

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

ANGELS

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Introducing the Gospel

Jesus bridges heaven and earth (John 1: 47-51)

The Gospel reading for the Feast of Michael and All Angels draws on the opening of John's Gospel. The Prologue to John's Gospel (John 1: 1-14) establishes Jesus as the creative Word with God in the beginning, as the Word made flesh living among us. In chapter 1 John develops the theme of Jesus linking heaven and earth. Jesus is the vehicle through which God's messengers (angels) operate.

Our image to stimulate reflection on John's teaching is *angels*.

Core extract from the Gospel (John 1: 50-51; for reflection throughout the week)

Jesus answered Nathanael,
'Do you believe because I told you
that I saw you under the fig tree?'
You will see greater things than these...
Very truly, I tell you, you will see
heaven opened and the angels of God
ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)

Lord Jesus,
you are the eternal Word with God,
you are the creator of all things.
Lord Jesus Christ,
you are the Word made flesh,
you live among us.
Lord Jesus Christ,
you link earth and heaven,
now and always.
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

John 1: 47-51

When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!' Nathanael asked him, 'Where did you come to know me?' Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.' Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!' Jesus answered, 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.' And he said to him, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

FEAST OF MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS (YEAR B) Sunday 29 September 2024

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

Dwelling with the text (John 1: 47-51)

Begin exploring John's teaching about Jesus linking earth and heaven 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 do you make of Jesus' encounter with Nathanael?
- What did Jesus make of Nathanael?
- What did Nathanael make of Jesus?
- What are the angels doing in this narrative?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

Place this short reading in its wider context in John's Gospel.

- John 1: 35-51

Explore the roots of this passage in the Old Testament.

- Genesis 28: 10-17

Explore angels as God's messengers in Luke's Gospel.

- Luke 1: 8-13
- Luke 1: 26-35
- Luke 2: 8-14

Explore Michael in the Bible.

- Revelation 12: 7-12

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Exploring online

Widen your exploration of angels in the Bible by looking up some of the following themes and others of your own choosing.

- Michael (archangel)
- Angels in the Bible
- Christian angelology

Drawing on experience

The image to stimulate reflection on the John's teaching about Jesus linking earth and heaven is *angels*. Draw on your own experience of angels. For example:

- When have you encountered angels in artwork or statues?
- When have you encountered angels in literature?
- When have you encountered angels in stained glass?

What have you learned about angels?

Creating and making

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by John's teaching about Jesus linking earth and heaven, or by the image of angels.

- Make origami angels to give out in church.
- Create a collage of images of the Archangel Michael.
- Create a poster exploring Jesus' encounter with Nathanael.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on John's teaching about Jesus linking earth and heaven or on the image of angels.

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2024



**Liverpool
Cathedral**

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

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 smc.lesliefrancis@gmail.com.

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.



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