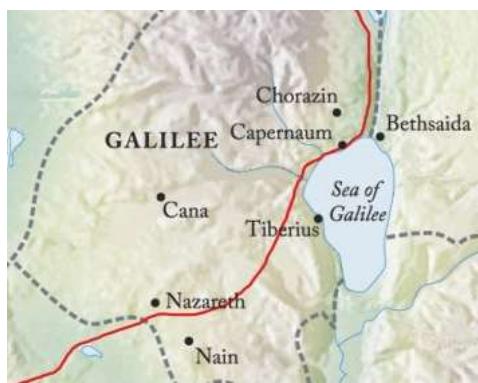


Jesus begins His Ministry in Capernaum

Jesus left Nazareth and began His ministry in Capernaum after John the Baptist was arrested. Capernaum was one of the fishing towns in the north part of the Sea of Galilee, Bethsaida was another. Bethsaida was the birthplace of least three of Jesus' apostles: Philip, Simon Peter and his brother Andrew. Simon Peter and Andrew were fishermen who have been partners with James and John, sons of a man named Zebedee.

Since large freshwater lakes with abundant fish resources were rare in the middle-east, fishing on the Sea of Galilee at the time of Jesus was a heavily regulated business. A lease to fish in Galilee may have been prohibitively expensive for just one or two fishermen, thus the fishermen

needed to form partnerships. The fishermen were permitted to pay their taxes "in kind," and historical evidence shows that fishermen paid 25 to 40 percent of their catch in exchange for the right to fish. But in spite of the heavy taxation, there is evidence that Zebedee had a flourishing fishing business, for the scriptures indicate that he had hired men.



Why did Jesus begin His ministry in Capernaum and not His home town of Nazareth? Luke chapter 4 tells us that after Jesus spoke at the synagogue in Nazareth, an enraged mob tried to throw Him off the brow of a large hill. Jesus was rejected in Nazareth; He declared, "Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place" (Luke 4:24).

However, despite what happened in Nazareth, Capernaum was a larger and more important town than Nazareth. Living on the Sea of Galilee meant that Jesus was just a boat ride away from a number of Jewish communities that lived along the lake. Capernaum was strategically located on an ancient trade route called the "Via Maris" or "The Way of the Sea." People from many different nationalities passed through Capernaum each day, and this helped facilitate the spread of Jesus' message and news of His miracles and healings.

But the most important reason for starting His ministry in Capernaum was to fulfil Isaiah's prophecy: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen." (Matthew 4: 12-14; Is 8:22-9:1)

The people who sat in darkness in the land of Zebulun and Naphtali were the Israelites of the northernmost tribes; they were the first to face oppression, captivity and exile under the Assyrian Empire in 733-732 BC. They were considered "in darkness" because they were separated from the religious centers in Judea, surrounded by Gentile influence and lived in a region overshadowed by death. Isaiah prophesied that these tribes, who were the first to suffer the Assyrian conquest, would be the first to see "the great light," which is the arrival of the Messiah.

耶穌聖名華人天主堂

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每周公報 Weekly Bulletin

2026年一月廿五日 January 25, 2026



Matthew chapter 4 tells us that Jesus fulfilled this prophecy by starting His ministry in Capernaum, which was located within the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali.

But Isaiah's prophecy extends beyond the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali, especially if we consider that "sitting in darkness" refers to living in a state of spiritual ignorance, spiritual oppression and despair, not just living under foreign oppression. Truly, Jesus came "to bring glad tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to let the oppressed go free" (cf. Luke 4:18). The poor were those who were spiritually deprived, because they have not yet heard and accepted the Gospel, the captives were those chained to a life of sin, the blind were those who have not seen the light of truth, and the oppressed were those oppressed and possessed by demons.

From Capernaum, Jesus went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people; His fame spread and they brought to Him all who were sick with various diseases and racked with pain, those who were possessed, lunatics, and paralytics, and he cured them. Great crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and from beyond the Jordan followed Him (cf. Matthew 4:23-25).

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Due to the ice-storm warning this weekend, we will not have Mass and Sunday School on Sunday. Please remain at home and be safe! God bless you!

We will celebrate Chinese New Year on Feb. 15, 2026 in lieu of 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The 10th year anniversary of the dedication of our church will be on November 19, 2027. We would like all church members to have their picture taken for the 10th year anniversary commemorative parish book. Please sign up with Tommy Puk.



Prayer List: Xie Yannong, Bian Meiyi, Chen Kun, Chen Shupeng, Ni Yufang, Lydia Chen, David Wang, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.

Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	Sundays 9:00-9:30 AM	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)	Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 PM By Appointment	Mondays 6:00 PM (English)
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)		Eucharistic Adoration
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	Anointing of the Sick	Sundays 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Tuesdays 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		
First Saturday 10:00 AM (Chinese)		