

Our Lady of Lourdes Harpenden

27TH JANUARY 2019
3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)



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There is something about the opening sentences of Luke's Gospel that grabs one's attention. He is the only Gospel writer to give us information about his purpose and sources. He writes for Theophilus, whose name in Greek suggests 'lover of God'. Theophilus may have been a patron of Luke's, but we can also take this name to mean that Luke writes for all lovers of God, i.e. all of us.

Jesus, 'as was his custom,' attends the service at his local synagogue. It is clear that Jesus was a faithful Jew even though he is about to have some serious run-ins with the Jewish religious leaders. This moment is one of the most powerful passages in the New Testament, as Jesus sets out his manifesto for ministry. Reading from Isaiah, Jesus tells the crowd that this passage is being fulfilled as they hear it, his ministry would be one focused on freeing people from various types of oppression. This passage is as relevant in our world today as it was for Jesus' time: people still await liberation, the oppressed are not free. This is not a passage read in the past: it is very much alive, a vision for all to have as Christians and to work out of. Just as the scriptures are fulfilled in Jesus, they are also fulfilled in each of our lives.

'Although they heard you, Lord, they failed to listen. They heard only what they wanted to hear. The truth hurt them, you made them feel uncomfortable, and they rejected you ... Show us how we may seek your Kingdom and help to bring peace to a troubled world.' Tony Singleton