

The Little Flower Messenger

Year C – THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 23rd January 2022

Welcome to our Parish Community of St. Theresa of Lisieux

The Presbytery, High Lane, Stansted Mountfitchet, CM24 8LQ

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Gospel: Luke 1:1-4

'This text is being fulfilled today'

Mass book (P. 129)

1st Reading:

Nehemiah 8:2-6, 8-10

Psalm 18:8-10:

Yours words are spirit, Lord, and they are life.

2nd Reading:

1 Corinthians 12:12-30

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! The Lord has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon: (P. 132)

Look toward the Lord and be radiant; let your faces not be abashed.

This Week's Good News

Dear Friends,

In his motu proprio of 30th September 2019, *Aperuit Illis*, Pope Francis has declared that the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be devoted to the celebration, study, and dissemination of the Word of God

Today's Gospel, presenting Jesus' "inaugural address" in the synagogue of Nazareth and outlining his theology of total liberation, marks a great moment in Jesus' ministry. The Scripture readings for today focus our attention on the importance and liberating power of the Word of God as "sacramental," making God present in our midst. The readings challenge us to listen to the Word, accept it into our hearts, then put it into practice as we live out our lives, thus liberating ourselves and others from all types of bondages.

Today's Gospel describes how Jesus participated in the Sabbath prayer of the synagogue in his native place in Nazareth with a band of disciples. The synagogue Liturgy of the Word was based on seven readings. The first four were from the Law (the Torah or the Pentateuch) followed by explanations given by the rabbi who was the teacher of the Law. The second set of three readings, taken from the prophets, could be read, and interpreted by any circumcised male over thirty years of age. It was in this second capacity that Jesus read and preached on the passage from Isaiah (61:1-2a). Since Jesus did not belong to Aaron's family, he could not be a Jewish priest. But as a popular lay teacher, he was given the chance to read and explain the portion from the Scroll of the Prophet Isaiah. Naturally, the people of his native place were curious to hear from this carpenter-turned-prophet who had grown up among them and had worked miracles throughout Galilee. Luke reports that Jesus returned to Galilee *in the power of the Spirit*, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,*" Jesus said,



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“because He has anointed me...” This “power of the Spirit” was absolutely essential in order for Jesus to complete his mission.

The reading from Isaiah describes a kind of Messianic figure. In Isaiah 61:1-2, the prophet explicitly uses the language of “Messiah” or “Anointing”, “Anointed One.” Jesus identifies as that figure and declares that the mission and ministry prophesied are his mission and his ministry. In other words, Jesus declares that Isaiah’s prophecy is fulfilled in him, and this Scripture, about the Messiah, and the Jubilee, that we just heard, is fulfilled. Jesus claims that his messianic mission is similar to the mission given to Moses in Exodus 3:7-10, and that Jesus has been sent to Israel: (1) to bring glad tidings to the poor; (2) to proclaim liberty to captives; (3) to give recovery of sight to the blind; (4) to free the oppressed, and (5) to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord. “An acceptable year,” in this context, suggested the ancient “*Jubilee Year.*”

In the book of Leviticus 25, God says there is, at the end of seven times seven-year cycle, that is, after 49 years, the 50th year will be a Jubilee year. It’s going to be a Jubilee year because in that year all debts are to be forgiven, all slaves are to be set free, and any land that has been appropriated, (family land which had been lost through debt), is to be returned to the original owners. Isaiah meant that the period of his ministry would open for all Israel the long-desired restoration of Zion which the Lord God Himself would accomplish, giving Israel His forgiveness and restoring her to His love and favour. In selecting this Messianic passage (“*This Scripture has been fulfilled today, in your hearing*”), Jesus sums up both the source of his power and authority and the nature of his freeing and saving ministry. First, Jesus claims the power of God’s Spirit as the source of his work. Second, Jesus makes this proclamation in the context of Judaism – on the Sabbath, from the Scriptures, and in the synagogue. Third, Jesus identifies his work, the work of the Messiah, with that of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh (see Isaiah 42:1-4, in particular), who brings Good News to the poor, proclaims release to the oppressed and recovery of sight to the blind — figuratively and literally. Fourth, this agenda begun in Nazareth is to extend to all places where the Word of God will be heard and understood.

