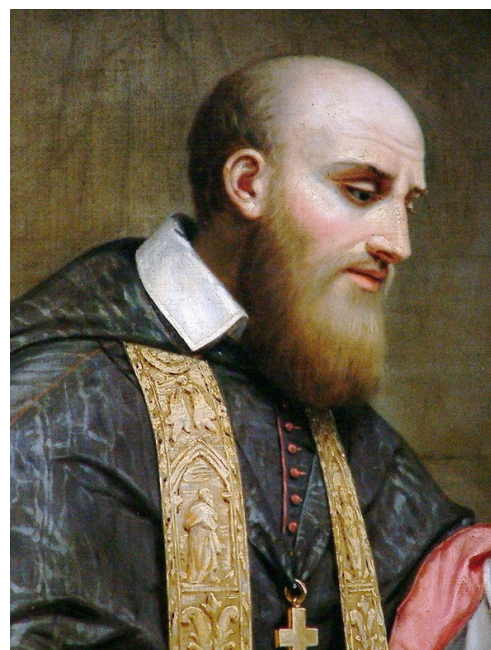


St. Francis de Sales

Feastday: January 24

August 21, 1567 - December 28, 1622



The back page has not featured too many saints this year, but I want to draw attention to one of my favorite saints. His book, *Introduction to the Devout Life* is an extraordinarily practical and helpful spiritual guide even today. Well worth reading! (multiple times)

Francis was destined by his father to be a lawyer so that the young man could eventually take his elder's place as a senator from the province of Savoy in France. For this reason Francis was sent to Padua to study law. As was written about him: *He was a gifted young man: of brilliant intellect, persevering, purposeful, serene, affable, irresistibly charming, and above all, consumed with the love of God.* After receiving his doctorate, he returned home but told his parents he wished to enter the priesthood. His father strongly opposed

this, and only after much patient persuasiveness did his father finally consent. Once ordained, Francis was elected provost of the Diocese of Geneva.

At 35, he became bishop of Geneva. He thus found himself at the center of conflicts between Catholics and Protestants, and the controversies raised by the Reformation. He worked ceaselessly for reconciliation, for the spiritual return to unity of the faith in his diocese. Through it all, he continued to preach, hear confessions, and catechize the children. His gentle character was a great asset in winning souls. He practiced his own axiom, "A spoonful of honey attracts more flies than a barrelful of vinegar."

Besides his two well-known books, the *Introduction to the Devout Life* and *A Treatise on the Love of God*, he wrote many pamphlets and carried on a vast correspondence. For this reason, he has been called patron of the Catholic Press. His writings, filled with his gentle spirit, are addressed to lay people. He wants to make them understand that they too are called to be saints. As he wrote in *The Introduction to the Devout Life*: "It is an error, or rather a heresy, to say devotion is incompatible with the life of a soldier, a tradesman, a prince, or a married woman.... It has happened that many have lost perfection in the desert who had preserved it in the world."

GROWING CATHOLICS

Leaflet 

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday Gospel • January 23, 2022 Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

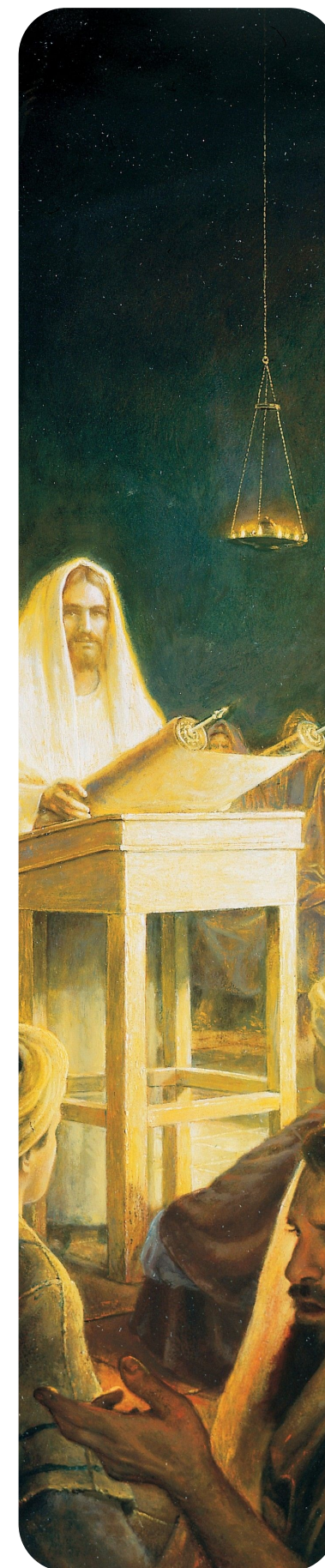
Since many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as those who were eyewitnesses from the beginning and ministers of the word have handed them down to us, I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received.

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."



EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW

Who was Theophilus?

- Some scholars think he was Luke's patron who funded the publication (handwritten) of his Gospel. Theophilus was a name commonly used at the time.
- Others suggest that "Theophilus" is a code name for the benefactor; in Greek the name means "God-lover".
- Still others suggest the name "God-lover" in the dedication means Luke is addressing everyone who believes in Jesus.

WHAT DID HE SAY?!

Adults have often heard these words of Jesus, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." But, that fancy wording can remove some of the shock value. What Jesus said was: **"I am the one Isaiah was talking about."**

Woah.



SEEDS FOR CONVERSATION

How did Jesus return to Galilee? What do you think that phrase means?

If Jesus was powered "by the Spirit", what powers you?

What kind of reception was Jesus getting in Galilee? Why do you think this was so?

Today's Gospel is part of a larger section in Luke that is introducing us to Jesus' ministry. Luke is answering the question, what did Jesus come to do? What is the answer we find in this particular passage?

What does this say about Jesus' relationship to God the Father? What does it say about Jesus' relationship to Scripture?

In the Gospel of John, he refers to Jesus as the Word. How does that relate to this passage?

BE SPIRIT-POWERED

Ask the HOLY SPIRIT to power your home and the people in it!

If you want a friend or family member to come visit, you invite them! If you want the Holy Spirit to power your home life- ask! There's no fancy prayer necessary; speak from the heart using words such as these:

Holy Spirit, come live in our home. We want you and we need you here. We invite you to come in and transform our home. We want You to inform us and inspire us to do the will of God. Please help us. Amen.



Say NO to un-Christlike Attitudes and Behaviors

Be bold about changing the atmosphere in your home, if needed.

Refuse to listen if God's Name is used in vain. Divert conversations that are unloving or critical to ones that focus on compassion and understanding. Call unkindness for what it is. Demand better of yourself and others - make it a family effort. Speak respectfully and gently, and remind others when their tone isn't loving.



The Bible is not called "God's Word" for nothing!

Have Bibles of various kinds available for browsing, reading and consulting. Children's Bibles, as well as simple translations make the Bible more appealing for children, in particular. And...the Holy Spirit often speaks through the Bible! Make it easily possible!



Serve!

If your home is habitually a place of service, love will grow. Serve one another and think of ways to serve outside the home. Remember to buy donations for the shopping cart. Look around your neighborhood for those who need a hand. Ask the Holy Spirit to show your family members ways to help others.



Come, Holy Spirit

Breathe into me, Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Move in me, Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Attract my heart, Holy Spirit, that I may love only what is holy. Strengthen me, Holy Spirit, that I may defend all that is holy. Protect me, Holy Spirit, that I may always be holy.

Saint Augustine