

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

CELEBRITIES

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Introducing the Gospel

Temptations in the wilderness (Luke 4: 1-13)

All three synoptic Gospels portray Jesus' ministry beginning with a period of forty days in the wilderness tempted by Satan. Both Matthew and Luke describe three of the temptations experienced. Each of these three temptations challenges Jesus to adopt a model of Messiahship which would win power and wide public appeal, and not lead to the inevitable cross on Good Friday. In the second of the temptations described by Luke (the third in Matthew's order) Jesus contemplates the opportunity of commanding worldly fame and power (i.e., the kingdom of the world).

The image to stimulate reflection on Luke's account of the temptations of Jesus is *celebrities*.

Core extract from the Gospel (Luke 4: 5-8; for reflection throughout the week)

Again, the devil took Jesus to a very high mountain
and showed him
all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour;
and he said to him,
'All these I will give you,
if you will fall down and worship me.'
Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan!
for it is written,
"Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him."'

Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)

Lord Jesus Christ,
when you were tempted to follow false gods,
you refused to be led astray.
Keep us loyal to our faith in the true God,
that we may never give to others
the worship due to you;
now and always.
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

Luke 4: 1-13

The Temptation of Jesus

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone." '

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, 'To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him." '

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written,

"He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you",

and

"On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone." '

Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." ' When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

Dwelling with the text (Luke 4: 1-13)

Begin to explore Luke's account of the temptations 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.

- Why does Luke refer to Jesus as 'full of the Holy Spirit' (something that Matthew does not note)?
- What is turning stone into bread all about?
- What is the idea of worshipping Satan all about?
- What is the temptation to jump from the pinnacle all about?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

Compare Luke's account of the temptations with Matthew's account.

- Matthew 4: 1-11

Note the foundation in Mark on which Luke and Matthew built.

- Mark 1: 12-13

Explore Jesus' responses in the Old Testament.

- Deuteronomy 6: 13
- Deuteronomy 6: 16
- Deuteronomy 8: 3
- Psalm 91: 11-12

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR C) Sunday 9 March 2025

Exploring online

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

- Temptations of Jesus
- Holy Spirit in Luke Acts
- Celebrity worship

Drawing on experience

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

- Have you experienced yourself as a celebrity?
- Are there celebrities whom you admire?
- What has been your experience of celebrities?

What have you learned about celebrities?

Creating and making

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by Luke's account of the temptations of Jesus or by the image of celebrities.

- Create a collage of celebrities.
- Make a poster about the temptations of Jesus.
- Dress tailor dummies as celebrities.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of the temptations of Jesus or on the image of celebrities.



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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