

**Parish of St. Joseph, Morningside**  
**14<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, B**

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**Pulpit Plan**

<b>Theme</b>	:	<b>“When I am weak then I am strong!”</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	:	Ezekiel 2:2-5
Responsorial Psalm	:	Ps 123
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	:	2 Corinthians 12:7-10
Gospel	:	Mark 6:1-6

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- The words of the Christmas Gospel of St. John: “He came to his own and his own received him not...” are made real in today’s scene from St. Mark’s Gospel!
  - Jesus is misunderstood and rejected by his own people: “they took offence at him.”
- Jesus has returned home, perhaps in need of some rest and relaxation, and is confronted by the pettiness, faithlessness and rejection of those he knows best!
- We can imagine then, how Jesus must have felt in today’s Gospel?!
- There is a deep harshness in the response of the people that must have forced Jesus to once again confront the loneliness of his calling:
  - His calling to be – not only a priest and king – but a prophet!
- A prophet has one job and that is to tell others of God’s word!
- Prophets must first of all be able to listen to what God is telling them in the depths of their hearts and then they must preach what they have heard –
  - without changing or adding anything; no matter how unpopular the message may be!
- And so, prophets cannot worry about the success of their mission – whether the people hear or refuse to hear!
- I often hear from older folk, the sad story of how their children and grandchildren no longer come to Mass or belong to the Church!
  - They worry that they did something wrong; that they somehow failed in their vocation as parents!
  - Their children’s rejection of the Church, breaks their hearts!
- Every baptised person – indeed the Church – is called to be prophetic!
  - We are called to hear the word of God for ourselves and then announce it to others!
    - Announce it by our words and our lives!
- There was a lady in our parish who did just this prior to lockdown!
- She was sad that her children and grandchildren did not come to Mass so when we held the last Youth Alpha early last year, she invited her grandson along.
  - She did not find it easy to do!
- Just like Ezekiel, many of us find this difficult!
  - We are afraid that we will be rejected, ridiculed and laughed at; some may even take offence at us!

- strangers and even our own family and friends!
- No matter how great; no matter how important or special the Mission;–
  - We must acknowledge that we are weak to carry it out!
- Because we are weak,
  - we will think of giving up;
  - we will lose heart;
  - we grow cynical and negative;
  - we might also just do nothing!
- And we would not be alone in our thinking:
  - Down through history, starting from St. Paul himself, men and women have generously committed themselves to preaching the Gospel – they gave their time, energy and money – but were subjected to bitter criticism and even persecution some even give it all up!
- But, no matter how weak or inadequate we may be,
- No matter how much criticism or rejection or scorn we may face
  - God’s power is at work!
- Because, ultimately, it’s not about us!
  - That may come as a surprise!
  - It may even dent our pride!
    - But it is true – it is not about us – it is about God!
- The elderly lady from our parish found the courage to ask her grandson to Youth Alpha and he came!
  - During that first lockdown, she died but not after knowing that she had helped her grandson hear about Jesus!
- Our world does not imagine that weak and small people ever create great things!
- But they can!
  - Because our God of Surprises, accomplishes extraordinary things using very ordinary people!
- The spread of the Gospel, the building up of the kingdom is dependent upon the power of God – not us!
- So, we do not need money, power, politically connected people or even the force of fear to build the kingdom!
- We only need trust the logic of the Cross: pain gives way to new life – for the whole world!
  - Including those friends and family who may have walked away!