



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY January 27 & BEYOND”

“There’s a Calling for Each of Us”



In the story from the Gospel of Luke for Sunday, we hear that Jesus has returned to Nazareth where he grew up. He had been traveling around visiting villages and synagogues ever since his baptism and was returning from

his battle with the devil out in the wilderness, now fully empowered by the Holy Spirit. This means, just from reading what Luke wrote, that this visit to his hometown synagogue is his ministry homecoming.

Here in this synagogue he reads the portion of Isaiah’s prophecy which describes who the Messiah is to be, and what his ministry would look like. He begins the reading where prophet had said,

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me....”

That in and of itself might not have caused any question, since he was reading the prophet Isaiah’s words. Then he continued from the scroll:

“...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,

to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

Why wait until he got to Nazareth to claim this was about himself? Because not only was Jesus a Nazarene, but the Messiah was a Nazarene, and this brings complete fulfillment to that prophecy.

You know, this moment reminds me of the public and media-invited announcements made by citizens of our nation that they are running for a particular public office

election. It doesn't seem to matter what the level of that office would be -- local, district, state, regional or national, politicians like to announce from their home towns. Of course, one of the reasons is to make the statement that even though this person has felt within themselves a political ambition, still, this person running for election is no different than any other person: they grew up somewhere specific, they had local friends, they had parents from somewhere. And then just to put a point on this homecoming announcement, they usually like to dress the part of their humble beginnings, like a cowboy hat if you are back in your humble home town of Dallas, TX. Of course, that doesn't mean that everybody in your small home town is going to vote for you! Familiarity sometimes breeds contempt.

Still, announcing from your home town brings attention to not only to the person running for office but also on the town or city. How many little and big towns around the United States proudly display a marker at the city limits that announces "This town is the home town of Franklin Delano Roosevelt (or Dwight Eisenhower, or Abraham Lincoln, or whomever)." Yes, all the way around, that special person makes note of their hometown; it is a special place.

So, how is this alike? Because Jesus read what he read, rolled up the scroll, and said with great confidence and boldness, "This prophecy from Isaiah has been fulfilled here in your presence and your hearing."

So here Jesus makes His announcement of His identity as the Messiah, formally, in the synagogue. Unlike those politicians above, though, the moment is not humanly staged. Jesus did not send a memo forward to the synagogue ruler telling him to hand Jesus the scroll of Isaiah and clearly, it was not so marked for that passage. No, the PR person for Jesus was not a human team. It was the Holy Spirit himself, arranging for that moment. I imagine that no matter what happened before that moment God would have made sure Jesus got that scroll, and that he would read from it in his hometown.

This is one more story highlighted in the Sundays after Epiphany of how the identity of Jesus is revealed to the world, to the seekers of Israel, in power, and that the Messianic prophecy fulfilled. No one else is Jesus; no one else is the Messiah.

But YOU came from "somewhere," too. If your identity is already in Christ, have you considered the path of your life, and your spiritual journey to Jesus, and what happened along the way? Can you see how God has been involved to bring you to that special place where you proclaimed him as your Lord? You do this reflection, and I can almost unequivocally guarantee that you will see God's hand on your life, leading you until you did decide to follow Jesus, and that he's still leading you. You

can't make those stories up; the realization of God's desire to lead YOU to such moments of grace and confidence are humbling, and full of grateful thanksgiving.

If you have not yet come to believe in Jesus Christ as the Savior of the World, you should know that everyone who has ever reflected on their life, considering where they have been and where they are now in their personal journey, can see that God was already there in their lives leading and guiding them to come to that special moment of public proclamation. The Church notes that as the day of your baptism. He's been there with you. It's time to believe in the One, the only One.

Then you too will be able to say as Jesus did, "God has been with me in the stages and events of my life; God's plan for me has been fulfilled, and is being fulfilled."

Fr. Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Third Sunday of the Epiphany

Nehemiah 8:2-10 Psalm 113 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 Luke 4:14-21

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The Third Sunday of the Epiphany

8:30a Low Mass (Church)

10:30a Solemn High Mass (Church)

—The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue—

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

MONDAY: 7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY: AA Meetings

8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)

8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

SATURDAY Societies of Mary Day of Devotion (All are welcome)

11:00am Rosary (St. Mary Chapel)

11:30am Mass (St. Mary Chapel)

Noon Potluck Lunch (Parish Hall)