

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

July 4, 2021

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ezekiel 2:2-5 † 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 † Mark 6:1-6a



Reflection by: Sister Ann Marie Rimmer, OP

Why Don't We Recognize the Prophet?

Last week the ministry of Jesus saw him curing a woman suffering from a hemorrhage and healing Jairus' daughter who was thought to have died. People were utterly astounded when Jesus called her from her death bed to stand and she began to walk around. The crowd pressed around him and his disciples encouraged him to move on. Jesus was the healer.

This week tells a different story. Jesus wears the heavy mantle of the prophet. Jesus moves on to his hometown of Nazareth. There he preaches in the Synagogue. The people were amazed at this hometown man who preaches with such wisdom and accomplishes such mighty deeds. Yet, they ridiculed him. "Is he not the carpenter's son? Who does he think he is?" He was stunned at their lack of faith. In a sense, Jesus was a failure in Nazareth. Yet his words could be addressed to some of us today. Do we listen?

Often the prophet is treated without honor. The people to whom Ezekiel was sent were hard of heart and stiff-necked. Though Ezekiel was preaching about a new and better way of being, he would not be accepted.

The Galileans who heard Jesus' words were no better. They questioned Paul's authenticity because they knew him so well. They thought he was no better than they were, and, therefore, he had no right to act superior. We sometimes reject people who seem to know more than we do. Why do we turn from the insightful people among us?

True believers recognize and admit their human frailties. They also know that genuine weakness does not impede God's saving action in us. It seems that God prefers to act where pride and self-satisfaction do not prevail. When we act with humility and honesty, God will act through us, soften our hearts, allow us to receive the grace to hear the prophet, and, sometimes, act as the prophet ourselves.

On this Independence Day, our country is hearing many false prophets; let us do our due diligence to listen to the true prophets and work to allow the truth to prevail.