

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday "C" 2010

I. Two men unroll papyrus scrolls and read to the people. In each case their proclamation signals the beginning of a new era. One is Ezra the scribe in the 1<sup>st</sup> reading; the other is Jesus of Nazareth in the gospel. Four centuries separate them. After an exile of 70 years in Babylon, the Jewish people returned to a destroyed nation much like the people of Iraq or Haiti, and now Ezra reads the "Book of the Law" to them in front of the reconstructed Temple. Not only can they worship again, they can also hear once again the Word of God. A new era had begun.

II. Four centuries later we find Jesus in his hometown synagogue. St. Luke tells us He has just been baptized and now by the "power of the Spirit" He begins his ministry by opening the Scroll of the Prophet Isaiah, often called "the Fifth Gospel" since it referred to so much in the New Testament an reading:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he has anointed me to bring glad tidings  
to the poor; liberty to captives, recovery  
of sight to the blind; proclaim a year  
acceptable to the Lord.

Rolling up the scroll, he eye-balls the crowd and says "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."-a new era had begun.

III. As Christians we believe that God took flesh in Jesus Christ; and not just a one-shot, 33 year intrusion into human history. The Mystery is that God is still taking flesh inside us, the community of

believer, the Body of Christ. St. Paul says "We are the Body of Christ"; not a replacement, not a representation. We are meant to do what He did-heal the broken, proclaim Good News like we are doing for the people of Haiti; and forgive the sins of those we love. Sounds strange. But doesn't a mother or father forgive a child who gets in all sorts of scrapes. Love binds, looses, forgives and holds each child in a family as best as can be done. But only Christ can do that! But cannot the Body of Christ bring good news to the broken hearted and liberty to those in chains? Today this Scripture is fulfilled in you! Seem too good to be true-isn't that simply a description of the Incarnation; God become man?