

**FOR THE WEEKEND OF JAN 29-30, 2022**

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Gospel reading (Lectionary 72)**

Lk 4:21-30

Jesus began speaking in the synagogue saying:
“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.
They also asked, “Isn’t this the son of Joseph?”
He said to them, “Surely you will quote me this proverb,
‘Physician, cure yourself,’ and say,
‘Do here in your native place

The things that we heard were done in Capernaum.’”
And he said, “Amen, I say to you,
no prophet is accepted in his own native place.
Indeed, I tell you,
there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah
when the sky was closed for three and half years
and a severe famine spread over the entire land.
It was to none of these that Elijah was sent,
but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon.

Again, there were many lepers in Israel
during the time of Elisha the prophet;
yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”
When the people in the synagogue heard this,
they were all filled with fury.
They rose up, drove him out of the town,
and led him to the brow of the hill
on which their town had been built,
to hurl him down headlong.
But Jesus passed through the midst of them and went away.

**Intercession**

For our diocese’s Annual Diocesan Appeal, that we might respond to the challenge to give with open-heartedness and generosity.

**Copy for bulletin announcement**

The Gospel is the Good News. It shows us the path to everlasting life. But sometimes it does this not just by showing us what to do, but also demonstrating what *not* to do. Today is a great example. Jesus preaches in Nazareth, where he grew up. The hometown crowd is expecting to hear some inspiring words, and maybe even see some miracles. But that’s not what Jesus has in store for them. Instead, he challenges them, pointing to their self-centeredness and their unwillingness to open-up to God. Definitely not the easy message they wanted to hear!

This is a moment of decision for his audience. Do they allow Jesus’s hard words to change them, leading to conversion and deeper relationship with God? Or do they put up walls, and respond with anger and stubbornness?

We know how they chose. The challenge for us is to choose differently when we’re confronted by a challenging message from Christ and His Church. One of those challenging topics in our parish today is the need to support the Annual Diocesan Appeal. It can be easy to react to this conversation by putting up walls or tuning things out. But the parish’s needs are real. What’s more important than whether we give or not is whether we allow ourselves to be challenged by the invitation to contribute, allowing ourselves to lower our defenses and to prayerfully listen and discern. Try it out today, and see how the Lord prompts you.

**Copy for pulpit announcement**

Our Lord challenges us to grow in open-heartedness and generosity. One of the ways he may be challenging you is through an invitation to contribute to our Annual Diocesan Appeal. Please discern how you can support this important cause, and consider making a contribution today.

**Social media post/content**

Photo: Person actively praying

Text: Prayerfully listen to the Lord

Copy: Jesus gives us signs at certain times when we need a moment to pause and rethink our priorities. One way he’s doing so in our parish community is through the invitation to contribute to the Annual Diocesan Appeal. The need is real. How will you respond?