



WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C

Fr. David Rosenberg
Institute for Spiritual Direction

"Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:21)

In the opening chapter of the Gospel of Luke, Luke notes that he is not the first to write the account of Jesus Christ and his followers. Rather, he prepares the reader for an orderly account so that we may know the Truth about Jesus Christ, the events of his life, and the sequence into the Apostolic Era that follow in the Acts of the Apostles. Many scholars believe that Luke is dissatisfied with previous renditions, not at the level of the facts, but at the level of interpretation. He is concerned that the Truth of the deeper spiritual knowledge be understood. For Luke, the Passion, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth is the fulfillment of the promises of the Prophets of Old: the inbreaking of the incarnate God-Man into history. Luke's inspiration from the Holy Spirit lays down an account that follows a logic that makes clear the fulfillment of God's promises in Jesus Christ.

Luke indicates that he is dependent on eyewitnesses and on those who have proclaimed the Word. It is good to reflect on this point this week that the Good News was handed down verbally before it was written. Luke addressed "*Theophilus*," most likely a prominent leader of the Luken Community. Fortuitously, his name means "*beloved of God*," so we can reflect on the power of the Holy Spirit, down through the centuries, to inspire us as God's beloved, receiving Scripture anew as it is offered to us.

The second part of the reading begins after Jesus' temptations in the desert. Luke notes that Jesus was filled with the Spirit as he began his ministry teaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

The final note of that section establishes the contrast with what follows. Luke notes that Jesus was praised by all, yet he will soon be rejected.

Jesus insists that the words of the prophet were being fulfilled as he proclaimed them in the synagogue. This fits Luke's overall theme that the promises of God are fulfilled in Jesus. As we anticipate the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, let us reflect on the emphasis of his preaching that continues to produce a resonating effect in our days, but only if the scripture is fulfilled in our hearing.

As you consider the movements of Lectio Divina, "*Lectio*," the first movement, or what I call "*The Art of Listening*," is a *cooperative, intentional movement* on our part. If we fail to be attentive to hear Jesus in the scripture due to our own lack of attention span, then the scripture cannot be fulfilled. Jesus is clear on this point: "*Today this scripture has been fulfilled **in your hearing**.*" (Luke 4:21) We must hear it in order to receive it. And we must receive it in order for it to be fulfilled.

This might be a good week to practice and fine tune your "*Art of Listening*." Jesus is present in the proclamation of the Gospel, but only but only to the extent that you cooperate with the transmission, and bring his presence into your physical, mental and spiritual Reality.

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, Jesus went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom, He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

And Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then Jesus began to say to them:

"Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

The Gospel of the Lord