

Pastor's Letter

July 7, 2024—14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Church Family,

Mother Teresa once said, “God does not require that we be successful, only that we be faithful.” Part of being faithful to our calling as Christians means persevering in our proclamation of the good news of redemption in Jesus Christ even in the face of indifference or opposition. In our first reading the prophet Ezekiel is reminded that his task is to pass on the message that God has given him for the people. What they do with the message is up to them. The work of the prophet is to make God’s words known. It’s a big job but we don’t bear the burden alone. We might not think that we have the abilities necessary to do it, but it’s not our strength or talent that will make our mission successful. It’s the power of God.

St. Paul recalls his experience of this fact in our second reading where he recounts how God responded to his request to remove a “thorn in the flesh,” some affliction or impediment that was tormenting Paul and perhaps keeping him from being as effective as a missionary as he wanted to be. God’s response was, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” God’s power is most apparent when we are at our weakest. That doesn’t mean that we shouldn’t do our best. It just means that if we are faithful God will supply his strength to make up for our shortcomings and make sure that his message is heard.

What people do with what they hear is up to them. Jesus himself faced opposition from the people who knew him best, or thought they did. Our Gospel reading tells about how the people he grew up with rejected him because they thought he was getting too big for his britches. Who did he think he was? He was just one of them. Where did he get off, acting like a prophet? Because of that attitude they missed out on the healing presence of God in their midst.

We might encounter the same attitude when we try to share the good news of the love of God. People sometimes think that Christians consider themselves better than others. To be honest, maybe we do give that impression sometimes. But the truth of the matter is, it is only by the grace of God, which is sufficient to supply all our needs, that any of us is able to grow in faith, hope, and love. And it is only by the grace of God that we will remain faithful to our prophetic mission.

Blessings,
Fr. Scott