

## EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

# ROYAL THRONES

### EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

#### *Introducing the Gospel*

##### *Going to the Father (John 17: 20-26)*

The Seventh Sunday of Easter is the Sunday after Ascension Day and continues with that theme. In chapter 17 John concludes Jesus' farewell discourse with the disciples over the last supper before Jesus goes out to face his arrest. In this chapter Jesus looks forward with confidence to returning to the Father. What John expresses in this farewell discourse, Luke symbolises through the Ascension which links the close of Luke's Gospel with the opening of the Acts of the Apostles. The Ascension, or Jesus' going to the Father, is seen as Jesus' enthronement. The Ascension symbolises the reign of Christ.

The image to stimulate reflection on the Feast of the Ascension is *royal thrones*.

#### *Core extract from the Gospel (John 17: 22, 24); for reflection throughout the week*

Jesus prayed,  
'The glory that you have given me I have given them,  
so that they may be one, as we are one.  
Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me,  
may be with me where I am,  
to see my glory, which you have given me  
because you loved me before the foundation of the world.'

#### *Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)*

Risen and ascended Christ,  
we proclaim you to be our King.  
Rule over our lives,  
that we may display your reign  
in who we are and in all we do;  
for you are the King of glory,  
now and always.  
Amen.

**READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL**

**John 17: 20-26**

‘I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

‘Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.’

## ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

### *Dwelling with the text (John 17: 20-26)*

Begin to explore John's account of Jesus' teaching at the Last Supper about his going to the Father 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' teaching 'You, Father, are in me and I am in you'?
- What do you make of Jesus' prayer 'that they may be one, as we are one'?
- What do you make of Jesus' claim 'you loved me before the foundation of the world'?
- What is involved in making the Father's name known?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

### *Using your Bible*

Recall the context in which John locates this teaching.

- John 13: 1-15
- John 17: 1-4, 11-13

Recall how Luke presents the Ascension of Jesus.

- Luke 24: 46-52
- Acts 1: 6-11

Explore images in the Old Testament that help to interpret the reign of Christ.

- Psalm 24: 7-10
- Isaiah 9: 6-7
- Daniel 7: 13-14

## SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (YEAR C) Sunday 1 June 2025

### *Exploring online*

Widen your exploration of John's account of Jesus' teaching about his going to the Father by looking up some of the following themes and others of your own choosing.

- The Ascension of Jesus
- The Ascension of Jesus in art
- Royal throne

### *Drawing on experience*

The image to stimulate reflection on the Church's teaching about the Ascension of Jesus is *royal thrones*. Draw on your own experience of royal thrones. For example:

- Have you visited places to see royal thrones?
- What image of royal thrones have you drawn from books and films?
- Have you seen stained glass or paintings of the enthronement of Jesus at the Ascension?

What have you learned about royal thrones?

### *Creating and making*

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by the theme of the Ascension of Jesus or by the image of royal thrones.

- Make a collage of pictures of royal thrones.
- Make a collage of pictures of the Ascension of Jesus.
- Make a poster telling the narrative of the Ascension.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of Ascension of Jesus or on the image of royal thrones.



**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.

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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