Monday of the Twenty-second Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 4:16-30): Jesus 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.

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They also asked, "Is this not the son of Joseph?" He said to them, "Surely you will quote me this proverb, 'Physician, cure yourself,' and say, 'Do here in your native place the things that we heard were done in Capernaum.'" And he said, "Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon. Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury. They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. But he passed through the midst of them and went away.

"Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

Fr. David AMADO i Fernández
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Today, "this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). With these words, Jesus comments on a text from the prophet Isaiah in the synagogue of Nazareth: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me" (Luke 4:18). These words have a meaning that transcends the specific historical moment in which they were spoken. The Holy Spirit dwells fully in Jesus Christ, and it is He who sends Him to believers.

But, in addition, all the words of the Gospel have eternal relevance. They are eternal because they were spoken by the Eternal One, and they are relevant because God makes them come true in all times. When we hear the Word of God, we must receive it not as a human discourse, but as a Word that has a transforming power in us. God does not speak to our ears, but to our hearts. Everything He says is deeply full of meaning and love. The Word of God is an inexhaustible source of life: "What we understand is much less than we leave behind; like thirsty people who drink from a fountain" (Saint Ephraim). His words come from the heart of God. And from that heart, from the bosom of the Trinity, Jesus—the Word of the Father—came to humanity.

Therefore, every day, when we hear the Gospel, we must be able to say like Mary: "May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38); to which God will respond: "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." However, for the Word to be effective in us, we must shed all prejudice. Jesus' contemporaries did not understand him, because they looked at him only with human eyes: "Is this not the son of Joseph?" (Luke 4:22). They saw Christ's humanity, but they did not perceive his divinity. Whenever we hear the Word of God, beyond the literary style, the beauty of the expressions, or the uniqueness of the situation, we must know that it is God who is speaking to us.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “For that was the acceptable year in which Christ was crucified in our behalf, because we then were made acceptable unto God the Father, as the fruit borne by Him.” (Saint Cyril of Alexandria)

- “The good news is the precious pearl of which we read in the Gospel. It is not a thing but a mission. This is evident to anyone who has experienced the ‘delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing’” (Francis)

- “(...) The economy of salvation is at work within the framework of time, but since its fulfillment in the Passover of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the culmination of history is anticipated ‘as a foretaste,’ and the kingdom of God enters into our time.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1168)