

Homily. 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year. B. 3/4 July2021.

What makes a person prophetic? The answer of course is their love for all of us. Prophets are people who love life and who detest to see some having it richly while others through no fault of their own are being deprived of a fair go. What drives prophets in the past and in our times to speak up? Again, their love, manifested in their desire that truth and justice and respect for all should become the norm and not the exception.

Prophets have been described as those people who comfort the afflicted and afflict those who have grown too comfortable with the status quo. The prophetic are those who want our planet respected and protected for future generations from the present ravages of our abuse and greed. They are the people who stand with and speak up for the marginalised, the many voiceless victims overlooked by our systems, our fears and our prejudices. Prophets work for peace, but not peace at any price. They want a lasting durable peace build upon mutual respect, care and the God given rights of our human equity.

Needless to say, prophetic persons are often uncomfortable to be around. They disturb, they challenge and they even confront us in our complacency, rocking our apathy and upsetting what we had believed to be settled. We need them for when they speak to us in their words and by their deeds they bring the truth of God to us and the light and power of the Holy Spirit. We need these prophets today as much as we need Jesus who was known as both a healer and a prophet, a fearless and self-sacrificing teacher of God's wisdom and truth. Indeed, the spirit of prophecy assuredly comes from God, as our scriptures constantly assert.

The name of the game for us is to be much better at welcoming and heeding today's prophets than were the people of Nazareth when Jesus called by to speak to and teach them. They rejected their own home town son because He didn't fit their expectations. They refused to be disturbed or challenged or moved by Him, settling instead for easy ridicule and incredulity. Their lack of openness and trust saddened Him deeply.

When everything we take for granted is tossed 'up in the air' as it is now, it's the prophets amongst us who can show us a way through our confusion, bringing perspective to our anxieties and direction to our aimlessness. They point out ways for us to seize the day and walk with confidence into the future, new and different as it must be. We ignore or ridicule these prophets to our peril and detriment, for in rejecting their words and deeds we are rejecting the very guidance and voice of God.