

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

YEAR B

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God,
you speak to us
through Jesus, your Son.
Do not let us ignore
what he has to say
nor think that we
know better than he.
Instead, open our ears
to your voice
and our hearts to your love,
so that we may live
as sisters and brothers
of Jesus, who is with you
forever and ever.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

The focus of both readings is the rejection of God's messengers, and ultimately of God's message.

In our first reading, Ezekiel is warned at the outset that he, and his message, may be rejected because "they are stubborn and rebellious people." But he is not to change the message. When Ezekiel proclaims God's message faithfully, whether it is accepted or not, they will know that he is truly a prophet. That is the sin God has warned against—they know he is a prophet, yet they will not listen.

Jesus is rejected, apparently because he is too common, too well known among his neighbors, to be a spokesperson for God. Note that this comes after a series of manifestations of the divine authority in Jesus—over evil spirits, over sin, over wind and water, and even death.

FIRST READING: *Ezekiel 2:2-5*

This is a reading from the prophet Ezekiel.

The spirit came to me, and I heard God say,

"I am sending you to speak to my people.

They are stubborn

and have turned away from me.

But I am sending you to them

and you will say,

'Your God is speaking to you!'

"And whether they accept what you say

or not,

(remember they are stubborn people!)

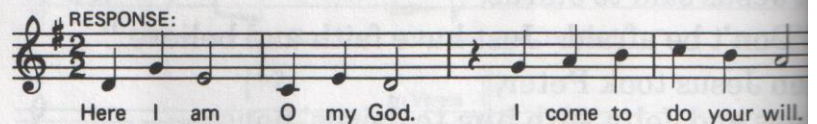
they will know that a real prophet

has come to them!"

This is the Word of God.


RESPONSE: *Psalms 40*

RESPONSE:



Here I am O my God. I come to do your will.

VERSES:

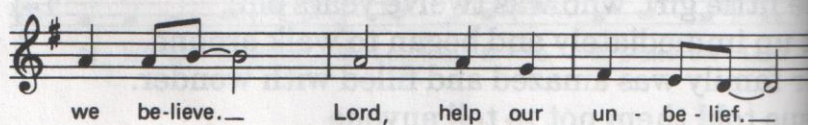


1. Speak Lord, I'm lis - ten - ing, — I wait to hear your Word
2. I will tell ev' - ry - one — how you will save us all.
3. A new song I will sing: — your love is won - der - ful.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. We be - lieve, —



we be - lieve. — Lord, help our un - be - lief. —



We be - lieve, — we be - lieve, — Lord, help our un - be - lief. —

* Use the *We Believe*, without the Alleluia, as a response for the Creed.

GOSPEL: *Mark 6:1-6*

This is a reading from the Gospel of Mark.

Jesus went to his home town
and his disciples went with him.
On the Sabbath day,
he went to the synagogue to teach.
The people there were amazed
at everything he said.
They asked,

“Where did he get all his wisdom?
And how is he able
to do the miracles he does?
Isn't he the carpenter, the son of Mary?
Isn't he the brother of James
and Joset and Judas and Simon?
And don't his sisters
live right here in our town?”

They just could not accept Jesus
as someone special.

Jesus said to them,

“Prophets are always honored
by everyone except their own people,
especially in their own home town.”

And Jesus could not do many miracles there,
except to heal a few people
by laying hands on them.

He was surprised at how hard it was
for them to believe.

And he went to teach in other towns.

This is the Good News of the Lord.

Ultimately, Mark tells us, miracles
are not enough—we must believe in
the person of Jesus. We are moving
toward the question of faith for
Mark, “who do you say that I am?”
(8:29)

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

Before the readings, ask the children if they have ever felt misunderstood or shunned or even rejected (perhaps made fun of) because they spoke the truth. Allow them time to relate their stories without comment. When all who wish have spoken, ask them why they think this happened—why they were shunned or made fun of. Again, allow them time to offer their ideas without comment. Invite them now to listen attentively to the first reading.

After the first reading, you might—in very few words—relate the call of Ezekiel to what the children have shared. Then invite them to listen to the Gospel.

After the Gospel, ask them why Jesus was not accepted when he taught. Help them to focus on the reason given in this Gospel reading. What did he do when his home town rejected him?

This last point is important. Children, too, feel rejected or made fun of for speaking the truth. They, like adults, are tempted to think it isn't worth the effort and give up. Help them to see that it is part of the Christian life and that Jesus himself experienced it. We can learn from Jesus not to give up.

