



# News from our Church

MINISTRY UPDATES AND UPCOMING EVENTS

## This week...

Sunday Jan. 23, 2022

### ***THE WORD OF GOD SUNDAY***

Please bring your Bibles to Church to have them blessed. If you do not have a Bible, you can receive one at all the Masses this weekend.



## PASTOR'S WEEKLY MESSAGE FOR THE 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME C

**“This text is being fulfilled today”**

The Gospel of today tells us, ‘Jesus, with the power of the Spirit in Him, returned to Galilee; and His reputation spread throughout the countryside.’ He taught in their synagogue, and everyone praised Him. Everyone praised Jesus for the words He spoke. On that day, He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up. He stood up to read the scroll of the prophet, Isaiah. He read, and as He finished the reading, “All eyes in the Synagogue were fixed on him.” What does this mean? It means that people were hungry for His words. They knew that He was going to explain the words of the prophet, Isaiah, which He had read to them. And, they were eager to listen to Him. They wanted to better understand God’s message. They knew that Jesus could explain it like nobody else had ever done. What was this message?

We have just heard those words: “The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor; to proclaim liberty to captives, and to the blind new sight; to set the downtrodden free, and proclaim the Lord’s year of favor.” After reading those words, Jesus added: “This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen.” God wants us to believe that “...today, even as you listen...” He still does wonderful, extraordinary things. There is a text in the Bible where God assures us of this. The author of the Book of Lamentations writes: “Surely the Lord’s mercies are not over; His deeds of faithful love not exhausted; every morning they are renewed.” (Lam 3:22-23). This is what God wants us to believe. And if we did, our life would be changed. We would be happy and at peace. In the first reading, this is what the people of Israel came to see. The book of God’s Word was read to them, and they were happy...they wept for joy.

Why does the same thing not happen to us? Why do we go on in life with worried minds and heavy hearts? Is it because we do not take time to look at our lives and see what God does for us? We feel poor, but do we listen to the Good News God speaks to us in Jesus? Do we take time, every day, to read the Gospel and receive the Good News that God loves us—each one of us? We see ourselves as captives—captives of our bad habits, our fears, our guilt... Are we ready to accept the liberty or freedom that God offers us in Jesus? He is able and willing to free us, but we must ask Him to do so. We are blind—our hearts are blind. We do not see ourselves as God sees us. We do not see people around us as He would want us to see them—with understanding and compassion. And, we do not see God, when, in fact, He has shown Himself in Jesus. He promises us new sight. Will we accept it? We are downtrodden, yes, and at times we are discouraged. We lose hope and our faith is shaken. We meet too many difficulties. We are faced with too many problems. Jesus tells us that God frees people like us...if we want to be free. Are we ready to receive those favors from the Lord?

Lourdes is a place in France where Our Lady appeared to Bernadette. There, God works wonderful things. Many people go to Lourdes who are suffering from all kinds of diseases of the body and the mind. Many of them are healed. How does it happen? There is one explanation only: God is at work. This is not the only place that God is at work. God is at work, also, in our lives—and in the depths of our hearts. The eyes of our body may not see the miracles being worked out. But, God really works marvels for each one of us.

In what ways am I poor, oppressed, or held captive? How does the Lord’s promise speak to me? How can I bring glad tidings to those who are poor and oppressed?

Let me tell you all about it