

## GOSPEL

Lk 1:1-4; 4:14-21

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

*The scriptures were fulfilled on this day.*

Seeing that many others have undertaken to draw up accounts of the events that have taken place among us, exactly as these were handed down to us by those who from the outset were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, I in my turn, after carefully going over the whole story from the beginning, have decided to write an ordered account for you, Theophilus, so that your Excellency may learn how well founded the teaching is that you have received.

Jesus, with the power of the Spirit in him, returned to Galilee; and his reputation spread throughout the countryside. He taught in their synagogues and everyone praised him.

He came to Nazara, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day as he usually did. He stood up to read, and they handed him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll he found the place where it is written:

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me.

He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.

He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the assistant and sat down. And all eyes in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to speak to them, 'This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen.'

### ■ The Gospel of the Lord.

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# Breaking Open the Word



# THE SAVING WORD

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / C

23 JANUARY 2022

## JESUS OUR GUIDE

Often it can be difficult to know how to read the signs of the times. In our search, we naturally turn to the scriptures but often we find that we need a guide in order to fully understand them. The first reading from Nehemiah comes from a time when the people of Israel shared some of the same difficulties. The Hebrew scriptures needed to be interpreted for the people in their own language of Aramaic.

One of Paul's strengths as a pastor was that he was tireless in searching for ways to explain the nature of Christian life in language that his Christian converts could understand. How was he going to show the divided community of Corinth that they needed each other? How could he bring them to see that the variety of gifts within the community was a blessing rather than a source of division? To answer this vexing problem, he drew upon the image of the community as a body where every member of the body depends on every other member. He knew all too well that separated from Christ our head, and divided from one another, we are nothing.

For Luke, Jesus is the one who can best explain the meaning of the scriptures and the signs of the times. As Jesus begins his ministry the new age promised by Isaiah is dawning. Jesus comes among us bringing new sight to the blind, freedom to captives, and good news to the poor.

Christopher Monaghan CP

## FIRST READING

Neh 8:2-6, 8-10

A reading from the book of Nehemiah

*They read from the book of the Law and they understood what was read.*

Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, consisting of men, women, and children old enough to understand. This was the first day of the seventh month. On the square before the Water Gate, in the presence of the men and women, and children old enough to understand, he read from the book from early morning till noon; all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden dais erected for the purpose. In full view of all the people – since he stood higher than all the people – Ezra opened the book; and when he opened it all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people raised their hands and answered, 'Amen! Amen!'; then they bowed down and, face to the ground, prostrated themselves before the Lord. And Ezra read from the Law of God, translating and giving the sense, so that the people understood what was read.

Then Nehemiah – His Excellency – and Ezra, priest and scribe (and the Levites who were instructing the people) said to all the people, 'This day is sacred to the Lord your God. Do not be mournful, do not weep.' For the people were all in tears as they listened to the words of the Law.

He then said, 'Go, eat the fat, drink the sweet wine, and send a portion to the man who has nothing prepared ready. For this day is sacred to our Lord. Do not be sad: the joy of the Lord is your stronghold.'

### ■ The word of the Lord.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Ps 18:8-10, 15. R. Jn 6:73  
**R. Your words, Lord, are spirit and life.**

1. The law of the Lord is perfect, / it revives the soul. / The rule of the Lord is to be trusted, / it gives wisdom to the simple. **R.**



2. The precepts of the Lord are right, / they gladden the heart. / The command of the Lord is clear, / it gives light to the eyes. **R.**

3. The fear of the Lord is holy, / abiding for ever. / The decrees of the Lord are truth / and all of them just. **R.**

4. May the spoken words of my mouth, / the thoughts of my heart, / win favour in your sight, O Lord, / my rescuer, my rock! **R.**

## SECOND READING

1 Cor 12:12-14, 27

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

*Together you are Christ's body; but each of you is a different part of it.*

Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.

Nor is the body to be identified with any one of its many parts.

Now you together are Christ's body; but each of you is a different part of it.

### ■ The word of the Lord.

*Longer form, 1 Cor 12:12-30.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

cf. Lk 4:18

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Lord sent me to bring Good News to the poor and freedom to prisoners.  
Alleluia!