**EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME**

**SCROLLS**

**EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY’S THEME**

***Introducing the Gospel***

*Synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4: 14-21)*

Luke begins his account of Jesus’ ministry not with the call of the first disciples, but with Jesus returning to his home town of Nazareth and teaching in the synagogue there. In this passage Luke is concerned to show that Jesus’ ministry was clearly foretold in the Old Testament. The very same Holy Spirit who inspired God's people in the Old Testament is now anointing Jesus to do the work of God. The message of continuity with the past is symbolised by the scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

The image to stimulate reflection on Luke’s opening narrative concerning Jesus’ teaching in the synagogue in Nazareth is *scrolls*.

***Core extract from the Gospel (Luke 4: 16-18; for reflection throughout the week)***

When Jesus came to Nazareth,

where he had been brought up,

he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day,

as was his custom.

He stood up to read,

and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him.

He unrolled the scroll

and found the place where it was written:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.’

***Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)***

Lord God,

you speak with your people

through the words of scripture.

Help us to hear your word,

and to heed your voice;

today and always.

Amen.

**READING NEXT SUNDAY’S GOSPEL**

**Luke 4: 14-21**

**The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry**

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

**The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth**

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:  
‘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,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’  
And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, ‘Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’

**ENGAGING WITH THE THEME**

***Dwelling with the text (Luke 4: 14-21)***

Begin to explore Luke’s narrative concerning Jesus’ teaching in the synagogue in Nazareth by employing the SIFT approach of Sensing, Intuition, Feeling, and Thinking. You may find that one of these approaches comes easier to you than the others. But it is worth trying all four.

* What details in the passage catch your attention (Sensing)?
* What big ideas in the passage spark in your mind (Intuition)?
* What most touches your heart in the passage (Feeling)?
* What most stretches your mind and makes you think in the passage (Thinking)?

***Thinking and talking***

Identify topics within the passage that can get you thinking and talking. Here are some ideas to get you started.

* Why does Luke begin this narrative by saying that Jesus was filled with the power of the Spirit?
* Why does Luke stress that it was Jesus’ custom to go to the synagogue?
* What is the significance of the chosen passage from Isaiah?
* How is Jesus interpreting Isaiah?
* What does this narrative say for us today?

***Using your Bible***

For the importance of Nazareth see:

* Luke 2: 39, 51
* Matthew 2: 23

For Jesus’ rejection in Nazareth see:

* Matthew 13: 54-58

For the roots of this passage in the Old Testament see:

* Isaiah 61: 1-6

For the role of the Spirit in Luke see:

* Luke 1: 34-35
* Luke 3: 22
* Luke 4: 1

***Exploring online***

Widen your exploration of Luke’s narrative concerning Jesus’ teaching in the synagogue in Nazareth by looking up some of the following themes and others of your own choosing.

* Jesus in the Nazareth synagogue
* Ancient scrolls
* Making paper scrolls

***Drawing on experience***

The image to stimulate reflection on Luke’s narrative concerning Jesus’ teaching in the synagogue at Nazareth is *scrolls.* Draw on your own experience of scrolls. For example:

* Have you attended worship in a synagogue (or seen films of this) and seen scrolls used there?
* Have you seen ancient scrolls or pictures of them?
* Can you imagine how tricky it would be to read a book written on a scroll?

What have you learned about scrolls?

***Creating and making***

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by Luke’s narrative concerning Jesus teaching in the synagogue in Nazareth.

* Make paper scrolls and display them.
* Make a collage of pictures showing scrolls used in synagogues.
* Make a poster of Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth around the text of the passage from Isaiah.
* Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on Jesus’ reading and interpretation of Isaiah.



**EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME**

Each week we are inviting people in their homes to look forward to those Sunday services that follow the Revised Common Lectionary Gospel readings. We employ the SIFT approach (Sensing, Intuition, Feeling, and Thinking) to encourage reflection on the Sunday Gospel.

We are suggesting a variety of ways in which people of all ages, and households working together, may engage with the Gospel reading and celebrate that engagement with shared activities.

Our invitation then is for you to share your reflections, prayers and photos of your creative work with the Cathedral by emailing them to smc.lesliefrancis@gmail.com.

These materials have been developed by the Canon Theologian of Liverpool Cathedral working in collaboration with the staff team here at the Cathedral, and with sponsorship and support from the St Mary’s Centre in Wales.



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