SUNDAY GOSPEL STORIES · FOR SCHOOLS

Lead it yourselves

A class prayer planned and led by children · Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday) · John 1:6-8, 19-28

GETTING READY

- Share out three jobs: **Leader**, **Reader** and **Prayer leader**.
- Set the prayer table: a purple or pink cloth, the Bible open at John 1, and three candles of your Advent wreath, including the pink one (battery candles are fine).
- The Reader practises the Gospel out loud once before you begin.

1 GATHER

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: Today is the Third Sunday of Advent. It is called Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means 'rejoice', because Christmas is close. Let's be still and get ready to listen.

Light three candles, including the pink one. Breathe slowly three times together.

2 LISTEN

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

Read John 1:6-8, 19-28 from the class Bible. Younger classes can watch the two-minute cartoon instead.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Keep a short silence. Sit still and let the story settle.

3 RESPOND

Leader: John told the visitors he was not the Christ. Who did he want them to look for?

Two or three people share an idea. There are no wrong answers.

Prayer leader: Jesus, you are the light John pointed to. We bring you our prayers.

- For people having a hard time this Advent, that someone brings them joy. Lord, hear us.
  All: Lord, graciously hear us.
- For anyone who feels lost in the dark, that they find your light. Lord, hear us.
  All: Lord, graciously hear us.
- For our class, that our words and actions point others to you. Lord, hear us.
  All: Lord, graciously hear us.

Add a prayer of your own, written by your class.

All: Jesus, you are our light. Help us show people your love in the way we speak and act. Amen.

4 GO

Leader: This week, let's be like John: say one encouraging thing to someone who needs it.

Leader: Let us go in peace, rejoicing in the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Put out the candles.

AFTERWARDS: HOW DID IT GO?

- Did everyone who had a job feel ready?
- Was the silence really still?
- What one thing will we change next time?

For teachers: in Reception and Key Stage 1, an adult helps the children lead. In Key Stage 2, the children plan and lead it, and the adult joins in.