WELCOMING CHILDREN in WORSHIP

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Fulfillment of Prophesy November

Adaptive Activities for Children

National Catholic Partnership on Disability

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Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ministry that serves the liturgical formation of children for their participation in the Eucharist, the “source and summit of the Christian life.” This resource is provided by the Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD). It aims to offer an adaptive catechetical opportunity for all who have a heart for disability ministry to reflect on the liturgical year. We welcome you to this virtual community and hope you find this resource beneficial.

Here you will find reflections to guide children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or diverse learners, through the liturgical season of Lent with adaptive catechesis to help prepare them to participate fully as we journey through Lent.

Each offering includes prayer, Scripture, activities and more that incorporate the senses and take into consideration the needs of all learners. We invite you to gather children around the table of the home or the table of the classroom as a preparation for their participation at the sacred table of the Eucharist.

Each session with children follows these moments with supporting materials:

1. Prayer

2. Sacred Scripture

3. Reflection

4. Faith in Action

5. Activities

6. Saint

7. Resources/Bibliography

Prayer

Many figures in the Bible, and several recognized saints, have had the gift of prophecy. Some of the most notable are St. John the Baptist, St. Paul, St. Padre Pio, and St. John Bosco. Prophets receive a special grace from God and messages directly from God. They share the messages so that more persons hear the revelation or insight from God. Sometimes the message is a prediction, describing what will happen in the future, and sometimes it is a message that brings persons closer to God and away from sin. We can all be this type of prophet, telling friends and family about Christ.



Padre Pio National Shrine
Judgefloro, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons

We need God's help to be ready to hear him and do what he asks us to. We pray this prayer to open our hearts to hear God’s message to us and to give us the strength to do his will.

Pray this prayer with the leader reading and the group listening and talking to God in their heart, or the leader can pray one line at a time with the group repeating each line or have members of the group each read a line.

Related song: "Make us your prophets, Lord." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3X6Ox0fP_mk

Sign of the Cross.

Lord, God.

Truth and goodness come from you.

We are thankful for your Word and praise you.

You have spoken to your people across generations and showed your divine plan through Jesus Christ.

You have promised to be with us always and show us the way.

We give our hearts to you.

Send your Holy Spirit to open our minds and hearts to recognize and receive your prophetic promises.

Help us be patient with your timing and have the faith to follow you when the path is unclear.

We pray that all the blessings, promises, and purposes are realized according to your will.

Help our thoughts, our speech, and our actions be guided by your Spirit, so that we can bear witness to your grace.

Take away every barrier that keeps us from receiving the blessings you have for us and give us understanding while we wait.

We ask this through Jesus, Christ.

Amen.

Sign of the Cross.



St. Paul abt. 1598-1600 by El Greco

Reading of Sacred Scripture

Matthew 2:1-6

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



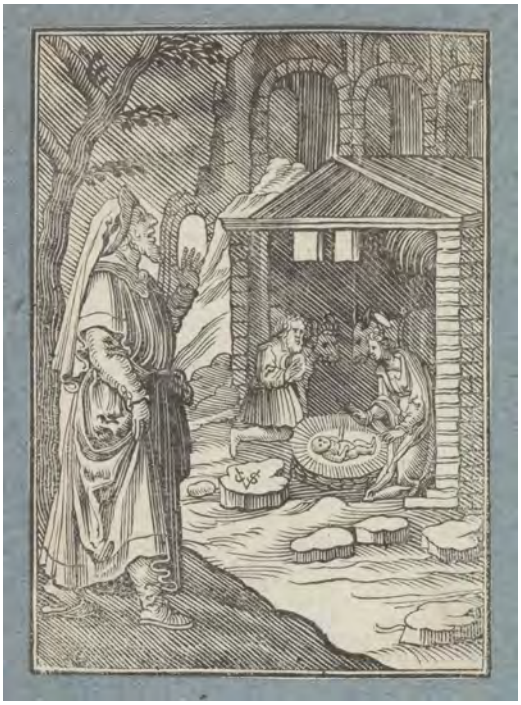
The People's Census at Bethlehem by Pieter Brueghel II

Gospel Reflection

This month, we are learning about prophets. A prophet is a messenger inspired by God. Prophets share God's will, guide God's people, and help prepare the way for God's kingdom. Jesus Christ is the perfect fulfillment of prophecy. This is one reason we know Jesus is God.

