Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Gospel text (*Lk* 1:1-4; 4:14-21): Since many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as those who were eyewitnesses from the beginning and ministers of the word have handed them down to us, I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received.

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.” 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.”

“So that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received”

Fr. Bernat GIMENO i Capín
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today we begin to hear the voice of Jesus through the evangelist who will accompany us throughout the ordinary time of cycle “C”: Saint Luke. “That you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received” (Lk 1:4), writes Luke to his friend Theophilus. If this is the purpose of the writing, we must become aware of the importance of meditating on the Gospel of the Lord – a living word and, therefore, always new – every day.

As the Word of God, Jesus is presented to us today as a Teacher, since “He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all” (Lk 4:15). He begins like any other preacher: reading a text from Scripture, which is now being fulfilled… The word of the prophet Isaiah is being fulfilled; moreover: the whole word, the

whole content of the Scriptures, everything that the prophets had announced is made concrete and comes to its fulfillment in Jesus. It is not indifferent to believe in Jesus or not, because it is the same "Spirit of the Lord" who has anointed and sent him.

The message that God wants to convey to humanity through his Word is good news for the helpless, an announcement of freedom for the captives and the oppressed, a promise of salvation. A message that fills all of humanity with hope. We, children of God in Christ through the sacrament of baptism, have also received this anointing and participate in his mission: to bring this message of hope to all of humanity.

Meditating on the Gospel that gives strength to our faith, we see that Jesus preached in a different way from other teachers: he preached as one who has authority (cf. Lk 4:32). This is so because he preached primarily with works, by example, by bearing witness, even by giving his own life. We must do the same; we cannot stop at words alone: we must express our love for God and our brothers and sisters with works. The Works of Mercy that the Church proposes to us — seven spiritual and seven corporal — can help us, like a mother who guides our path.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

-"For when you direct your whole heart to wisdom, truth, and the contemplation of the only-begotten Son of God, your eyes behold Jesus." (Origen).

-"In our diversified and distracted time, this Gospel passage invites us to ask ourselves whether we are able to listen. Before we can speak of God and with God we must listen to him." (Francis).

-"(...) When 'the poor have the good news preached to them' (Mt 11:5; cf. Lk 4,18), it is the sign of Christ's presence." (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 2443)