

Getting Ready for Chapter 18

Take Home



Baptism and Repentance

John the Baptist prepared people for the Messiah, Jesus Christ. John preached repentance and the need to wash away one's sins in the waters of Baptism. His story reminds us of the importance of sacraments and of our need to prepare spiritually for Christ. What helps your family live as people who are ready for God's kingdom?

ACTIVITY

The Spirit of Advent Preparation for Christ is appropriate any time of the year. Create an Advent wreath for next Christmas by inserting three purple taper candles, one pink taper candle, and some artificial greenery into a circular plastic foam base.

WEEKLY PLANNER

On Sunday

As you pray the Lamb of God, think of instances in which you need Christ's mercy.

On the Web

www.blestarewe.com



Visit our Web site for the saint of the day and the reflection question of the week.

Saint of the Week



Saint Josephine Bakhita (1869–1947)

As a child, Josephine Bakhita was kidnapped from her village in Darfur, Sudan, and sold into slavery. She was rescued about ten years later and taken to Italy. In 1890, Bakhita was baptized—taking the name “Josephine”—confirmed, and received the Eucharist. In 1896, she took religious vows. She went on to live an exemplary life of virtue.

Feast Day: February 8



A Prayer for the Week

God, thank you for the gift of Baptism and for all the sacraments, as they bring your life and love into our hearts. Amen.



Scripture Background

In the Time of Jesus

John the Baptist Like the prophets of the Old Testament, John the Baptist warned the Jewish people of their need to repent. Yet John stood apart from the prophets of old in that he proclaimed that God's Kingdom was at hand and announced the coming of the Messiah. Similarly, John's baptisms were based on the Hebrew tradition of ritual washings, but they were performed in expectation of the coming Messiah. When Jesus asked John to baptize him, John was reluctant at first, knowing that Jesus was the Son of God. Read how John the Baptist prepared people for the coming of Jesus in Matthew 3:1–11.

OUR CATHOLIC TRADITION in Religious Orders

The Benedictines John the Baptist was called to proclaim to people the news of the coming Messiah. From the Church's early history, there have been Christians with a special vocation to serve and build up the Church. As the Church grew, communities of people sharing this special calling began to develop. One of the earliest of these is the religious order founded by Saint Benedict. In 529, Benedict founded a monastery at Monte Cassino in southern Italy. In the Middle Ages, hundreds of Benedictine monasteries sprang up throughout Europe and played an important role in passing on the Christian faith. Today, Benedictine monasteries can be found in many parts of the world.