

July 5, 2015

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Do not be doubters but have faith!

Ezekiel 2:2-5

Psalm 123

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Mark 6:1-6

The Lord speaks to Ezekiel and the spirit entered him. He is sent to rebellious Israelites who are hard and obstinate of heart, and when they hear his message, regardless if they accept or reject it, they certainly know a prophet is among them.

The Psalmist is lifting his eyes to the Lord who is enthroned in heaven. He seeks help for himself and other faithful who constantly receive the mockery of the arrogant and the contempt of the proud.

Paul addresses his brothers and sisters in faith and tells them of the "thorn in the flesh" he suffers. He has begged the Lord to be released from this suffering but is reminded that "power is made perfect in weakness." He therefore is content with weakness, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints inflicted for the sake of Christ, for this will make his faith even stronger.



Jesus taught in the synagogue and astonished his listeners. They wondered how he came about all of this wisdom since they knew him as the carpenter's son. They began to take offense with him and Jesus told them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house." Their lack of faith amazed him and as a result he could only cure a few sick people by laying his hands upon them.

**The Father spoke to the prophets,
The Son spoke to the disciples and people of his time,
The Holy Spirit speaks to us.**

Jesus was disappointed because there was no acceptance of him in his own hometown and their lack of faith in him hindered even his healing power. The prophet Ezekiel encountered the obstinate of heart; the psalmist faced the mockery of the arrogant; Paul constantly faced insults and hardships. It is no surprise then that even today the faithful encounter their share of disbelief and rejection from others.

When Jesus taught in his hometown synagogue many people gathered to hear for themselves the teaching of this "carpenter" whose words emanated wisdom and whose reputation they most likely already heard of. Probably they expected the usual teaching but somehow they found his words powerful and transforming and could not truly accept them in faith but rather wanted to keep him in the "old mold" they had of him. His words and actions initially resembled those of others but somehow they were now "above and beyond" what the listeners could imagine and they may even found them too challenging. What Jesus taught was not to be understood as passive acquiescence but an active acceptance that is life changing and since it is easier to remain at "status quo" they resisted the challenge of change.

Perhaps we too need to realize how dynamic are the graces we receive and how we mature spiritually and are not look at each other as static in nature but rather as God's people constantly being renewed in body, mind, and spirit.

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