

St. Frances Cabrini - Lebanon, TN
Fourteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time – Year B
July 8, 2018

Ez 2:2-5

2 Corinthians 12: 7-10

Mark 6:1-6

What is a prophet and their purpose? A prophet is a person speaks God's truth to others. They would also provide instruction to the people to help them follow God's will. As a part of this, a prophet calls attention to sin and wrong attitudes. However, most importantly, through His prophets, God wants people to know of his love.

Let us talk about Jesus as a prophet. Jesus was teaching something entirely different from what the Scribes and Pharisees was teaching. They were teaching fear. They were adding barriers, adding burdens to the Israelites. Jesus was working to remove those barriers to God. Jesus was telling them of God's love.

What makes it difficult to accept something considered prophetic? We see the world through the lenses of our lives. It is the paradigms we surround ourselves. We have preconceived notions on what is the truth. We have preconceived notions on who possesses that truth. We have preconceived notions on who can share that truth.

There is something interesting about today's gospel. Jesus' hometown did not doubt his message. What they doubted, was the messenger. How could Joseph's son be given this authority to teach? I used to play with Jesus; how did he get so much knowledge? We used to attend the synagogue together. I never saw him heal people then. They did not questions the good acts; but they were envious.

I get this. On a smaller scale, I get what Jesus was going through. People have in their mind who you are supposed to be. People have in

their mind who you are from past or present conditions. I am an engineer and manager at work. Those who have known me for years may be a little surprised to find out I am also a deacon for the Catholic Church. They do not think that I can have one foot in the secular world and one in the Church. Some of that is on me. Let me turn this around slightly. How many of you would see me as an engineer? You may only know me as a deacon.

You have heard me say that I am one of the youngest of eight children. Several siblings only remember the ornery little brat from forty years ago. You cannot be a deacon because you used to pull my hair, put peas in the toaster. You cannot be a deacon because you do not support every one of my political beliefs. You cannot be a deacon because you do not give me money when I choose not to work. None of their arguments hold water.

We are all called to be prophets. By our baptism, we are called be priest, prophet and king. We have a call to spread God's message and a call to do His will. This is no different from that of John the Baptist. Biblically, John was the last prophet. He was the bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament. He had one simple assignment; prepare the Way of the Lord.

As I just mentioned, we are all called to be prophets. We must follow a method. We must meet people where they are. It does no good to preach if you do not take the time understand where someone is coming from or what they are experiencing. If we ignore their needs, our words will have no effect.

There is another ingredient to this formula. Have you ever heard the saying "You can catch more flies with honey than vinegar"? It is in the how we say things. I do not mean that we should sugar coat everything like rainbows and unicorns. Sometimes, a tough message is required.

Other times, the message is better received when it is inviting, when it has a healing nature, not accusatory.

We are called to be prophets. I want you all to recognize the prophet within yourself. Spread God's Word. Spread God's mission. Spread God's mission of love and mercy for our brothers and sisters. Be like John and Prepare the Way of the Lord.