

# First Sunday after Epiphany



The Children's Illustrated Bible page 202

John the baptizer announced in the wilderness that everyone should be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. People from the whole countryside around Jerusalem went to him and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

John wore camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

He said, "One who is more powerful than me is coming; I am not even worthy to untie his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." One day Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the Jordan River. As he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens open and the Spirit coming down like a dove on him. A voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

—Mark 1:4–11 adapted

## Follow the Leader?

Read the story of John baptizing Jesus from Mark 1:4–11 and *The Children's Illustrated Bible*, page 202. Discuss: John was busy announcing Jesus' coming and baptizing people. He never knew that Jesus would be baptized by him! He was very humble and surprised.

### Who's the Leader?

Play a humble leader game. Send one kid out of the room while the others sit in a circle. Choose a leader whose actions the other kids will follow. When the leader crosses her legs, sneezes, or blinks her eyes, everyone else follows her as soon as possible. Invite the kid back into the room, and have them guess who the leader is by trying to determine who initiates the action. When the kid identifies the leader, send another kid out and play again. To make it more fun, have two leaders at a time (this also helps everyone get a turn sooner), and send two kids out at the same time.

After many have played, discuss: What was it like to be the leader? Was it confusing to guess who the leader was? This is how John felt when Jesus wanted to be baptized by him! John knew that Jesus was the Savior, but Jesus wanted to be baptized by him!

Go to another class to feed the hungry (have a snack to share with another class).

Go to the baptismal font and tell a friend the story of Jesus being baptized.

Go to the church sign and put a sticky-note on it telling why you like this church.

## Jesus Said

Send kids on a treasure hunt adventure around the church, doing what Jesus would do. Make up index cards directing them from one clue to another. Give them the first clue card in the class. The last card will direct them back to the class. Personalize these clues, activities, and locations to your congregation.

## All Wet Finger Paints

Invite kids to create drawings of their own baptism. If not yet baptized, have them draw what they think their baptism will be like, or create a painting of Jesus' or another person's baptism. These may be displayed on the sanctuary walls. Call attention to them during the Call to Worship. Mix colorful, powdered-drink mix into yogurt cups to make edible finger paints. After painting, if kids lick their fingers, it's OK.





John the baptizer came in the wilderness telling everyone to be baptized so their sins would be forgiven. He wore camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He said, "Someone is coming who is greater than I am. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." Then Jesus came from Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan River.

—Mark 1:3–11 adapted

## My Baptism

Were you baptized? Fill out this certificate of baptism. If you are not baptized yet, fill it in for the future.

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date I was baptized: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

Who baptized me? \_\_\_\_\_



Add a photo or drawing of yourself being baptized.