

Homily  
Monday of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Week in Ordinary Time  
September 2, 2024

During the weekdays of the next thirteen weeks that lead up to the season of Advent, we will read from the Gospel of Luke. We begin with the story of Jesus' return to Nazareth, an event that takes place after his Baptism in the Jordan, His forty days in the wilderness, His first weeks of ministry in Galilee. Luke tells us Jesus returned to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit" and taught in the local synagogues. The welcome that Jesus received throughout the villages of Galilee, is in stark contrast to the rejection he faced in Nazareth. At first, the people of Jesus' hometown spoke well of him and were amazed at his words. When Jesus spoke about the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy in his person, the people were happy and pleased. What Jesus said seemed to be a message of glad tidings and hope. It was a message about the Messiah, God's Anointed One. Those held captive and who were oppressed would be freed; those who were blind would see. This is the promise the people of Israel have been waiting for. But then, a light goes off for these family and friends of Jesus, "Is this not the son of Joseph?" They realized Jesus was referring to Himself. They could not accept such a great message in the form of what had been right in front of them. They knew Jesus as a little boy, a young man, who walked among them, played with them, ate with them, worked with and for them, was one of them. And they rejected Him.

Everything we have and are, all we see, touch, hear, taste, and smell comes from God. God is and has been with us every day of our lives. Do we take Him for granted? God talks to us in many ways all the time. Are we listening? God knows our suffering, our passions, our needs, our desires. And He is right there as we cry out, waiting for us to reach out to Him. Are we too caught up in our lives to recognize God's presence among us? In a few moments, Jesus, always present, will become truly present on this altar, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. When we receive Him, do we welcome Him into our lives? Do we truly embrace His humanity and divinity? Do we accept His invitation to be one with Him and one with each other? Do we listen to Him and align our will to His? Do we see Jesus in ourselves and in each other? Have we welcomed His message of life, love and mercy and shared this message with everyone we meet? Let's start today.