

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (Mk 6,1-6): Jesus departed from there and came to his native place, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, 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! Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. 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.” So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.

«He was amazed at their lack of faith»

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Today, the liturgy helps us to discover what it is that Jesus feels in the depths of his heart: “He was amazed at their lack of faith” (Mk 6:6). Without a doubt, the disciples would have been taken aback by the lack of faith shown by the Master's fellow citizens and His reaction to them. It would have seemed more natural that things should happen differently: they had arrived in the land that had been His home for so many years, the people would have heard of His works, and the most logical result would be that He would have been received warmly and trustingly, they should have been more disposed than others to listen to his teachings. However, things didn't turn out that way, quite the opposite: “They took offense at him” (Mk 6:3).

Jesus' surprise at the attitude shown towards him by His people shows a heart that has faith in mankind that is waiting for a response and is not indifferent to the lack

of one, because it is a heart that gives of itself looking for our good. Saint Bernard expresses it well when he writes: “The son of Man came and did such marvels that He uprooted our mundane understanding of the world, to help us meditate and so that we never cease to ponder the wonderful things He did. He left us infinite horizons for the ease of the intelligence, and an overflowing river of ideas impossible to wade through. Is there anyone capable of understanding why the Supreme Majesty would want to die to give us life, why He would want to serve so as we could reign, live without a place to rest his head so as we can possess the world, and allow himself to be lowered to the most vile and vulgar so as to raise us above all else?”

Imagine how the Nazarenes' lives would have changed if they had approached Jesus with faith. Keeping this in mind we should ask daily, as the disciples did: “Lord, increase our faith” (Lk 17:5), so as we may open ourselves more and more and let His love work in us.