



CELEBRATING AT HOME

3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

*Homecoming (Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21)*



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### Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church in this  
moment of prayer.**

### Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus, your words are Spirit and Life  
**Lord, have mercy.**

You bring Good News to your people.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

You feed us with your body and blood.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

### Scripture Reading (Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21)

Seeing that many others have undertaken to draw up accounts of the events that have taken place among us, exactly as these were handed down to us by those who from the outset were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, I in my turn, after carefully going over the whole story from the beginning, have decided to write an orderly account for you, Theophilus, so that your Excellency may learn how well founded the teaching is that you have received.

Jesus, with the power of the Spirit in him, returned to Galilee; and his reputation spread throughout the countryside. He taught in their synagogues and everyone praised him.

He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day as he usually did. He stood up to read, and they handed him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling scroll he found the place where it was written, *The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.* He then rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the assistant, and sat down. And all eyes in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to speak

to them, "This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen."

### Reflection - Homecoming

Homecomings can turn out to be very mixed events. Initial warmth and welcome can turn, surprisingly quickly, to doubt, antagonism and rejection.

In the Gospels for this Sunday and next, Luke tells the story of Jesus' visit to his hometown of Nazareth.

Before that story begins, however, the Church has included the very first lines of Luke's Gospel in today's reading. Here Luke explains, in classical literary fashion, what the purpose of his writings is: to offer an authentic and ordered account of the Christian movement, designed to give Theophilus firm reassurance about the things he has been taught.

After this introduction the first part of the story of Jesus' homecoming follows. We will hear the second part in next week's Gospel.

Following his temptation in the wilderness, Jesus returns to Galilee, the region in which he had grown up. He sets about teaching in the synagogues, winning many admirers.

Eventually, Jesus appears in his hometown of Nazareth and attends synagogue on the Sabbath as he usually did. He does the second reading of the synagogue service - the reading from the Prophets, in this case from the prophet Isaiah.

What Jesus reads out becomes an explanation of his mission and ministry. In the Spirit of the Lord, with which Jesus has been anointed, he will bring good news to the poor, liberty to captives, new sight to the blind, freedom to the downtrodden and proclaim a year of the Lord's favour.

The essential *good news* that Jesus preaches and enacts is of God's acceptance and welcome (not judgement) of the people who find themselves bound, trapped and afflicted.

Here Jesus sets the pattern not only for his own life and ministry, but also for those who would wish to follow him. We, too, anointed by the Spirit, are called

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to be God's acceptance, welcome and freedom for all who are bound, trapped or afflicted in their lives.

In the broader context of Luke's Gospel, this message is not to be reduced to metaphor. It is about giving real help for all who are struggling in one way or another with the concrete situations of their lives.

### Prayers of Intercession

You are the strength and joy of our hearts.

**May your Word touch us deeply  
as we strive to live as members of your Church.**

Your Spirit unites the individual gifts we bring to one another.

**Sustain us in our efforts to serve each other.**

We praise you for all people  
who proclaim your favour

**by cultivating peace, hope, freedom,  
liberty and generosity.**

### Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,  
we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done on earth  
as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

### Closing Prayer

Loving God, may our actions and our words  
heal and help, teach and touch  
through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

### Blessing

Walk gently with us, O Lord.

**Accompany us with the wisdom, love and strength  
we need to be your love at work in the world. Amen.**



# Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



**The Carmelites**  
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