

## Evaluating Faith

14<sup>th</sup> Week of Ordinary Time – Mark 6:1-6

How strong is your faith? That is a tough question. In fact, faith might seem impossible to measure. Yet, in the gospel today Jesus seems to measure and evaluate the faith of those in the village of Nazareth. The measure by which he evaluates their faith seems to rest on how well they respond to his teachings and his wisdom. The result is that, “...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.”


How might this be for us? How would Jesus evaluate my faith? One quote from the *Collegeville Bible Commentary* states, “Mark’s readers, no matter how familiar they are with Jesus, might well evaluate the depth of their faith in him in order to allow him to be as effective as he wants to be in their midst.” (p.916) This seems to suggest that our response to Jesus has something to do with the degree of change (conversion) we are willing to be open to in our lives.

When we come to Mass, we are actually placing ourselves before Jesus and praying/asking that he will change us. Yup! That’s what we do. We come broken and imperfect and we ask that Jesus change us for the better, to be merciful. But there is a catch. The change is not going to be in the direction of our wants and desires. On the contrary, we are actually praying that God will change us according to his will.

That is a bit overwhelming as it means I might have to change some of my bad habits, some of my habitual sins. This prayer for change might be asking me to be open to what Jesus is saying, what his Word has to say to me that day, every day.

The prophet Ezekiel says this week that the Lord sent him to a people, “hard of face and obstinate of heart.” Does that sound like anyone you know? It is a call for us to listen with an open spirit this week. We are being called by God to wake up, open up and bear witness to our need for Christ. We need a Savior. How might Jesus evaluate our faith in him and our need for him in our lives?

Blessings!

  
Sue Schettler