Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Gospel text (*Lk* 1:1-4; 4:14-21): (…) Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all. He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord." (…).

Jesus Christ is the principal subject of evangelization in the world

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today's Gospel tells us that Jesus Christ, consecrated by the Father in the Holy Spirit, is the true and perennial subject of evangelization. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me". This mission of Christ continues in space and time, over centuries and continents. It is a movement which starts with the Father and, in the power of the Spirit, goes forth to bring the good news to the poor, in both a material and a spiritual sense.

The Church is the first and necessary instrument of this work of Christ because it is united to him as a body to its head. Through Christ, God is the principal subject of evangelization in the world.

—But Christ himself wished to pass on his own mission to the Church, pouring out his Spirit upon the disciples, the same Spirit who came upon him and remained in him during all his earthly life, giving him the strength "to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind".

The joy of believing

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Today, recent decades have seen the advance of a spiritual "desertification". This void has spread. But it is in starting from the experience of this desert, from this void, that we can again discover the joy of believing, its vital importance for us, men and women.

In the desert we rediscover the value of what is essential for living; thus in today's world there are innumerable signs, often expressed implicitly or negatively, of the thirst for God, for the ultimate meaning of life. And in the desert people of faith are needed who, with their own lives, point out the way to the Promised Land and keep hope alive. Living faith opens the heart to the grace of God which frees us from pessimism.

—We can picture faith as a pilgrimage in the deserts of today's world, taking with us only what is necessary: neither staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money, nor two tunics…, but the Gospel and the faith of the Church.