

GOSPEL PEARLS

Testifying to Jesus

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Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all. He 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. They also asked, "Isn't this the son of Joseph?" (Lk 4, 14-22)

Jesus begins the proclamation of the Gospel in the places and towards the people that are humanly closest to Him, as will later also be the case, by the same will of Jesus, for his disciples who are sent first to preach to the people of Israel and not to the pagans. The ripple, in order to expand, must have a tiny beginning that becomes ever wider, until it involves everyone by means of the transmission of the proclamation from one to the others. The closest, the next, are those who are first involved in evangelization not by merit but by Grace. Like everyone, they are called to respond – there is no place for indifferent lukewarmness. Lord, help us not to be ashamed to witness to you to our closest friends and relatives.