

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME

ADVENT WREATHS

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Reflecting on the Gospel

Be prepared (Mark 13: 24-37)

This gospel reading is part of Mark's apocalyptic discourse, the chapter which separates Jesus' final ministry in Jerusalem from the Passion narrative. After he had left the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked Jesus 'What will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?' Jesus' answer is to advise them to be always on the alert because no one knows the precise time. The season of Advent reminds us today that we, too, need to keep awake and to watch for the Lord's coming.

Our image to stimulate reflection on this passage is *Advent wreaths*.

Extracts from the Gospel passage (Mark 13.35-37)

Jesus said, 'Therefore, keep awake –
for you do not know when the master of the house will come,
in the evening, or at midnight,
or at cockcrow, or at dawn,
or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly.
And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

Gospel prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
we look forward to your birth at Christmas.
Help us to prepare for your coming,
so that we are ready to welcome you;
for you are our God.
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

Mark 13: 24-37

The Coming of the Son of Man

‘But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in clouds” with great power and
glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds,
from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

‘From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts
forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things
taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this
generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and
earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

The Necessity for Watchfulness

‘But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the
Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time
will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his
slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the
watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house
will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he
may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all:
Keep awake.’

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME AT HOME

Reflecting and meditating

Reflect on Mark's teaching about keeping watch for the Lord's coming (Mark 13: 24-37):

- 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

- how do you read the images of the sun, moon, and stars?
- what do you make of the image of the fig tree?
- how do you interpret the narrative of the man going on a journey?
- why does the passage focus on evening, midnight, cockcrow, and dawn?
- what can we make of this teaching for today?

Using your Bible

Explore further how the theme of staying awake and watching is developed in Mark's Gospel:

- Mark 14: 32-42

Explore passages in the Old Testament that resonate with the Advent call for God's awaited intervention:

- Psalm 80: 1-4
- Isaiah 64: 1-3
- Daniel 7: 13-14

Exploring online

- explore the origin of Advent wreaths
- explore ways of making Advent wreaths
- explore commentaries on Mark 13: 35-37 and related images

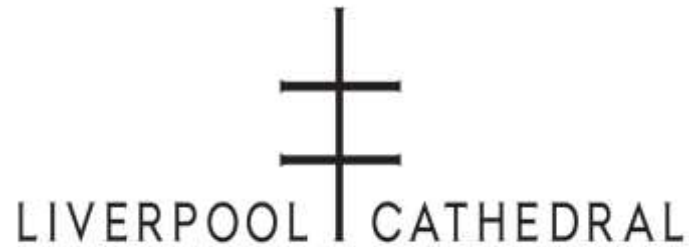
Drawing on experience

- reflect on your experience of joining in Christian vigils
- reflect on your experience of staying awake watching for something to happen
- reflect on your experience of Advent wreaths

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B) SUNDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2020

Creating and making

- make an Advent wreath with candles to celebrate the Advent season at home
- make a decorative wreath to hang on your door or place in your window
- create a poster illustrating the Advent theme of keeping awake and keeping watch
- create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the Advent theme of keeping awake and keeping watch



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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