

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

WEATHER FORECASTS

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Introducing the Gospel

Signs of the times (Luke 12: 49-56)

There is a long tradition in the Old Testament of the prophets reading the mind of God behind the signs of the time. Toward the end of chapter 9 in Luke's Gospel, Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem and the events leading to his crucifixion. On that journey Jesus understands his own ministry and impending suffering as signalling the moment of crisis and judgement for God's chosen people. The signs are there, if only the people would read them. Jesus challenges the crowd by saying that they are better at reading the weather than at reading the mind of God.

The image to stimulate reflection on Luke's account of Jesus' teaching is *weather forecasts*.

Core extract from the Gospel (Luke 12: 54-56; for reflection throughout the week)

Jesus also said to the crowds,
'When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say,
"It is going to rain";
and so it happens.
And when you see the south wind blowing, you say,
"There will be scorching heat";
and it happens.
You hypocrites!
You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky,
but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?'

Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)

Lord Jesus Christ,
you teach your people
to read the signs of the times.
Open our eyes to the signs of your presence,
that we may serve you as you desire;
for you are our God,
now and always.
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

Luke 12: 49-56

Jesus the Cause of Division

‘I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! From now on, five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; they will be divided:

father against son

and son against father,

mother against daughter

and daughter against mother,

mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law

and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.’

Interpreting the Time

He also said to the crowds, ‘When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, “It is going to rain”; and so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, “There will be scorching heat”; and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?’

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

Dwelling with the text (Luke 12: 49-56)

Begin to explore Luke's account of Jesus' teaching as he made his journey toward Jerusalem and toward his crucifixion 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 was in Jesus' mind when he said these words?
- What is Jesus referring to when he speaks of his baptism?
- What is Jesus asking when he asks us to interpret the present time?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

Explore parallel themes in Matthew's Gospel.

- Matthew 10: 21
- Matthew 10: 34-35
- Matthew 16: 2-3

Explore parallel themes in the Old Testament.

- 1 Kings 18: 41-45
- Isaiah 11: 1-7
- Joel 2: 28-31
- Micah 7: 6

Explore weather in the Psalms.

- Psalm 135: 7
- Psalm 147: 8
- Psalm 148: 1

Exploring online

NINETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY (YEAR C) Sunday 17 August 2025

Widen your exploration of Luke's account of Jesus' teaching as he made his journey toward Jerusalem and toward his crucifixion by looking up some of the following themes and others of your own choosing.

- I came to cast fire
- Weather in the Bible
- Your local weather forecast

Drawing on experience

The image to stimulate reflection on Luke's account of Jesus' teaching as he made his journey toward Jerusalem and toward his crucifixion is *weather forecasts*. Draw on your own experience of weather forecasts. For example:

- What do you recall about weather folklore sayings?
- When have you relied on weather forecasting?
- How well can you read the weather?

What have you learned about weather forecasts?

Creating and making

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by Luke's account of Jesus' teaching as he made his journey toward Jerusalem or by the image of weather forecasts.

- Make a poster about Jesus' teaching to read the weather.
- Make a collage of different weather conditions.
- Make a display of the shipping forecast.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of Jesus' teaching as he made his journey toward Jerusalem or on the image of weather forecasts.



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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