

## Epiphany III Coming Home: Stating Identity— Luke 4:14-21

The Lukan account is very different when compared to Mark 6:1-6 and Matthew 13: 53-58.

Jesus stands in the synagogue at Nazareth and reads from Isaiah 61:1-2:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour (4:18-19).

The eyes of all in the synagogue are fixed on him as he reads the Scripture. But they could hardly have been prepared for what he is reported to have said when he sat down: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (vs. 21). He celebrates a time of jubilee in his declaration of the coming of God's reign and the release that it brings when people turn to God with and through him and rejoice in a new day

This ministry follows the testing in the wilderness. Jesus comes to his hometown. The focus in Luke is the proclamation that Jesus makes at Nazareth about his ministry and mission. The text from Isaiah becomes a charter for another journey into the fields of justice and mercy and the unfolding of the sovereign will of God. The release of captives and the release of the oppressed are clearly intentional in the ministry of Jesus. The passage may have been the set one to be read that day, but in any case it struck home when he sat down and said that the text was about him! It was an entirely appropriate text for his ministry. It touched on some of the great needs of humanity, the very things that he was so anxious to address. That is, his commitment to bring healing and blessing and refreshment of vision and hope into many lives. The text speaks as much to us as it spoke about him.

Jesus is so clearly linked with the anointing of the Spirit in Luke that Spirit and Jesus are inseparable at times. During his ministry he constantly reaches out to those on the margins of life. He directly chooses to relate to the outcasts of his day. The proclamation of the "good news" by Jesus declared that a new age had dawned in which status was no longer the mark of a person's humanity or their standing before God. The prophets had always said that and they were still read with great seriousness in the synagogues. But the actual voice of the prophets had been silent for centuries. Jesus reactivates that voice by connecting his words, his person and the prophetic text from Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth. The mission of Jesus was described by Origen, one of the first biblical exegetes in the early Church as that of being the *autobasileia*. The Greek word *autos* means "he", and in a reflective sense "himself". "*Basileia*" is the Greek word for "kingdom" That is, the combined word means the Kingdom in a person, the focus of the reign of God on earth. What a wonderful combination to describe the ministry of Jesus! We also have to reflect the reign of God in our own person through our ministry and mission. We have to know what our mission is and how we can "so shine" before others so that we too can "glorify your Father who is in heaven" – Bishop Arthur Jones

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**Your prayers are asked in our healing ministry for** Allan Waterfield, Beryl Tanner, Bonnie SyCip, Carlyn-Fern Manning, Rom Vildzius, JPeter, Isabel Yu, Johnny Manning Jr, Loy Solasco, Aris Paraman, Benjie Conzales, Jovel Llagas, Richard Kendall, Diana Croyston, Ted Whale, Merly Quiapos, Susan Dalmas, Helen Irvine, Ron Jacob, Carrie Angus, Emerinciana Gatela, Suzanne Jacobson, Fr. Gabriel Dimanche.

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### Important Reminders ...

**Jan. 31, the last Sunday of this month**, has been designated by the Vestry as the **Annual General Membership** meeting date for the Church of the Holy Trinity.

Activities for Jan. 31 will include 2009 Year-End reports of the various committees and casting of votes to fill up the 6 positions that will be vacant in the Vestry for 2010.

1. Nomination forms are now available at the church office (from Claire or Maricel) for those interested to nominate a parishioner to sit in the Vestry. Please note that the form requires the signed confirmation of the person nominated.

2. A brief write-up about the person nominated, preferably with a photo attached, will be greatly appreciated, so we can post the write-up on the church bulletin board for information of the parishioners and for everyone to know the candidates better.

3. We enjoin everyone to please submit the nomination forms today, January 24, in order for the ballots to be printed with complete listings for distribution on the election date.

4. The list of those eligible to vote is posted on the church bulletin board. Please check the listing to ensure that your name is included. If your name is not in the list, please advise Claire Agustin, our church secretary.

Vicky Yu, AGM Coordinator

P.S.  
Committee Reports are also due today.

**Great Renovations!** After both services today the In-Touch renovations will be open for inspection. This has been a major project, and our people should see what has been done and where their money has been spent. It is fitting that we thank Phil Thoburn for his leadership in this renovation. He generously placed his people at our disposal, gave of his time in supervision and saved us a lot of money. After the 9.30 am Eucharist we will also bless the Renovated Rooms upstairs. I will ask the young people and children to join me for this blessing in the midst of our people. I would like to thank our staff for their patience in the noise and inconvenience. I will be glad to have my office back!

### This week:

Jan. 26, Tuesday.

- Bible Study

Jan. 28, Thursday.

- Eucharist, 10am, Chapel
- Bible Study 7pm, Rectory

Jan. 31, Sunday.

- Eucharist 7:30/9:30
- Sunday School, 9:15
- Annual General Meeting, after the 9:30 service.

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**Next week's readings:** Jeremiah 1:4-10; 1 Corinthians 14:12b-20; Luke 4:21-32

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