



July 7, 2024

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ez 2:2-5 | 2 Cor 12:7-10 | Mk 6:1-6

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

The prophets of the Old Testament didn't exactly have it easy, and Ezekiel is no exception. The Lord tells him that he's being sent to the Israelites, calling them "rebels who have rebelled against me," who were "hard of face and obstinate of heart." In other words, God basically tells him that they will be a tough audience. Can you imagine how Ezekiel felt? Here, he is being dispatched to a people who will likely not welcome him in order to say things that probably no one will want to hear. And yet his work is crucial. God is sending his people a messenger, telling them he stills loves them and wants them to be his people. It should come as no surprise that we are called to do the same! Although we may not describe the people in our lives as obstinate or "a rebellious house," we know it's not always easy to share God's message. It matters that we do, though. We may not always know exactly what effects our words and actions have, but everything the Lord asks us to do has a purpose.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Rejection, apathy, complacency. Whatever name you want to give it, it's undeniable that witnessing to Christ in the world can be met with something less than pure enthusiasm. Even Jesus himself faced rejection in his own hometown, as we see in today's Gospel. But did he give up? Obviously, we know that he did not. In fact – in the very next verses of this chapter of Mark's Gospel – Jesus sends the Twelve out on mission. They are to represent him, and witness to him. Likewise, as Jesus' hands and feet in the world today, we are to be imitators of Christ (ccc 1694) and witnesses to his Good News. And, just as Jesus wasn't always welcomed by people, it shouldn't surprise us when something similar happens to us. Like Paul, however, we can be "content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ." And then we can call on him for help, because where we are weak, the Lord is strong. As in all things, his grace is sufficient for us.

ACTION We cannot control others' responses to God's gift of himself, we can only be faithful to our commitment to share it. This week, take time to think about what "thorn in your side" makes your witness difficult. What weakness do you need the Lord to enter into so that *his* power might prevail?