

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time by Fr. Dave

(Ezekiel 2: 2 – 5; 2 Corinthians 12: 7 – 10; Mark 6: 1 – 6)

In the Gospel for this weekend, Jesus returns to His home town of Nazareth. He preaches in the local synagogue and people are amazed by what they hear. In a sense, the neighbors seem to be jealous of Him as they ask: “Where did He gain all this knowledge and power? Isn’t He the Carpenter’s Son?” And isn’t that the way we can sometimes be when someone from our community does good? We question: “Who does he think he is? He’ll probably forget us now that he’s made a name for himself!” In Jesus’ case, His words and actions are greeted with skepticism and unbelief. This appears remarkable when the Gospel describes the large crowds elsewhere who accepted His preaching and acted upon His words. The people who Jesus knows, with whom He had grown up, those with whom he played, and the shopkeepers who knew His family, all these reject the Man Who returns preaching the message of the Kingdom of God. Had they heard rumors of the time He spent in the Desert? Were they embarrassed by His prayer and the way in which He spoke about God as His Father? Was suspicion led by the local synagogue leaders? These are not questions that we can answer, but they do suggest the human ways in which people judge one another.

Even though Jesus is rejected, God continues to invite each and every person into a personal relationship. The prophet Ezekiel show how God will continue faithfully to send prophets even if they are rejected. It is as though people do not realize that they cannot beat God’s plan. Ezekiel knows his humanity and yet God will use this for His own purposes. The people will rebel against the prophet because they are stubborn and obstinate, but they will know that there is a prophet among them. They may reject the prophet, but they cannot defeat God’s plan.

The same is true today. The grace of the Sacred Scripture allows eyes to be opened, minds to be opened to God’s plan – *if* we allow it to be. All of us, regardless who we are, are in a sense a prophet – leading people on the right path: it can be parents with their children; one co-worker with another; one student with another. There are times when we know that something should be said or done. Do we have the courage to be even a little bit prophetic over some issue of justice, or at least to pen ourselves to listen to a prophetic voice? We may hesitate, for we know of the inevitable discomfort and change that it may bring. But - how else will a society be healed unless a word is spoken? Ezekiel reminds us of God’s calling: “Whether they listen or not, this set of rebels shall know there is a prophet among them.”

This weekend we celebrate the Birthday of this great nation, let’s pause to think how some of the ideals of our founders have eroded over the years – diminishing some of the freedoms this country was once known for. As we reflect, let’s think how we can be a prophet speaking or

writing to our Senators and Representatives, to the general public, raising a greater awareness of circumstances that need to be corrected. Let’s pray for a greater openness to and a greater *co-operation with* God’s graces and Holy Spirit so that each of us, in our own gifted ways, can speak for those who cannot speak for themselves.



Happy Birthday America



I share the following with each of us - The words of the Preface of the Mass for Independence Day and Other Civic Observances says it so well: *“He spoke to people a message of peace and taught us to live as brothers and sisters. His message took form in the vision of our ancestors as they fashioned a nation where all might live as one. This message lives on in our*

midst as a task for us today and a promise for tomorrow.”

On Independence Day we honor America because we live with great liberty. But Americanism is about something much more important than freedom. So – what is the essence of Americanism?

The late Venerable Fulton Sheen wrote: “[Man’s rights] come not from the Constitution, the Government, Parliament, or the will of the majority, but from God. This is the essence of Americanism.”

May we accept the task of working with one another and with God so that all may live as one – all being accepted by one another and being treated fairly.

Let us pray for the Conversion of the World
& for Peace

BULLETIN REFLECTION

by Father Rody

JULY 04, 2021...14TH SUN O.T.

YR-B...MK 6, 1-6

2 When the Sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands!

3 Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.

Let me connect the above text to **MT. 7, 20** 'So by their fruits you will know them.'

Following the gospel of Mt., what kind of tree is being presented to us by evangelist Mark in our gospel today? Mark is presenting to us a good fruit thus pushing us to say, 'Hey we need to affirm also that this good fruit came from a good tree.' But the community of His time did not like it. Why?

1. Because they wanted to assert their prevailing concept...prestige can only come from the elite...education could come only from educated parents. Look how they disputed Mt. 7, 20, they attacked His parents (v.3) who were just carpenter and plain housewife and His brothers and sisters. Extra careful in interpreting brothers and sisters to mean biological siblings...Jesus did not have one.
2. Because His brothers and sisters were nobody. Nobody at that time meant no title...no position in the community...no degree/diploma...no wealth etc.
3. Because to be somebody in the community could only be displaced by another somebody who is greater and not by a mere nobody. In fact they were offended to be displaced from the strata of the society (verse 3) by a nobody.
4. Today we have the term 'Zombie' 'The Living Dead'. During the time of Jesus

those terms (zombie, the living dead and nobody) were already in existent...'multiplication of bread.'

-MT. 14, 21 Those who ate were about five thousand men, not counting women and children.

-MK 6, 44 Those who ate [of the loaves] were five thousand men.

-LK 9, 14 Now the men there numbered about five thousand. Then he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of [about] fifty."

-JN 6, 10 Jesus said, "Have the people recline." Now there was a great deal of grass in that place. So the men reclined, about five thousand in number.

Our gospel is not only about how intelligent-proficient teacher our Lord Jesus Christ is. Rather, He is telling us embrace always your ancestors though they may be lacking in life...being somebody is never gauged in what you have. We are 'somebody' because despite our sinfulness God did not treat us as nobody.