**EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME**

**DEMOLITION**

**EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY’S THEME**

***Introducing the Gospel***

*The last days (Mark 13: 1-8)*

The thirteenth chapter of Mark’s Gospel stands apart from the rest of the book. Known as ‘the apocalyptic discourse’, chapter 13 stands between Jesus’ final days in Jerusalem (chapter 12) and the passion narrative (chapters 14 and 15). In chapter 13 Jesus prepares the disciples and the church for the last days by emphasising two clear points. On the one hand, Jesus affirms the reality of the last days. On the other hand, Jesus projects this time into the future. The temple will be destroyed, but that in itself will not be a sign that the end is near.

Our image to stimulate reflection on this passage is *demolition*.

***Core extract from the Gospel (Mark 13: 1-2; for reflection throughout the week)***

As Jesus came out of the temple,

one of his disciples said to him,

‘Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!’

Then Jesus asked him,

‘Do you see these great buildings?

Not one stone will be left here upon another;

all will be thrown down.’

***Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)***

Lord Jesus Christ,

all things decay,

but you endure for ever.

Teach us to place our trust

in the things that last,

that we may live our lives for you;

for you are our God.

Amen.

**READING NEXT SUNDAY’S GOSPEL**

**Mark 13: 1-8**

**The Destruction of the Temple Foretold**

As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!’ Then Jesus asked him, ‘Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.’

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, ‘Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?’ Then Jesus began to say to them, ‘Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, “I am he!” and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

**ENGAGING WITH THE THEME**

***Dwelling with the text (Mark 13: 1-8)***

Begin exploring the significance of the opening of the apocalyptic discourse in Mark’s Gospel by employing the SIFT approach of Sensing, Intuition, Feeling, and Thinking. You may find that one of these approaches comes easier to you than the others. But it is worth trying all four.

* What details in the passage catch your attention (Sensing)?
* What big ideas in the passage spark in your mind (Intuition)?
* What most touches your heart in the passage (Feeling)?
* What most stretches your mind and makes you think in the passage (Thinking)?

***Thinking and talking***

Identify topics within the passage that can get you thinking and talking. Here are some ideas to get you started.

* What had Jesus been doing in the temple in chapters 11 and 12?
* What was impressive about the temple?
* What is Jesus referring to when he says the stones will be thrown down?
* Does Jesus answer the question, ‘When will this be’?
* What does this narrative say for us today?

***Using your Bible***

Recall what had been happening in the temple in Mark 11 and 12.

* Mark 11: 15-18
* Mark 11: 27 - 12: 9

Explore how Matthew and Luke develop Mark’s apocalyptic discourse.

* Matthew 24: 1-8
* Luke 21: 5-9

Reflect on the origins of the temple in the Old Testament.

* 1 Chronicles 28: 1-7

Reflect on apocalyptic images in the Old Testament.

* Jeremiah 22: 23
* Micah 4: 9-10

***Exploring online***

Widen your exploration of the opening of Mark’s apocalyptic discourse by looking up some of the following themes and others of your own choosing.

* Destruction of Solomon’s temple
* Construction of the second temple in Jerusalem
* Destruction of the second temple

***Drawing on experience***

The image to stimulate reflection on Mark’s teaching about the destruction of the temple is *demolition.* Draw on your own experience of demolition. For example:

* Have you witnessed the demolition of significant buildings?
* Have you experienced the demolition of churches?
* Have you experienced the effects of war or natural disasters?

What have you learned about demolition?

***Creating and making***

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by Mark’s apocalyptic discourse.

* Make a map or model of the second temple in Jerusalem.
* Make a collage of pictures and images of demolition work.
* Create a collage of images from Mark 13: 1-8.
* Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of the destruction of the temple.



**EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME**

Each week we are inviting people in their homes to look forward to those Sunday services that follow the Revised Common Lectionary Gospel readings. We employ the SIFT approach (Sensing, Intuition, Feeling, and Thinking) to encourage reflection on the Sunday Gospel.

We are suggesting a variety of ways in which people of all ages, and households working together, may engage with the Gospel reading and celebrate that engagement with shared activities.

Our invitation then is for you to share your reflections, prayers and photos of your creative work with the Cathedral by emailing them to Nelson.Pike@liverpoolcathedral.org.uk

These materials have been developed by the Canon Theologian of Liverpool Cathedral working in collaboration with the staff team here at the Cathedral, and with sponsorship and support from the St Mary’s Centre in Wales and the St Christopher’s College Trust.



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