

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

EASTER BUNNY

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Introducing the Gospel

The empty tomb (Luke 24: 1-12)

Luke recounts how the women (including Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James) came to the tomb on the first Easter morning. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. Then the two men in dazzling clothes spell out the implications of the empty tomb: 'He is not here, but has risen.' The empty tomb points to the Easter message of new life.

The image to stimulate reflection on the new life of Easter is *Easter bunny*.

Core extract from the Gospel (Luke 24: 1-5; for reflection throughout the week)

On the first day of the week, at early dawn,
the women who had accompanied Jesus came to the tomb,
taking the spices that they had prepared.
They found the stone rolled away from the tomb,
but when they went in they did not find the body.
While they were perplexed about this,
suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them.
the women were terrified
and bowed their faces to the ground
but the men said to them,
'Why do you look for the living among the dead?
He is not here, but has risen.'

Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)

Lord Jesus Christ,
you are risen from the tomb, alleluia, alleluia!
Bring us to share the new life of your Easter resurrection,
that we may live with you for ever;
you are risen from the tomb, alleluia, alleluia!
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

Luke 24: 1-12

The Resurrection of Jesus

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.’ Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

Dwelling with the text (Luke 24: 1-12)

Begin to explore Luke's account of the first Easter Day 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 the women finding the stone rolled away?
- What is significant about Luke's description of the two men?
- What do you make of the reference to Jesus' prediction of his resurrection?
- How do you read Luke's reference to 'an idle tale'?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

Compare Luke's account with his primary source Mark. What is different?

- Mark 16: 1-7

Compare Luke's account with Matthew and John.

- Matthew 28: 1-10
- John 20: 1-18

Recall Jesus' predictions in Luke.

- Luke 9: 22, 44
- Luke 13: 33

Explore images of God messengers in Luke's second book, the Acts of the Apostles.

- Acts 1: 10
- Acts 10: 30

EASTER DAY (YEAR C) Sunday 20 April 2025

Exploring online

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

- Luke's resurrection narrative
- Images of the empty tomb
- Easter bunny

Drawing on experience

The image to stimulate reflection on the new life of Easter is the *Easter bunny*. Draw on your own experience of bunnies at Easter. For example:

- Have you watched bunnies at Easter time?
- Why are bunnies seen as a sign of new life?
- Has the Easter bunny played a part in your community?

What have you learned about the Easter bunny?

Creating and making

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by Luke's account of the first Easter Day or by the image of the Easter Bunny.

- Make an Easter garden with the empty tomb and the Easter bunny.
- Make a collage of pictures and images of bunnies.
- Make a poster of the empty tomb and the message of the two men.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of the new life of Easter, or the image of the Easter Bunny.



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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