

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (YEAR A) Sunday 3 May 2026

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MAPS

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Introducing the Gospel

The way, the truth and the life (John 14: 1-14)

This passage from John's Gospel is part of the Farewell Discourse at Jesus' last supper with his disciples. Judas has just left the meal. As part of this discourse, Jesus refers to himself as 'the way'. The image of the journey is of great importance in John's Gospel, right from chapter one when the first disciple followed Jesus to see where Jesus was staying. Now in the present passage John shows how the journey itself is of greater significance than the destination. Jesus takes to himself the description 'I am the way.' Subsequent generations of Christians have known themselves as people of the way.

The image to stimulate reflection on this passage from the Farewell Discourse where Jesus says 'I am the way' is *maps*.

Core extract from the Gospel (John 14: 5-7; for reflection throughout the week)

Thomas said to him,
'Lord, we do not know where you are going.
How can we know the way?'
Jesus said to him,
'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me.
If you know me, you will know my Father also.
From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)

Risen Lord,
you are the way, the truth and the life.
Keep us firm in your way,
that we may hold to your truth
and share in your risen life;
now and always.
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

John 14: 1-14

Jesus the Way to the Father

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.' Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.'

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

Dwelling with the text (John 14: 1-14)

Begin to explore this part of Jesus' Farewell Discourse in John's Gospel 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 understand by the journey on which Jesus is soon to embark?
- How do you read Thomas' question, 'How can we know the way'??
- What do you make of Jesus' answer, 'I am the way'?
- How do you read, 'No one comes to the father except through me'?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

The Farewell Discourse that John places after the conclusion of the last supper occupies the whole of chapters 14 to 17. Explore how the theme of journey has been introduced earlier in John's Gospel and persists through the Farewell Discourse.

- John 8: 21-22
- John 12: 26
- John 16: 2

Explore the images of the way in the Old Testament.

- Psalm 1: 1
- Psalm 119: 25-32

Explore the people of the way in Acts.

- Acts 9: 1-3

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Exploring online

Widen your exploration of this part of Jesus' Farewell Discourse in John's Gospel by looking up some of the following themes and others of your own choosing.

- I am the way images
- Cartography and map making
- Pointing hand symbols

Drawing on experience

The image to stimulate reflection on Jesus as 'the way' is *maps*. Draw on your experience of maps. For example:

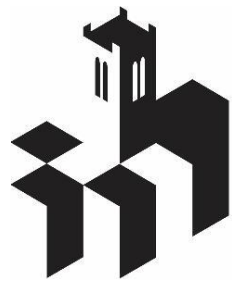
- What is your experience of maps?
- What has pointed you on the path with Jesus?
- What is your experience of Jesus being the way for you?

What have you learned about maps?

Creating and making

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by Jesus saying, 'I am the way' or on the image of maps.

- Make signs in the shape of a pointing hand or of a signpost, saying 'Jesus said, "I am the way"'.
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- Make a three dimensional map of your local area: 'We use maps to show us the way'.
- Make a collage of the resources that keep us on the way with Jesus around a signpost: Jesus the way.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of Jesus saying, 'I am the way' or on the image of maps.



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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