

Sent by a God who Empowers

I. A LOOK AT THE THREE READINGS

FIRST READING (Ez 2:2-5)

²As he spoke to me, the spirit* entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard the one who was speaking ³say to me: Son of man, **I am sending you** to the Israelites, a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have been in revolt against me to this very day. ⁴Their children are bold of face and stubborn of heart—to them **I am sending you**. You shall say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD. ⁵And whether they hear or resist—they are a rebellious house—they shall know that **a prophet has been among them**.

THE FOCUS: Sending of the Prophet by God

REFLECTIONS

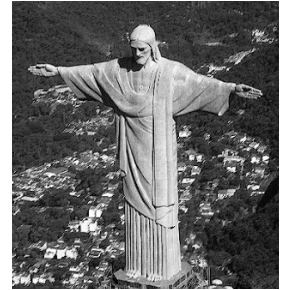
The prophets stand for the loving and tender God in the midst of a stubborn people.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 123:1-4)

OUR EYES ARE FIXED ON THE LORD,
PLEADING FOR HIS MERCY.

SECOND READING (2 Cor 12:7-10)

^{7b}Because of the abundance of the revelations. Therefore, that I might not become too elated,* **a thorn in the flesh was given to me**, an angel of Satan, to beat me, to keep me from being too elated. ^{8c}Three times* I begged the Lord about this, that it might leave me, ^{9*}^dbut he said to me,* “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in **weakness**.”



*Jesus the Redeemer,
Brazil*

I will rather boast most gladly of my **weaknesses**, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me. ^{10e}Therefore, I am content with **weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints**, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

THE FOCUS: A Thorn in the Flesh

REFLECTIONS

The thorn in Paul's flesh stands for his weakness so that he only relies on the power of God.

GOSPEL READING (Mk 6:1-6)

Setting (teaching)

^{1a}He departed from there and came to his native place,* accompanied by his disciples. ^{2*}When the sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue,

Reaction

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! ^{3b}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.

Jesus' response

⁴* "Jesus said to them, "A prophet is **not without honor** except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house."

No miracle performed

⁵So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there,* apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them. ⁶He was amazed at **their lack of faith**.

Teaching Again

He went around to the villages in the vicinity teaching.

THE FOCUS: The Rejection of the Prophet

REFLECTIONS

If Jesus just walked about his native place as a prophet depending on having known the place and the people, his mission would have failed. But Jesus had total trust in God from whom Jesus draws strength and life.

II. TYING THE THREE READINGS TOGETHER TO DEVELOP YOUR SHARING/HOMILY

Even if people are disobedient, God does not tire to send living signs, as the prophet to assure them of God's loving presence (First Reading). The thorn in the flesh that Paul feels also is a living witness to his dependence on God' power (Second Reading), and Jesus is also a living sign of God as he preaches, teaches and heals the people even in his native place. Yet, his own people have not accepted him. This is true pattern in the history of salvation. God has made a covenant with His chosen people, has sent prophets and seers and

teachers to remind the people of his abiding love forever fulfilling what He has promised. People ignored the offer of salvation, but God sent finally Jesus, the annointed (the Christ) to make the mystery of redemption happen.

How to develop your homily/sharing.

Begin with your experience of being rejected: when you manifested your love for a friend or a relative or a sibling. How did it feel?

Contrast it with the moment when you were sick and loved one visit you with *pasa-lubong* (gifts). How did it feel?

God must have experienced both of these. What pain when we reject his offer of salvation, yet what joy when we accept Him in our hearts as we try to be sorry for our sins and try to mend the broken relationship, leading a good life worthy of the salvation given.

Thus we have to be aware of what God has given us, of who are sent to us. These are opportunities of receiving God's blessings. When we receive people in our lives and accept them despite their idiosyncracies, we learn to adjust and live with all kinds of people and teach ourselves how to deal with the sometimes difficult ways of living.

Let us encourage people to come and join together in becoming Church, that is, People of God.

III. OUR CONTEXT

1. Sometimes we do not believe in the talents and capabilities of others because of their looks. Some singers who are not pretty or handsome do not gain popularity because of this. Is this true to our parish?

2. How is the lifestyle of the preachers and the evangelizers in your place? Do they rely on wealth or on God?

2. **Focus:** Lay Evangelizers of the Word of God in our parishes.

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