We need to let the power of the Holy Spirit fill us, and to be ready to have miracles done through us. Today’s Gospel tells us that Jesus performed miracles because he was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised the same Spirit to his disciples: “*I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth.... He lives with you and will be in you*” (Jn 14:16-17). To this very day, the Holy Spirit is available to all believers who sincerely ask Him to dwell in their hearts. If we fail to receive, and then to use, His power and His gifts, we are left with nothing but our natural abilities, and we will be unable to be used as instruments in His freeing miracles. Miracles occur every day through weak human instruments, although they may be less spectacular than the ones Jesus performed. People whose minds are ravaged by fear and hatred can be miraculously filled with peace and kindness. Those whose hearts are crippled with bitterness and anger can be made gentle and peaceful. Perhaps others, whose relationships with their spouses are strained, can be miraculously healed by love and faithfulness. These are true miracles, performed by the power of God, through the Holy Spirit, often making use of human instruments. Let us be ready to become Spirit-filled instruments of Christ’s saving freedom.

Bible reading enables us to know Jesus more and to love him better. That is why we should set apart a time in the morning and in the evening to read a part of the Bible, giving priority to the Gospels and the Epistles. This reading should be an integral part of the evening family prayer. Children should be encouraged to read the Bible with the adults explaining to them what they read. We need to read the Scriptures as books inspired by God that teach us about God and how we should live our lives. We also need to ask for God’s grace to interpret what we read. God gives us inspiration so that we may understand the text and apply its lessons fruitfully to our lives. Five or ten minutes each day will make it possible to read the entire New Testament easily at least twice each year.

Deacon Des



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Making an Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Parish News

COVID19 - Bishops' Conference Guidance: The following guidance is currently in place and was issued by the Bishops of England and Wales:

- **Face Coverings** - The wearing of a face covering is now mandatory in Places of Worship. However, there will be exemptions for those leading worship, public proclamation of scriptural readings or prayers, and those who are unable to wear face coverings and are exempt for medical reasons.
- **Singing** - The current Church guidance states that congregational singing should take place with face coverings in place and choirs and soloists may sing without such coverings. As the Church moves towards Christmas celebrations which often involves carol services and other singing events, it is strongly recommended that congregational singing within church buildings continues with the applied face coverings.

26th January Mass: Please note there will be no Mass this Wednesday (26th January). Thank you.

White Flower Appeal: Thank you for your generosity with this appeal last weekend. In all £400 has been sent to SPUC.

PPC Meetings: The latest minutes of the PPC dated 20th September 2021 are available to view on our Website. Dates of the 2022 meetings are as follows:

- May 9th 2022 at 7:00 p.m.
- July 11 2022 at 7:00 p.m.
- July 17th 2022 APM after the 10:00 Mass
- October 17th 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Baptism Course: Forthcoming courses take place on 16th February, 16th March and 6th April, all on a Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. To enrol on the course, please email the Parish Office stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org Thank you.

Sacrament of Marriage: People who wish to be married in the Catholic Church must approach Fr. Lee / Deacon Des, at least 6 months prior to the intended date of their wedding, and before setting a wedding date.

Visions Group: We would like to invite anyone who wishes to share and grow their faith to join us every Monday at 3:45 p.m.

- Zoom meeting ID: 822 2687 8791 +
- Passcode: visionst.

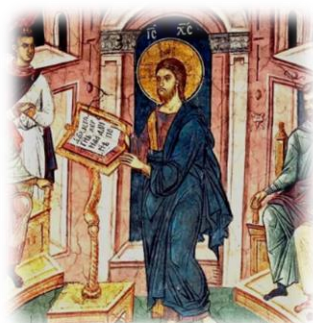
For a direct link visit the parish website calendar or contact Isobel.



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Mass Times and Intentions

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR C		
Saturday 22 nd January	Confessions: 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Margaret Barrett R.I.P. Stuart Gibby R.I.P. (M. Jacobs)
Sunday 23 rd January <i>Sunday of the Word of God</i>	Mass: 8:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i> Confessions: 9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	People of the Parish
Monday 24 th January <i>St Francis de Sales</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	
Tuesday 25 th January <i>The Conversion of St Paul</i>	Confessions: 7:15 p.m. Mass: 8:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	For the intentions of Grace and Sister Catherine (O. Salici)
Wednesday 26 th January <i>St Timothy & Titus</i>	No Mass	
Thursday 27 th January	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	
Friday 28 th January <i>St Thomas Aquinas</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	
FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR C		
Saturday 29 th January	Confessions: 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	John Paul Loughlin 8th Anniversary R.I.P. (The Loughlin Family)
Sunday 30 th January	Mass: 8:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i> Confessions: 9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Margaret Barrett R.I.P. Stuart Gibby R.I.P. (M. Jacobs) People of the Parish



PLEASE TAKE THIS NEWSLETTER HOME WITH YOU AND DISPOSE OF IT RESPONSIBLY. THANK YOU.



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