Church. Do you follow Him, too? Pray, and ask God to help you to be ready when you meet Him, and to help you follow Him as the people in this story did.



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"I AM NOT WORTHY"

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophets, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the

people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey.

And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water: but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

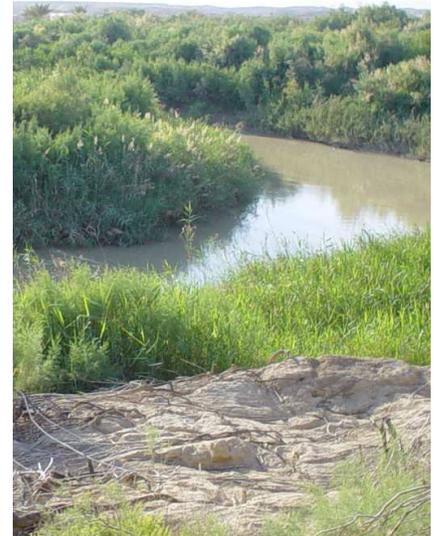
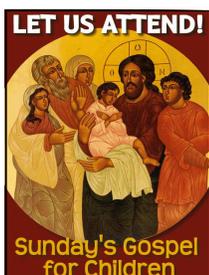


Image of the Jordan River courtesy of freeimages.com

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. St. Mark begins his gospel with "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ," and immediately talks about the writings of the prophets. Do you think it is important that he begins with prophecy? Why or why not?
2. Does the prophecy come true? How do you know?
3. If you were going to send someone before Jesus, to prepare people to meet Him, would you have picked someone like St. John the Forerunner? Why or why not? Why do you think God chose him to fulfill the prophecy?
4. God chooses unlikely characters to do His work. Can you think of any other unusual people that God used, from Bible times, or more recent saints, to fulfill his prophecies and His will?
5. Pray, and ask God to help you to be willing to do what He wants, so that you can fulfill what He has created you to do!



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"I AM NOT WORTHY"

Characters: Narrator, Prophet Micah, Prophet
Isaiah, John the Forerunner

Narrator: The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets,

Micah: Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way;

Isaiah: the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Narrator: John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

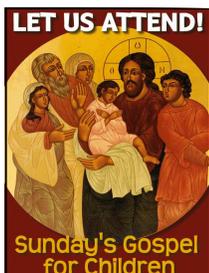
Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey.

And he preached, saying,

John: After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water: but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.



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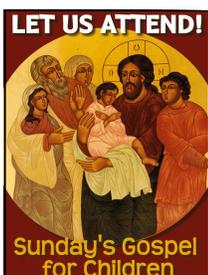
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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Take a few minutes to write this story as a news report. What kind of picture might appear with your story?
2. How does your report present John?
3. How would your classmates react to John if he was your teacher?
4. How is this part of John's life preparing the way for Christ?
5. What does this suggest about how Christians should treat people who appear strange?
6. What do you think about that?



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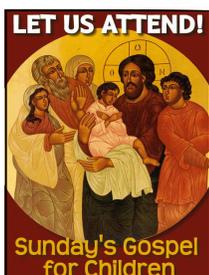
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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Take a few minutes to write this story as a news report. What kind of picture might appear with your story?
2. How does your report present John?
3. How would you or your friends react to this kind of story if you saw it on television?
4. What does this say about preparing the way for Christ?
5. What does this suggest about being a Christian?
6. What do you think about that?



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