

## SUNDAY: 31 January 2010 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

1<sup>st</sup> reading: [Jer 1:4-5, 17-19](#)

Psalm 71:1-6,15-17

2nd reading: 1 Cor 12:31—13:13 or 13:4-13

**Gospel reading:** Lk 4:21-30

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### Scripture: Lk 4:21-30

<sup>21</sup>Then he began to speak to them, 'This text is being fulfilled today even while you are listening.' <sup>22</sup>And he won the approval of all, and they were astonished by the gracious words that came from his lips. They said, 'This is Joseph's son, surely?'

<sup>23</sup>But he replied, 'No doubt you will quote me the saying, "Physician, heal yourself," and tell me, "We have heard all that happened in Capernaum, do the same here in your own country." ' <sup>24</sup>And he went on, 'In truth I tell you, no prophet is ever accepted in his own country. <sup>25</sup>'There were many widows in Israel, I can assure you, in Elijah's day, when heaven remained shut for three years and six months and a great famine raged throughout the land, <sup>26</sup> but Elijah was not sent to any one of these: he was sent to a widow at Zarephath, a town in Sidonia. <sup>27</sup> And in the prophet Elisha's time there were many suffering from virulent skin-diseases in Israel, but none of these was cured -- only Naaman the Syrian.' <sup>28</sup> When they heard this everyone in the synagogue was enraged. <sup>29</sup> They sprang to their feet and hustled him out of the town; and they took him up to the brow of the hill their town was built on, intending to throw him off the cliff, <sup>30</sup> but he passed straight through the crowd and walked away.

**Meditation:** How would you react if Jesus spoke this message in your worshipping community? It was customary for Jesus to go weekly to the synagogue to worship and on occasion to read the scriptures and comment on them to the people. His hometown folks listened with rapt attention on this occasion because they had heard about the miracles he had performed in other towns. What sign would he do in his hometown? Jesus startled them with a seeming rebuke that no prophet or servant of God can receive honor among his own people. He then angered them when he complimented the gentiles who seemed to have shown more faith in God than the "chosen ones" of Israel. They regarded gentiles as "fuel for the fires of hell". Jesus' praise for "outsiders" caused them offence because they were blind-sighted to God's mercy and plan of redemption for all nations.

The word "gospel" literally means "good news". Isaiah had prophesied that the Messiah would come in the power of the Holy Spirit to bring freedom to those oppressed by sin and affliction (see Isaiah 61:1-2). Jesus came to set people free from the worst tyranny possible – the tyranny of slavery to sin and the fear of death, and the destruction of both body and soul. God's power alone can save us from emptiness and poverty of spirit, from confusion and error, and from the fear of death and hopelessness. The gospel of salvation is "good news" for us today. Do you know the joy and freedom of the gospel?

*"Lord Jesus, you are the fulfillment of all our hopes and dreams. Through the gift of your Holy Spirit you bring us grace, truth, life, and freedom. Fill me with the joy of the gospel and inflame my heart with burning love for you and zeal for your word."*