In the Old Testament, prophets helped people get ready for the coming of the Messiah. Their words were captured and shared over time. When Herod asked, in the Scripture you just heard, where the Messiah would be born, his advisors who knew about the prophets tell us that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. The Gospel of John gives another example: "Some in the crowd who heard these words said, 'This is truly the Prophet.' Others said, 'This is the Messiah.' But others said, 'The Messiah will not come from Galilee, will he? Does not scripture say that the Messiah will be of David's family and come from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?'" (John 7:41-42).

Why does Bethlehem matter? The prophet Micah wrote that the person who would rule Israel would come from Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) and then Jesus was born there, fulfilling God's promise and the prophecies of the Old Testament.



Prophecy of Micah. Abt. 1645-1646
Christoffel van Sichem

In addition, these prophecies give us a glimpse of God's plan to save us. The name "Bethlehem" means "house of bread." In Jesus' time, Bethlehem was an area that supplied grain and bread to nearby cities, including Jerusalem. Jesus is like bread as he a feeds all of us. Do you remember when Jesus fed 5,000 followers with bread and called himself the "living bread?" He was hinting at the Eucharist. At Mass, the priest prays over the bread and wine and turns them into Christ's Body and Blood. This holy moment is called transubstantiation.

What can these prophecies teach us? They remind us that, as members of Christ's body, we are called to nourish others with his love. We receive Christ through Scripture, the Eucharist, and his Church and then are sent to share his love through our words, our choices, and our actions. The prophets show us how to listen to God, speak the truth, and place our trust in him. They also remind us that God always keeps his promises.



Uriel1022, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

How can you live out your faith this week? Like Jesus and the prophets, you can build trust by keeping your promises. You can pray for people who do not yet believe. You can serve someone who needs help. Most of all, you can share the love of Jesus through what you say and do.

Vocabulary

A **prophet** is a messenger inspired by God. Prophets share God's will, guide God's people, and help prepare the way for God's kingdom. Catholicjournal.us

Transubstantiation - In Christianity, transubstantiation is the Catholic teaching that, during the Mass, the bread and wine truly become the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. Christianityinfo.com

Faith in Action

In the Old Testament, there were three kinds of people who were anointed. Anointed means that they were chosen and set apart for a special mission: priests, kings, and sometimes prophets. Priests offered sacrifices to be a bridge or a mediator between God and man. Kings governed and were supposed to protect the vulnerable. Prophets were chosen to speak God's word and point people back to God. The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that the name "Christ" means "anointed." Jesus is called Christ because at his baptism he was anointed with the Holy Spirit and sent by the Father to be the ultimate priest, prophet, and king to the world (CCC 436, 783). When we are baptized, we are also anointed but with chrism oil. We become part of the Church, the Body of Christ, and share in the three roles of Jesus as priest, prophet, and king.



The Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 license

Let's look more closely at what it means to be a prophet, and how we can practice being prophets today.

- **Prophets Listen**: They listen closely to God. God whispers his love into a prophet's heart.
  - How we can help children listen to God: We have to learn to hear God's voice by spending time in prayer and reading Scripture without distractions. First, show children how noise blocks our ability to hear people's voices. Have children play a musical instrument or tap on a table with a wooden spoon. Whisper a short message to them and then talk about how hard it was to hear your voice over the other sounds. Repeat the whispered message with no background sounds and talk about how much easier it was to hear your voice!

    Set aside a quiet space, such as a prayer corner, and intentionally spend time with your child there each day. Read a Scripture story or prayer aloud and then spend a few moments in silence.

- **Prophets Speak**: Prophets are messengers of good news. They share God's Word with others.

  - **How we can help children speak God's Word to others**: Explain that a prophet is like God's special mail carrier. God has a message of love, and the prophet delivers that message to us. We can practice speaking words of love to each other at home. Decorate a small shoebox as a family mailbox. Have family members slip anonymous notes of encouragement, kindness, or gentle reminders to choose love into the box, acting as "messengers of good news" for one another.



National Postal Museum, Curatorial Photographic Collection
Photographer: Unknown

- **Prophets Act**: They show God's love by helping others. They use their actions to show how God wants us to treat others.

