

Read



Nehemiah 8:2-4a, 5-6,
8-10

Psalms 19:8, 9, 10, 15

1 Corinthians 12:12-30 or
12:12-14, 27

Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

LIVING THE WORD

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 27, 2019



REFLECTION

Have you ever listened to a grandparent or elder tell a family story? Did their telling grip the audience with reverence and awe over the memory of family folklore? Ezra demonstrates this as he shares the law with the community. The Israelites finally understood what the law meant and rejoiced (in tears!) that they knew what God was asking of them. Our communities all have unique members just as the Israelites surely did. Each person has his or her own gifts as we are reminded of again in St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Using the metaphor of the body being made up of many parts, St. Paul challenges us to live our gifts out so that others may do the same. If you are a teacher, then teach! If you have a gift toward prophecy, then be a prophet! We cannot be all parts of the body at the same time, but we can do our part to be the best version of ourselves so that the body is enriched and inspired by our gifts.

? QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What body part do you most relate to? Why?
- ❖ How might you live out this gift more fully in your life?



ACTION

A fun activity to do with your family, your friends, or your youth group is to trace a person's body onto a large piece of poster paper. Each member of the group then reflects on which body part they might be and writes or draws this gift onto the body. For example, someone may choose "hands" because they enjoy service to others. As a doer, they may draw one person giving another person a bag of food on one of the hands. Each person shares what gifts they bring to the group. End by reading 1 Corinthians 12:12-30. Afterward, hang the poster in a common space. This visual can remind everyone of their responsibility to the group and to live out their gift.





January 27, 2019

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #69C

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Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 15

1 Corinthians 12:12-30 or

1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 27

Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

This Sunday's Gospel reminds us about the transcendent nature of the Holy Spirit in our lives and Christ's call for us to follow his lead in serving the world around us. Luke's initial narrative relates his desire to pass along the events of Jesus' life. His continuation of this Gospel in chapter four describes Jesus' return to his home synagogue and his spirit-filled incarnation of Isaiah's prophetic message. Teens should be reminded about the moving of the Spirit within them and will be motivated by a unique calling to serve the needs of the Church and the world.

Q FOCUS: *Bring the Good News of Jesus to the poor in spirit.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week, on January 28, we celebrate the life of the patron saint of students, St. Thomas Aquinas. Remind teens to more fully pray about their own theological pursuits by encouraging them to ask big questions about the role of God in their lives. St. John Bosco, an educator and founder of the Salesians, is celebrated on January 31. On February 2, the Church commemorates the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, recalling the ritual purification of Mary and the presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple.

Church Teaching Connection

"God's word teaches that our brothers and sisters are the prolongation of the incarnation for each of us: 'As you did it to one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it to me' (Matthew 25:40). The way we treat others has a transcendent dimension. . . . What [this passage makes] clear is the absolute priority of 'going forth from ourselves towards our brothers and sisters' as one of the two great commandments which ground every moral norm and as the clearest sign for discerning spiritual growth in response to God's completely free gift" (*Evangelii gaudium*, 179).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Luke 1:1- 4; 4:14-21

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

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.”

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

Luke's synoptic Gospel opens with his desire to tell his version of the birth, ministry, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ to his reader Theophilus, whose name literally means “friend of God.” For Luke, it was important that this historical account be told with detail, in an organized way, and in a way that told Jesus' life story as a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. Luke's synoptic Gospel, written primarily for a Gentile audience (those who were not Jewish), continues its narrative in the Acts of the Apostles.

► When you prepare to tell a big, exciting story to friends or family, what types of details are most important for you to share?

► Why do you think it was important to Luke to spell out his sources for this story, including accounts from eyewitnesses?

We “fast-forward” now to the fourth chapter of Luke and find his account of Jesus as he preached his way through Galilee. Powered with the grace of the Holy Spirit, Jesus made the rounds of the area's synagogues. When he taught in these holy places, he was widely praised. News about him began to spread throughout the region. Imagine what it meant for Jesus to be “in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

► How would this have blessed his public ministry?

► Have you ever had a moment when you felt the power of the Holy Spirit moving in your life? How did this embolden you to share your faith with someone?

When Jesus returned to his home town of Nazareth, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath. Taking the scroll, Jesus read from the prophet Isaiah. The portion of the Scripture text he proclaimed that day was a challenge to those in the congregation. These very words had been written to foretell of Jesus Christ's coming. Contained in this small portion of text are words that serve as a commission for us as well. We are called to do the following:

- ✧ Bring God's Word to the poor
- ✧ Proclaim liberty to people who are enslaved in any way, even by addictions or behaviors
- ✧ Bring sight to those who cannot see for themselves, including the spiritually blind
- ✧ Help those who are oppressed in any way to find freedom and liberty
- ✧ Proclaim God's love

Jesus told those listening that the answer to their prayers was sitting right before them. The Messiah they had awaited was in their midst. Those in the synagogue that day simply sat in silence looking at him with disbelief. Jesus was moved by the Spirit and went to the holy place in his community to serve.

► Have you ever known an older friend who went off to college and achieved something special?

- ▶ How was that person received when they came back to your hometown or high school?
- ▶ How can someone who does not know God in their lives be spiritually blind?
- ▶ Can you think of any good examples of someone who is captive or oppressed by substances, behaviors, or bad decisions they have made? How might you be able to come to their aid?

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 128.

Luke desired to leave an accurate, orderly, and historical recounting of the events of Jesus' life for the Gentiles.

Jesus felt the Holy Spirit moving within him. This enabled him to educate, inspire, and save those who heard him preach and teach. In his home community's synagogue, Jesus proclaimed that he was the fulfillment of the prophecies the faithful had studied. He had come to set them free.

Christ calls each of us to come to the aid of those in need. The workings of the Holy Spirit in our hearts enable us to bring light, liberty, and love to the suffering.

Act on the Word

Never Have I Ever

To encourage teens to understand the workings of the Holy Spirit in their lives, play a spiritual version of the fun icebreaker game "Never Have I Ever." To encourage participation, consider offering small prizes such as holy cards, religious medals, candy, or trinkets. Speak with students before playing this game to set ground rules and omit topics that are not faith-based or may make students feel uncomfortable. Assemble teens into groups of ten or less and have them sit in a circle. If you have many teens, appoint a captain for each group. Reward your captains with one of the small prizes to get started.

Students will start the game with five or ten fingers raised in the air. They will take turns saying the statement, "Never have I ever ____," going around the circle. In this Holy Spirit edition of the game, students' "Never Have I Ever" questions should be related to this Sunday's Gospel, to spiritual activities, to volunteer ministries within your Church, to evangelization, or to other faith-based prompts. In this version, if a teen HAS done the prompted activity, they may keep their fingers elevated. If they have not ever done the prompted activity, they must lower one finger. The winner is the student who still has fingers elevated the longest.

To extend play, when students leave their fingers elevated (indicating that they have done a faith based activity), invite them to briefly share their experience. For example, if the prompt is "Never have I ever read at Mass," any teen who has read at Mass will leave their finger elevated and you might invite these teens to share their experiences.

Possible prompts for this game include "Never have I ever" collected food for a soup kitchen; talked to a friend who was feeling doubt about his or her faith; spoken with a responsible adult about a peer struggling with abuse or addiction; felt the power of the Holy Spirit moving in my life.

Closing Prayer

*Lord, your words are spirit and life.
Renew your spirit within us,
that we may proclaim your Good News
by the example of our lives.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.