

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE LENT (YEAR C) Sunday 2 March 2025

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

WHITE CLOUDS

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Introducing the Gospel

Transfiguration (Luke 9: 28-36)

The season of Epiphany is concerned with the theme of revelation, how the presence and power of God is made known through the person of Jesus. On the first Sunday after Epiphany, in Luke's account of the baptism of Jesus, the voice from heaven spoke to Jesus, 'You are my Son'. On the last Sunday after Epiphany the same voice at the transfiguration proclaims to everyone, 'This is my Son'. This time the divine revelation enfolds Jesus, appropriately in a cloud. This cloud is an image for the divine glory.

The image to stimulate reflection on Luke's account of the transfiguration is *white clouds*.

Core extract from the Gospel (Luke 9.28-29, 34-35; for reflection throughout the week)

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James,
and went up on the mountain to pray.
And while he was praying,
the appearance of his face changed,
and his clothes became dazzling white.
A cloud came and overshadowed them;
and they were terrified as they entered the cloud.
Then from the cloud came a voice that said,
'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!'

Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)

Lord Jesus Christ,
your disciples saw your glory
on the mount of the transfiguration.
Open our hearts to the power of your glory,
and transform our lives by the power of your presence;
for you are our God.
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

Luke 9: 28-36

The Transfiguration

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah’—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, ‘This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!’ When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

Dwelling with the text (Luke 9: 28-36)

Begin to explore Luke's account of the transfiguration of 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 is the significance of Jesus' clothes becoming dazzling white?
- What is the significance of Moses and Elijah being there?
- What is the meaning of Moses and Elijah speaking of Jesus' departure?
- How do you understand the divine voice first addressing Jesus alone (at baptism) and then everyone (at transfiguration)?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

Explore how Luke develops his primary source (Mark).

- Mark 9: 2-8

Compare also.

- Matthew 17: 1-8
- Matthew 28: 2-3

Draw on images for the Old Testament.

- Exodus 24: 15-17
- Psalm 104: 1-7
- Isaiah 6: 1-3
- Daniel 7:19

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Exploring online

Widen your exploration of Luke's account of the transfiguration of Jesus by looking up some of the following themes and others of your own choosing.

- Transfiguration in Luke
- Biblical meaning of Glory (also shekhinah)
- Jesus' exodus in Luke

Drawing on experience

The image to stimulate reflection on Luke's account of the transfiguration of Jesus is *white clouds*. Draw on your own experience of white clouds. For example:

- When has your imagination been caught by white clouds floating through the sky?
- When have you been aware of the presence of God shining through the world?
- What has been your most memorable experience of dazzling white?

What have you learned about the attraction of white clouds?

Creating and making

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by Luke's account of the transfiguration of Jesus, or by the image of white clouds.

- Create a poster of Luke's account of the transfiguration of Jesus.
- Create a collage of images of white clouds.
- Make white cloud shapes to suspend from the ceiling.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of the transfiguration of Jesus or on the image of white clouds.



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.

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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