  - **How we can help children show God's love to others**: With your child, brainstorm and make a list of ways they can show God's love to others in their daily life (e.g., sharing a toy, giving someone a compliment, hugging a sibling). Cut out footprints from paper and tape them to the floor. On each footprint, draw or attach a simple picture of one of the actions. Have your child physically step on them while saying, "I can walk like the prophets walked."

Resources:

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Activities with Children

Let's Talk: Talk with your child about how God made many promises throughout the Old Testament and faithfully fulfilled them through Jesus Christ. For hundreds of years, prophets shared God's message and foretold the coming messiah. Jesus fulfilled these prophecies through his birth, life, death, and resurrection.

- **What Is a Prophecy**: A prophecy is a message from God given through a prophet. Many Old Testament prophecies pointed to the coming Savior, Jesus Christ. God wanted his people to recognize Jesus as the Messiah and know that he is the fulfillment of God's promises.

- **How Does Jesus Fulfill God's Promises**: Long before Jesus was born, the prophets foretold many details about his life. They spoke of his birth, his ministry, his suffering, and his victory over death. Jesus fulfilled these prophecies, showing us that God is faithful and always keeps his promises.

- **Why Is This Important**: As Catholics, we believe that Jesus is the promised Messiah. Learning about fulfilled prophecies helps strengthen our faith and reminds us that God's plan of salvation has been unfolding throughout history. Because God kept his promises then, we can trust him to keep his promises to us today with the biggest promise being everlasting life in heaven.



- **Discussion Questions**
  - What is prophecy?
  - Who were some of God's prophets?
  - Why did God send prophets to his people?
  - Who is the Messiah that God promised?
  - What are some ways Jesus fulfilled God's promises?
  - How does knowing God keeps his promises help us trust him?
  - What promises does God make to us today?

Let's Read: This month, read Scripture passages that show the promises of the Messiah and their fulfillment in Jesus.

- Old Testament Prophecies
  - Isaiah 7:14 - The prophecy of a virgin bearing a son.
  - Micah 5:2 - The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem.
  - Isaiah 9:6-7 - The promised Savior and Prince of Peace.
  - Isaiah 53:3-5 - The suffering servant.
  - Zechariah 9:9 - The king entering Jerusalem on a donkey.
- New Testament Fulfillments
  - Matthew 1:18-23 - Jesus' birth.
  - Matthew 2:1-6 - Jesus is born in Bethlehem.
  - Luke 2:8-14 - The Savior is born.
  - Matthew 21:1-11 - Jesus enters Jerusalem.
  - Luke 24:44-48 - Jesus explains how the Scriptures were fulfilled.



Entry into Jerusalem Relief. 15th Century.

Let's Pray: This month, focus on thanking God for his faithfulness and for sending Jesus, the promised Savior.

- Dear heavenly Father, thank you for always keeping your promises. Thank you for sending Jesus, the Savior you promised through the prophets. Help us grow in faith as we learn about your plan for our salvation. May we trust you in all things and remember that your love is constant and true. Help us follow Jesus each day and share his love with others. Amen.

Let's Make It: God's Promise Timeline

- Supplies
  - Construction paper
  - Markers or crayons
  - Glue
  - Scissors
  - Bible pictures or printed images (optional)
- Instructions
  - Draw a long timeline across a sheet of paper.
  - Mark important events:
    - Creation
    - Noah
    - Abraham
    - Moses
    - The Prophets
    - Birth of Jesus
    - Death and Resurrection of Jesus
  - Draw or glue pictures for each event.
  - Draw arrows showing how God was preparing his people for Jesus.



  - Write across the top: "God Keeps His Promises!"
  - Faith Connection: This timeline reminds us that God had a plan from the very beginning and fulfilled his promises through Jesus Christ.

Let's Cook: Promise Rainbow Fruit Kabobs

The colorful fruit represents the many promises God made throughout salvation history, all leading to Jesus.

- Ingredients
  - Strawberries
  - Mandarin oranges

- Pineapple chunks
- Green grapes
- Blueberries
- Wooden skewers

- Directions
  - Wash all fruit.
  - Place fruit on skewers to create a rainbow.
  - As you build your rainbow, talk about God's promis
  - Thank God for sending Jesus, the fulfillment of his



Image from Canva

- Family Discussion
  - What promise did God make about the Messiah?
  - How did Jesus fulfill God's promises?
  - Why can we trust God today?

