

# 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 23, 2022



#### REFLECTION

Jesus stood up at worship to proclaim a prophetic Scripture text. Have you ever served as a reader in your parish (someone who proclaims the first reading or second reading)? If so, you do the same!

Take a moment to reread the passage Jesus proclaims in this Gospel (Luke 4:18-19). This passage is actually from Isaiah 61:1-2 and Isaiah 58:6 (you can find these in the Old Testament). After he reads the prophet's words, Jesus says with confidence, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). What a powerful statement.

What if you, too, believed you could bring the sacred Word alive off the page? What if you believed you could contribute to the ongoing revelation of Scripture by embodying it in this time and place? The fellow worshippers were awed by Jesus' claim, and expected more. Eventually they tried to drive him off a cliff. Being a preacher—and a prophet—is not easy. Not everyone will accept you. And still, when God calls it is our responsibility to answer.



#### ACTION

Volunteer to be a reader at your parish. Participating in this ministry will not only enrich your parish community, but it will invite you to enter into deeper reflection of the Sunday readings. It's impossible to space out when you're the one doing the reading! Many readers prepare before Mass by reading and then praying through the Scripture passage assigned to them. What is God trying to communicate through this passage?



**What parish ministry can you become involved in?**

**Check out LTP's video for inspiration on the role of teens at Mass.**

**<https://vimeo.com/247171573>**



#### QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What if you believed you could bring the sacred Word alive off the page?
- ❖ What would it look like for you to embody the Scripture in this time and place?



January 23, 2022

## THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### LECTIONARY #69C

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

## 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

Luke's prologue addresses "Theophilus," literally, "friend of God." Luke wants friends of God to have the truth of Jesus' authentic teachings. Luke's Gospel includes many references to Jewish tradition, rituals, and is very concerned about Torah. We hear Jesus cite the prophetic texts and proclaim his life as fulfillment of these texts in today's Gospel. He returns to Nazareth, where he was raised, to begin his public ministry. This Gospel text will be continued next week on the third Sunday of Ordinary Time.

**Q FOCUS:** *Disciples respond to God's Word.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

Remind the young people that we began a new liturgical year at the beginning of Advent. We are in Year C of the liturgical year cycle and we will frequently hear Gospel readings from the Gospel according to Luke. Today's Gospel starts with the very beginning of this Gospel and then places us at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry.

### Church Teaching Connection

Through the sacrament of baptism we become members of the Body of Christ and are united with Christ to live out his mission. This is the foundation of our call to discipleship. As a Church, we are all called to build the kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit dwells in each one of us and makes it possible for us to follow

Christ and be temples of his presence on earth (see *Christifideles laici*, 13).

## 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:*

► Have you ever heard a friend recount an exciting adventure the two of you went on, only to realize that the way they remember it and the way you remember it are completely different? What did you do about it at the time?

The beginning or "prologue" to the Gospel according to Luke that we hear in today's Gospel passage is a good example of this. The writer who we call Luke begins his Gospel in an interesting way, basically saying that others have tried to write an account of the life of Jesus, but that Luke's goal is write it more accurately so that others may come to believe. He addresses this disclaimer to "Theophilus," a Greek word literally meaning "friend of God." He's writing to set the record straight, from the information he has gathered, and communicate the truth to all who consider themselves friends of God.

► Do you think of yourself as a "friend of God"? Why or why not?

► Do you find Luke's prologue convincing? Will he be more accurate than Mark or Matthew?

It is important to remember that the Gospel writers were not writing to outdo one another on who comes the closest to the truth of what happened in the life of Jesus. Rather, each was writing from their own

experience and to their own community. They had particular goals in mind, but because they were all inspired by the Holy Spirit, the truth of the Good News of Jesus is present in all of them.

Next, our reading jumps from the first chapter of Luke to the fourth chapter of Luke, skipping over the early life of Jesus and bringing us to the beginning of his public ministry. While last week's account from the Gospel according to John told a story of Jesus' ministry starting at an ordinary wedding with a miracle, Luke begins Jesus' ministry with Jesus' public recounting the prophecies of Isaiah.

► Imagine that you are a character in this story, attending synagogue on the Sabbath. What is your reaction to Jesus' declaration? What sort of changes do you think are coming?

Like last week's reading, Jesus provides a sneak peek into how the kingdom of God will be a place of abundance, joy, and justice, overturning marginalization and freeing captives. With the eyes of the whole synagogue on him, Jesus boldly declares that he is the fulfillment of the prophet's words.

► Think about other Gospel readings. What are some ways that Jesus fulfills what the Old Testament prophets spoke about? [Think about the readings of Christmas Time, other readings from Ordinary Time, etc.]

When Jesus talks about this fulfillment, he means that who he is and what he is doing is not superficial; he will radically change their lives. As they hear this, they are encouraged to internalize his truth and respond accordingly. In other words, Jesus doesn't just want those in attendance (and us, today) to hear the words of the prophet Isaiah and go on living their lives per usual, thinking that Jesus alone will do the works of justice described here. Jesus wants us to internalize this message and make it a reality—to hear, deeply listen, believe, and respond. He wants us to make the kingdom of God a reality in our own communities.

## 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 116.

Jesus begins his ministry with a bold statement.

Christian disciples take part in fulfilling the kingdom of God which is proclaimed by Jesus.

Our baptism commissions us to respond to God's Word through action.

## Act on the Word

### Fulfilled in Our Hearing

For this activity, you will need paper and pens.

To fulfill this prophecy from Isaiah 61:1–2, Jesus asks all people to not just hear what is said, but to respond and believe. Divide the young people into small groups, and assign each group a line from the prophecy, as noted below (Luke 4:18–19):

- ✧ "To bring glad tidings to the poor"
- ✧ "To proclaim liberty to captives"
- ✧ "Recovery of sight to the blind"
- ✧ "To let the oppressed go free"
- ✧ "To proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord"

Each group should begin by brainstorming a list of actions that they can take to act upon their assigned line of Scripture. Encourage them to think creatively and to not just read their line literally. This is part

of truly listening; interpreting it in light of your own life and applying it appropriately.

If time permits, ask each group to choose just one action step and to prepare a skit to present this action to the rest of the class. They should prepare to explain how their action step is a way of living out the part of Jesus' mission that they were assigned.

Once each group is presented, come back together as a large group and discuss the examples given. Ask teens how they can incorporate these actions in their daily lives, and in the coming weeks and months. Help them to think about how their personal talents and interests might interact with these action steps.

### Closing Prayer

*God of liberating power,  
your Spirit beckons us to embrace the mission  
of Jesus as our own.*

*Energize us to accept your call to be prophets  
of a new creation.*

*May we rejoice whenever the chains  
of oppression are removed,  
the yoke of injustice is broken,  
and those in bondage are set free.*

*Grant this 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](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.