

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

OPENING EYES

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Introducing the Gospel

Opening eyes (Mark 10: 46-52)

The healing of the blind beggar, Bartimaeus, brings to a close the section of Mark's Gospel opened by Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8: 29). At Caesarea Philippi Peter confessed Jesus as Messiah for the first time. Since then Jesus has been reshaping the disciples' understanding of Messiahship, although they have found this teaching difficult to grasp. But now even the blind man sees Jesus for who he really is and, as a consequence, his blindness is healed.

Our image to stimulate reflection on this passage is *opening eyes*.

Core extract from the Gospel (Mark 10: 46-47, 51-52; for reflection throughout the week)

Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar,
was sitting by the roadside.
When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth,
he began to shout out and say,
'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!'
Then Jesus said to him,
'What do you want me to do for you?'
The blind man said to him,
'My teacher, let me see again.'
Jesus said to him,
'Go; your faith has made you well.'

Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)

Lord Jesus Christ,
you bring sight to the eyes
and insight to the mind.
Open our eyes
to see you for who you are,
open our minds
to know and to do your will;
now and always.
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

Mark 10: 46-52

The Healing of Blind Bartimaeus

They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' Jesus stood still and said, 'Call him here.' And they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart; get up, he is calling you.' So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. Then Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' The blind man said to him, 'My teacher, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has made you well.' Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

Dwelling with the text (Mark 10: 46-52)

Begin to explore how Mark draws to a close his teaching on how Jesus opens the eyes of his disciples to see the true nature of his Messiahship 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 is interesting and important about Jericho?
- What is symbolic about Jesus opening the eyes of the blind?
- What is significant about the blind man addressing Jesus as Son of David?
- What is significant about Bartimaeus following Jesus 'on the way'?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

Compare the ways in which Matthew and Luke develop Mark's narrative.

- Matthew 20: 29-34
- Luke 18: 35-43

Explore how John relates the account of the man born blind.

- John 9: 1-25

Explore images of eyes and sight in the Old Testament.

- Psalm 19: 8
- Psalm 115: 3-5
- Psalm 146: 4-7
- Isaiah 29: 17-20

LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY (YEAR B) Sunday 27 October 2024

Exploring online

Widen your exploration of the Gospel narrative concerning opening the eyes of the blind beggar at Jericho by looking up some of the following themes and others of your own choosing.

- Blind Bartimaeus
- Leaving Jericho behind
- Opening eyes

Drawing on experience

The image to stimulate reflection on Mark's narrative concerning Bartimaeus is *opening eyes*. Draw on your own experience of eyes. For example:

- What do eyes tell you about a person?
- When have your eyes been opened to see things differently?
- What do you feel like when it is too dark to see?

What have you learned about the connection between sight and insight?

Creating and making

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by Mark's narrative concerning the blind beggar Bartimaeus or by the image of opening eyes.

- Create a mural telling the story of Bartimaeus.
- Create a collage with pictures of eyes.
- Create a poster of stunning landscapes.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the narrative of the blind beggar Bartimaeus, or on the image of opening eyes.



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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