

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME

SETTING TRAPS

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Reflecting on the Gospel

Jesus' authority (Matthew 21: 23-32)

Immediately prior to this conversation held in the temple between Jesus and the chief priests and elders, the events of Palm Sunday have taken place. Jesus has ridden into Jerusalem on a donkey, been greeted with shouts of 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' and driven the traders from the temple. Now the Jewish authorities want to trap Jesus into speaking out the claims of Messiahship portrayed by such actions. Jesus refuses to fall into this trap and sets one of his own.

Our image to stimulate reflection on this passage is *setting traps*.

Extracts from the Gospel passage (Matthew 21: 23-25)

When Jesus entered the temple,
the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching,
and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things,
and who gave you this authority?'

Jesus said to them,

'I will also ask you one question;

if you tell me the answer,

then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.

Did the baptism of John come from heaven,

or was it of human origin?'

Gospel prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you made sound judgements
and were blameless before your accusers.
Give us a sound sense of judgement,
that we may witness to you
in confidence and in truth;
for you are our God.
Amen.

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME AT HOME

Reflecting and meditating

Reflect on the conversation that takes place between Jesus and the chief priests and elders in Mathew 21: 23-32:

- what details in the passage catch your attention?
- what big ideas does the passage spark in your mind?
- what most touches your heart in the passage?
- what most stretches your mind and makes you think in the passage?

Thinking and talking

- what is behind the question that they posed to Jesus?
- what could Jesus have said to answer that question?
- what is behind the question that Jesus posed to them?
- what could they have said to answer Jesus' question?
- what can we make of this teaching for today?

Using your Bible

Matthew is now following the structure of Mark's Gospel closely as the Passion Narrative takes shape. But note the new material that Matthew introduces in verses 28-32. Explore further how Matthew builds on Mark:

- Mark 11: 27-33

Note too how Matthew's teaching continues to 21: 45 where the purpose becomes clear.

- Matthew 21: 45

Explore passages in the Old Testament about traps:

- Psalm 141: 8-10
- Psalm 91: 1-3
- Psalm 124: 5-7

Exploring online

- explore images and interpretations of Matthew 21: 28-32
- explore images and art for Psalm 91: 1-3
- explore images and art for Psalm 141: 8-10

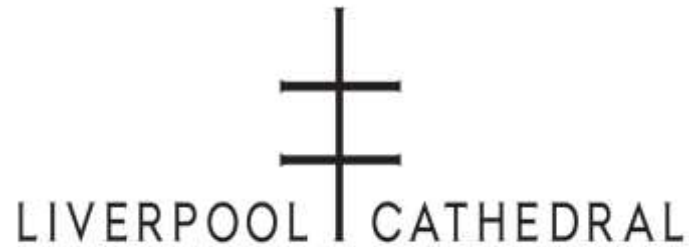
PROPER 21 (YEAR A) SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2020

Drawing on experience

- reflect on your experiences of falling into or avoiding traps
- reflect on your experiences of setting traps
- reflect on the image of Jesus avoiding and setting traps

Creating and making

- create a fun poster illustrating the kind of traps children make or find around the house: Lord keep me safe from the traps
- create a collage illustrating verses from the Psalms that speak of traps and snares
- create a resource on the traps set for Jesus in the Gospel
- create a reflection, poem, or prayer, on Jesus avoiding and setting traps in Matthew 21



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

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