

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Gospel text (Lk 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.”

“Most excellent Theophilus, so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received.”

Fr. Bernat GIMENO i Capín
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Today we begin to hear the voice of Jesus through the evangelist Saint Luke, who will accompany us during this liturgical time. Luke writes his friend Theophilus, so “that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received.” (Lk 1:4). If that is why Luke is writing his friend, then we should better start pondering over the importance of the Gospel of our Lord —Word alive! and, therefore, always brand new— every day.

Today, the Word of God introduces Jesus the Master, when “He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all” (Lk 4:15). He begins like any other preacher: reading a fragment of the Scripture, which is being fulfilled at that precise moment... The word of the prophet Isaiah is being fulfilled; even more: all the word, all the content of the Scriptures, all that the prophets had announced is concretized and reaches its fulfillment in Jesus. It is not indifferent to believe or not in Jesus, because it is the same "Spirit of the Lord" who has anointed and sent him over.

Through His Word, God's message is good news to the poor, proclaims liberty to captives and new sight to the blind; frees the oppressed and announces a promise of salvation. It is a message filling with hope all mankind. We, children of God in Christ by virtue of our baptism, have also received his holy anointment to participate in his mission: namely, to bring this message of hope to all mankind.

By mulling over the Gospel that brings consistency to our faith, we can see Jesus preaching in a different way than the other masters: “He taught and his message had authority” (cf. Lk 4:32). This is so because He preached with his deeds, with his example, by giving testimony, even offering his own life for all of us. We are supposed to do the same; we cannot just limit ourselves to words: we need to settle on our love for God and our brothers with our deeds and examples. As a mother trying to guide our steps for that purpose, the Church proposes The Works of Mercy —seven spiritual and seven corporal—, which can indeed be very valuable for us.

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, N° 2443)