

1. Read — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.

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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

[1] cf. Divine Intimacy, Vol. I pg. 173  
[2] Divine Intimacy, Vol. I pg. 173  
[3] John Paul II, Dives in misericordia, 3  
[4] cf. The Navarre Bible: St. Luke pg. 74  
[5] CCC 543 [6] Romans 10:5 [7] Isaiah 52:7  
[8] Tuesday Vespers – Week I  
[9] Liturgy of the Hours – Benedictus  
[10] Revelation 22:4-5 [11] John 8:33-34  
[12] Isaiah 49:8 [13] 2 Corinthians 6:2-3

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Link to Liturgy**



# Quick Connect

**What is the Gospel saying? Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21 — Pg. 1**  
**What is the Church saying Past and Present? Pages 1-3**  
**What is God saying to you through this passage? Page 4**

## **Gospel Reading – Luke 1:1-4; 4: 14-21– Roman Missal**

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.”

## **Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings**

*From the constitution on the sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council  
Christ is present to his Church*

Christ is always present to his Church, especially in the actions of the liturgy. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, in the person of the minister (it is the same Christ who formerly offered himself on the cross that now offers by the ministry of priests) and most of all under the Eucharistic species. He is present in the sacraments by his power, in such a way that when someone baptizes, Christ himself baptizes. He is present in his word, for it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church. Finally, he is present when the Church prays and sings, for he himself promised: *Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in their midst.* Indeed, in this great work which gives perfect glory to God and brings holiness to men. Christ is always joining in partnership with himself his beloved Bride, the Church, which calls upon its Lord and through him gives worship to the eternal Father. It is therefore right to see the liturgy as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ, in which through signs addressed to the senses man’s sanctification is signified and, in a way proper to each of these signs, made effective, and in which public worship is celebrated in its fullness by the mystical body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the head and by his members. Accordingly, every liturgical celebration,

as an activity of Christ the priest and of his body, which is the Church, is a sacred action of a preeminent kind. No other action of the Church equals its title to power or its degree of effectiveness. In the liturgy on earth we are given a foretaste and share in the liturgy of heaven, celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem, the goal of our pilgrimage, where Christ is *seated at the right hand of God, as minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle*. With the whole company of heaven we sing a hymn of praise to the Lord; as we reverence the memory of the saints, we hope to have some part with them, and to share in their fellowship; *we wait for the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, until he, who is our life, appears, and we appear with him in glory*. By an apostolic tradition taking its origin from the very day of Christ's resurrection, the Church celebrates the paschal mystery every eighth day, the day that is rightly called the Lord's day. On Sunday the Christian faithful ought to gather together, so that by listening to the word of God and sharing in the Eucharist they may recall the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus and give thanks to God who *has given them a new birth with a lively hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*. The Lord's day is therefore the first and greatest festival, one to be set before the loving devotion of the faithful and impressed upon it, so that it may be also a day of joy and of freedom from work. Other celebrations must not take precedence over it, unless they are truly of the greatest importance, since it is the foundation and the kernel of the whole liturgical year.

### Kingdom of the Poor – Lesson and Discussion

*“to bring glad tidings to the poor.”*

The readings for the third Sunday speak of the return of a kingdom. The first reading comes from the book of Nehemiah where the people of God hear the proclamation of the divine law after their return from the Babylonian exile.[1] “The Gospel gives us another proclamation of the word, more modest in its external form, but in reality infinitely more solemn...Jesus opened the book of Isaiah and read – certainly not by chance – the passage that concerned his mission: ‘The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor...’”[2] “These phrases, according to Luke (vv. 18-19), are his first messianic declaration. They are followed by the actions and words known through the Gospel. By these actions and words Christ makes the Father present among men”[3].

**Why is Jesus allowed to speak in the synagogue?** It was custom for the president to invite someone up who was well versed in the Scriptures to address one of the readings; the book of the Law, the Pentateuch, and another from the Prophets. Sometimes a volunteer would be allowed to give the address, which probably happen in Jesus' case.[4]

**Who is called to this kingdom?** *“Everyone is called to enter the kingdom...To enter it, one must first accept Jesus' word...”*[5] His word is the word we hear in today's gospel reading when he reads from the book of Isaiah. *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.* In the Baptism of the Lord, the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in bodily form, now we are told what will happen because the Spirit of the Lord is upon Christ. Do we accept the words of Christ given below?

**Jesus will bring glad tidings** – Do we accept the good news of Jesus Christ, the Gospel? We can read the Gospel daily as given to us by the readings of the Catholic Church. At the least we are obligated to attend Mass every Sunday and Holy Days of obligation to listen attentively to the Gospel. These glad tidings increase in us the theological virtue of Hope. In a world wrapped up in sad tidings, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”[6] Saint Paul is quoting the prophet Isaiah who says, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation...”[7]

**Proclaim liberty to captives** – Jesus liberates both physical and spiritual captivity. In the intercessions of Liturgy of the Hours we pray, “You [Jesus] made captive our captivity, to our brothers who are enduring bodily or spiritual chains, grant the freedom of the sons of God.”[8] Do we allow Jesus and trust Jesus to liberate us from spiritual and physical captivity?

**Recovery of sight from the Blind** – Jesus, the light of the world, enables us to see clearly. When we have deprived our soul of the light of Christ and begin to live in the darkness and shadows of death, it is Jesus Himself that is our recovery. This is why Saint Zachariah says, “In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.”[9] The imagery of “the shadow of death” is powerful. If we were walking on a sunny day and we suddenly see a shadow of a person appear near our own shadow, we would know that a person is near us. Those who dwell in the shadow of death, means that death is near. Humanity was in the “shadow of death”, eternal death. This eternal death or hell is described in the gospels as eternal darkness. It is Christ who offers us eternal light, eternal life. Each Sunday night in Liturgy of the Hours we are reminded of our recovery from blindness, and the hope we have of eternal life and light. “They shall see the Lord face to face and bear his name on their foreheads. The night shall be no more. They will need no light from lamps or the sun, for the Lord God shall give them light, and they shall reign forever.”[10]

**The oppressed go free** – This verse goes along with the liberty to the captives. In the Gospel of John the descendants of Abraham (the Jews) ask Jesus, “How can you say, ‘You will become free?’” “Jesus answered them, ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. A slave does not remain in a household forever, but a son always remains. So if a son frees you, then you will truly be free.’”[11] By our baptism we are made sons and daughters of God. We now have a right to heaven, and a right to remain in the household of God. The household of God on earth is the Church, established by Jesus Christ himself; when we sin we separate our self from Christ and His Body the Church. Freedom comes by remaining in the household of God, by living out our Baptismal vows of rejecting sin and embracing the Gospel. We are reminded of this call to reject evil and pursue good each Ash Wednesday when ashes are placed on our foreheads, but we are also reminded of this basic truth at every Mass, when we pray the Confiteor (reject evil, repent from sin) and profess the Creed (pursue good, embrace the Gospel).

**Proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord** – Isaiah says, “Thus says the Lord: In a time of favor I answer you, on the day of salvation I help you...”[12] Saint Paul in his letter to the Corinthians quotes Isaiah and says, “Behold, now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”[13]