
Background on the Gospel Reading

Today's Gospel reading combines two separate passages taken from the Gospel of Luke. First we hear the opening verses where Luke establishes the purpose of his Gospel. His style is typical of polished Greek and Roman literature. In this passage, we learn that Luke may have written to a specific person, Theophilus; but the word Theophilus may also be a general reference, functioning as the phrase "Dear Reader" might in contemporary writing. In Greek, the word Theophilus translates as "lover of God."

In chapter four of Luke's Gospel, we hear that Jesus is in his hometown of Nazareth, attending the synagogue on the Sabbath, which is said to be his custom. In this account, we find another important clue that Jesus lived as a faithful, observant Jew.

As Jesus stands in the synagogue, he reads from the scroll handed to him; it contains the words of the prophet Isaiah. At this early moment in his ministry, Jesus announces his mission in continuity with Israel's prophetic tradition. This reading from Isaiah defines Jesus' ministry. Jesus' ministry will include bringing glad tidings to the poor, liberty to captives, healing to the sick, freedom to the oppressed, and proclaiming a year acceptable to the Lord.

Through this text from Isaiah, Jesus announces God's salvation. The "year acceptable to the Lord" is a reference to the Jewish tradition of Sabbath years and jubilee. The Sabbath year was observed every seventh year. It was a year of rest when land was left fallow and food stores were to be shared equally with all. A year of Jubilee was celebrated every fiftieth year, the conclusion of seven cycles of Sabbath years. It was a year of renewal in which debts were forgiven and slaves were freed.

This tradition of Jubilee is the framework for God's promise of salvation. And yet in Jesus, something new begins.

Jesus not only announces God's salvation, he brings this salvation about in his person. Jesus is Yahweh's Anointed One, filled with the Spirit of God. The Kingdom of God is now at hand. It is made present in Jesus, in his life, death, and Resurrection. Jesus will send the Holy Spirit so that the Kingdom of God can be fulfilled.

The Holy Spirit is Jesus' gift to the Church. The Holy Spirit enables the Church to continue the mission of Jesus. When we do what Jesus did—bring glad tidings to the poor, liberty to captives, healing to the sick, and freedom to the oppressed—we serve the Kingdom of God.

Taken from <https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/sunday-connection>

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Third Week of Ordinary Time

The **Third Sunday in Ordinary Time** begins to take us through **Luke's Gospel**. We will follow it each week until February when Lent begins; it picks up again after the Easter season when Ordinary Time returns. It introduces Jesus as returning to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit" where he goes to the synagogue and teaches from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor." He ends with the stunning words "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

Monday is the **Memorial of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Priest and Doctor of the Church**. Thursday is the **Memorial of Saint John Bosco, Priest**. Saturday is the **Feast of the Presentation of the Lord**.

The first reading this week continues with the **Letter to the Hebrews** which teaches that Jesus is mediator of a new covenant and a priest who "offered one sacrifice for sins. He took his seat forever at the right hand of God."

In **Mark's Gospel** this week, the ever-critical scribes accuse Jesus of being possessed by demons. Jesus responds clearly, "If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand." When told his family has arrived to see him, he replies that "whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

He tells the imaginative story of the sower and the seed and after the crowd dispersed, Jesus explains to the disciples that the seed is the word of God, accepted at various levels. He encourages his disciples to show their light: "Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a bushel basket or under a bed, and not to be placed on a lampstand?" Jesus compares the Kingdom with the tiniest of mustard seeds which grow to "the largest of plants." He calms the seas during a storm. His disciples wonder, "Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?"

On the **Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time**, **Luke's gospel** continues the story of the Jesus teaching in the synagogue. The crowd, although "amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth" began to challenge Jesus. He responds that "no prophet is accepted in his own native place" and challenges their assumptions, angering the crowd. When they try to drive him out of town, he passes through their midst.

*Taken from the "Weekly Guide for Daily Prayer" on the Creighton University's **Online Ministries** web site: <http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html>
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Stewardship Reflection

"Go, eat rich foods and drink sweet drinks, and allot portions to those who had nothing prepared..." (Nehemiah 8:10) Ezra's instructions to the people show us that God does not forbid us from enjoying the good things in life. He wants us to be happy! However, God expects us to be grateful for all that He has given us and to generously share our blessings with those who are in need without expecting anything in return.

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Mass Intentions

Jan. 27—Feb. 2, 2019

Mon, Jan 28—	Lucia Festejo-Limjoco (RIP)
Tue, Jan 29—	Kay Sullivan (RIP)
Wed, Jan 30—	9am, Kay Sullivan (RIP) 7pm, Lawrence & Alice Fernandes (TG)
Thu, Jan 31—	Kay Sullivan (RIP)
Fri, Feb 1—	Aida & Alma Goco (TG)
Sat, Feb 2—	9:30am, Candelaria Aranos (TG) 5pm, Ricardo Valencia (RIP)