



Center for Spiritual Development

# Daily Reflections

Image by Christine Sponchia

## THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME...

By Sr. Jeanne Fallon, CSJ

### An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

*Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:*

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring glad tidings to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.*

*Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."*

*And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that*

came from his mouth.

LUKE 4:16-22

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## Reflection

What would it have been like to be in the synagogue at Nazareth on a sabbath day when Jesus, now about thirty years old, came back to the place where he grew up, to visit and to pray with the people? Perhaps take a moment to sit there as Jesus is invited to give a teaching. Watch as he stands up to read and is given the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. You are watching intently as he unrolls the scroll until he finds the passage he has chosen. Then he begins, ***“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me...”*** What is it like to hear Jesus reading the prophet’s words, words that describe his own mission to the poor, to those being held captive, to the blind and the oppressed? After reading the scripture, you see Jesus handing the scroll back to the attendant and he sits down to give his reflection on the reading. All are watching him with anticipation, and you hear him say, ***“Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.”***

As you imagine this scenario, what is the climate in the synagogue when Jesus says those words? At first the people spoke highly of Jesus as they listened to his opening statement. The following verses in this gospel (not quoted above) tell how the townspeople began to recall, *“Isn’t he the son of Joseph?”* They thought they knew his origins. As Jesus continued to speak, he knew that the people could not fathom that this man, whom they had known all along, could be saying words of salvation. Jesus took offense with their criticism and the situation changed dramatically. The villagers were filled with rage and chased Jesus out of the town and tried to kill him on the brow of the hill, but Jesus passed through the crowd and left the area. (Luke 4:22-30)

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Rabbi Jay holds the Torah  
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## For Pondering and Prayer

Following the history of the prophets of old, Luke describes Jesus as the “rejected prophet.” Yet this rejection in his hometown is not the end of the story. All through the Gospel of Luke, Jesus continues his journey to God, culminating in his passion, death and resurrection. This might be a good time to ask Jesus about his experience of rejection in Nazareth and listen again to his consoling proclamation in the synagogue. What does Jesus want to say to you?

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