

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

BUTTERFLIES

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Introducing the Gospel

The afterlife (Luke 20: 27-38)

After entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, Mark portrays Jesus as involved in a series of three divisive arguments. Luke preserves the first two arguments, one political and the other theological. In the theological argument Jesus became embroiled in an established dispute between Sadducees and Pharisees regarding the afterlife. The Sadducees try to demonstrate that strict adherence to the Law of Moses makes belief in the afterlife absurd. Jesus indicates that their argument misrepresents the afterlife. The afterlife is of a different order from this life.

The image to stimulate reflection on Jesus' teaching about the afterlife is *butterflies* that develop from caterpillars.

Core extract from the Gospel (Luke 20: 37-38; for reflection throughout the week)

Jesus said, 'The fact that the dead are raised
Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush,
where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham,
the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.
Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living;
for to him all of them are alive.'

Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)

Lord Jesus Christ,
to your reign there is no end.
Rejoicing with all your followers
who have gone before us in the way,
we pray that we may be one with them
as we share in your eucharistic feast;
for you are our God, now and for ever.
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

Luke 20: 27-38

The Question about the Resurrection

Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, 'Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; then the second and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. Finally the woman also died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her.'

Jesus said to them, 'Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Indeed they cannot die any more, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive.'

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

Dwelling with the text (Luke 20: 27-38)

Begin to explore Luke's account of Jesus' teaching on the afterlife 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 are the Sadducees asking this question of Jesus?
- What do you make of the way the Sadducees ask their question?
- What do you make of the way Jesus responds to their question?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

Explore how Mark and Matthew relate this narrative.

- Mark 12: 18-27
- Matthew 22: 23-34

Explore a later controversy between Pharisees and Sadducees.

- Acts 23: 6-12

Explore the roots for this narrative in the Old Testament.

- Exodus 3: 1-16, 14-16
- Deuteronomy 25: 5-6

Explore St Paul's teaching on resurrection.

- 1 Corinthians 15: 12-57

Exploring online

THIRD SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT (YEAR C) Sunday 9 November 2025

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

- Who are the Sadducees?
- Commentary on Luke 20: 27-40
- Lifecycle of butterflies

Drawing on experience

The image to stimulate reflection on Luke's account of Jesus' teaching on the afterlife is *butterflies*. Draw on your experience of butterflies. For example:

- Where have you seen butterflies?
- What do you know about the lifecycle of butterflies?
- Do you recall children's books about butterflies?

What have you learned about butterflies?

Creating and making

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by Luke's account of Jesus' teaching about the afterlife or by the image of butterflies.

- Make a collage of pictures of butterflies.
- Make a poster showing the lifecycle of butterflies.
- Make origami butterflies to display around your church.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of Luke's account of Jesus' teaching about the afterlife or the image of butterflies.



**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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