

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME

FAN CLUB

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Introducing the Gospel

Jesus and the crowds (Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56)

Throughout his Gospel, Mark draws a clear contrast between the reception given to Jesus by the religious and political leaders and the reception given to him by the common people. In the previous episode of chapter 6, John the Baptist's execution at the hands of Herod foreshadowed Jesus' own painful death. Now, by way of complete contrast, we are shown how the common people flocked around Jesus, to the point that Jesus and his disciples had no leisure even to eat.

Our image to stimulate reflection on this passage is *fan club*.

Core extract from the Gospel (Mark 6: 54-56; for reflection throughout the week)

When they got out of the boat,
people at once recognized Jesus,
and rushed about that whole region
and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was.
And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms,
they laid the sick in the market-places,
and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak;
and all who touched it were healed.

Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)

Lord Jesus Christ,
the crowds came to meet you
and recognised your power.
Make yourself known to those who seek you today,
that your power may be recognised throughout the world;
for you are our God.
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56

Jesus and the crowds

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

Healing the Sick in Gennesaret

When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the market-places, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

Dwelling with the text (Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56)

Begin exploring Mark's presentation of the response of the crowds to Jesus 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 happened before this passage?
- Why did Jesus invite the apostles to go away to a deserted place?
- What does this passage say about Jesus' attitude to the crowd?
- What does this passage say about the crowd's expectations of Jesus?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

Explore other references to Jesus having compassion in Mark's Gospel.

- Mark 1: 41
- Mark 8: 20

Explore other passages in Mark where the crowds throng Jesus.

- Mark 1: 32-34
- Mark 1: 45-46
- Mark 2: 13
- Mark 3: 7-8
- Mark 11: 7-10

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Exploring online

Widen your exploration of the response of the crowds to Jesus by looking up some of the following themes and others of your own choosing.

- Jesus and the crowds
- Mark 6: 53-56
- Fan clubs

Drawing on experience

The image to stimulate reflection on Mark's presentation of the response of the crowds to Jesus is *fan club*. Draw on your experience of fan clubs in real life or on television. For example:

- Have you ever joined a fan club, and if so why?
- What is your experience of seeing fan clubs on television?
- Have you experienced churches as fan clubs for Jesus?

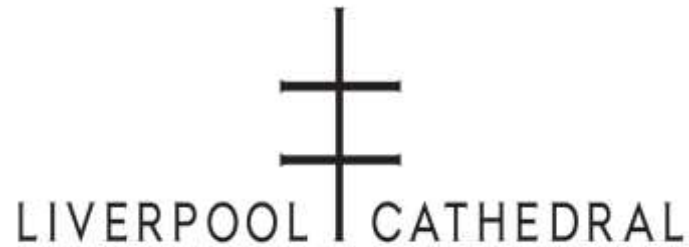
What have you learned about fan clubs?

Creating and making

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by the response of the crowds to Jesus.

- Create a poster about the response of the crowds to Jesus.
- Make a collage displaying different fan clubs.
- Make a display of clothing associated with fan clubs.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of the response of the crowd to Jesus.

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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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