Sensory Play: Hidden Promises Treasure Hunt

God's promises were revealed little by little throughout the Old Testament and fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

- Materials
  - Small container or sensory bin
  - Rice, shredded paper, kinetic sand, or dried beans
  - Small slips of paper
  - Plastic Easter eggs or small envelopes (optional)
  - Bible
  - Small cross or picture of Jesus
- Preparation
  - Tape the cross or picture of Jesus to the bottom of the bin before filling with rice, shredded paper, kinetic sand, or dried beans.

- Write the following prophecies and clues on slips of paper and then hide them in the sensory bin:
  - A Savior will be born of a virgin. (Isaiah 7:14)
  - The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem. (Micah 5:2)
  - He will bring light to the world. (Isaiah 9:2)
  - He will enter Jerusalem as king. (Zechariah 9:9)
  - He will suffer for our sins. (Isaiah 53:5)

• Steps

- Have your child search through the bin and find the hidden prophecy slips.
- Read each prophecy aloud together.
- Briefly explain how Jesus fulfilled that prophecy.
- After all the clues are found, reveal the cross or picture of Jesus hidden in the center of the bin.
- Explain that all the prophecies pointed to Jesus and helped God's people recognize him as the promised Messiah.



Airman 1st Class Ericka Engblom, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

• Discussion Questions

- Why did God give prophecies before Jesus was born?
- Who fulfilled all of these promises?
- How do these prophecies help us trust God?
- What promise of God brings you hope today?

• Faith Connection: Just as children searched for hidden clues, God's people waited for generations for the promised Messiah. When Jesus came, he fulfilled God's promises and showed the world that God is always faithful.

Family Challenge: Discover One Prophecy Each Week: Each week, choose one prophecy about Jesus and read both the prophecy and its fulfillment. Examples you can use but feel free to use your own or your favorite ones to share with your child:

- Week 1
  - Prophecy: Isaiah 7:14
  - Fulfillment: Matthew 1:18-23
- Week 2
  - Prophecy: Micah 5:2
  - Fulfillment: Matthew 2:1-6
- Week 3
  - Prophecy: Zechariah 9:9
  - Fulfillment: Matthew 21:1-11
- Week 4
  - Prophecy: Isaiah 53:3-5
  - Fulfillment: Luke 23



Image by Tima Miroschnichenko via Pexels

- At dinner or bedtime, discuss: As Catholics, we believe Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of God's promises throughout Scripture. By learning about these prophecies, we deepen our understanding of salvation history and grow in trust that God is always faithful to his people.
  - What did God promise?
  - How was the promise fulfilled?
  - What does this teach us about God's faithfulness?

Saint for November
St. John the Baptist

Feast Day: June 24

John the Baptist was born to Zachariah and Elizabeth. They were too old to have children but an angel visited Zachariah and announced that Elizabeth would have a son named John. Zachariah did not believe the angel and because of this was unable to speak until after John was born and named. When he did speak, he shared prophesies about his son, John. Elizabeth was related to Jesus's mother, Mary. When Mary visited Elizabeth with both women pregnant, John leaped in his mother's womb.



Jl FilpoC, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

John was the forerunner or proclaimer of Jesus, the Messiah. Prior to his public ministry, John spent a period of time in the desert in solitude. While in the desert, John ate locusts and wild honey. For clothes, he wore a garment made of camel hair with a leather belt around his waist.

He started his public ministry in the region of the lower Jordan River valley. John attracted large crowds. He was known for baptizing people that were sorry for their sins in the Jordan River, but baptism was not a requirement to be one of his followers. He told people that he will baptize them with water, but someone will come after him and baptize with fire and the Holy Spirit. He preached the approaching of God's final judgement.

Jesus came to John to be baptized at the beginning of his public ministry. While Jesus was approaching, John called out “Behold the Lamb of God.” John at first refused to baptize Jesus, saying that Jesus should baptize John instead. Jesus told John that for the prophesies to be fulfilled, John must baptize Jesus in the Jordan. After the baptism, John instructed his followers to turn to Christ.

Towards the end of his ministry, John spoke out against Herod’s marriage to his brother’s wife. Herold granted a wish to his daughter after she danced for him and guests. Based on her wish, Herod reluctantly had John killed. The anniversary of his death is celebrated on August 29th.

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