

## Ordinary 4C - 2022

### Jesus the prophet:

Some will remember the TV show "To Tell the Truth" panel has to guess who the real person is amongst two imposters.

In one of his books, David Buttrick tells about a cartoon in a magazine. The cartoon showed three men sitting in a row behind a long table. A microphone has been placed in front of each of them. One man was pictured in long flowing hair and a draped white robe. Another was battered, a wreath of jagged thorns on his head. The third was swarthy, with dark curly hair and a pointed nose. The caption said, "Will the real Jesus Christ please stand?"

Everybody sees Jesus from a different angle, including the writers of the New Testament. For Matthew, Jesus is the Teacher of Righteousness. For Mark, Jesus is an exorcist, constantly battling the powers of evil. Even after Evil nails him to a cross, Jesus emerges from the tomb to continue his saving work. But for Luke, the word that best summarizes the person and work of Jesus is "prophet." — In the story we heard today, Jesus is a different kind of prophet. The prophet Jesus says, "*Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.*" When the prophet Jesus said, "Today the Scripture is fulfilled," he turned memory into a mission statement. He transformed hope into an assignment. He claimed the beautiful poetry of Isaiah as his job description. (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>) L/22

### Truth Shall Prevail:

Brinsley McNamara wrote a classic story called *The Valley of the Squinting Windows*. He came from a very rural area of Ireland and was well known, because his father was a teacher in the local school. His story was such that everybody in the village recognized themselves among the characters of the story. This led to public outrage in his hometown, while the rest of the country was avidly reading the book! The book was burned in public, his family had to leave town, and, to this day, his name still evokes strong reactions among many of the people of that town. What he wrote was too close to the bone. If he had written a book about the people of some other town, he probably would have been hailed as the local literary hero. To this day none of his descendants would dare return to their roots in that town. They did, in a symbolic way, take him outside the town, and threw him over a cliff. (Jack McArdle in *And That's the Gospel Truth*; quoted by Fr. Botelho). (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>) L/22

### **Liberate dungeon lovers:**

Kazimerz Symanski of Poland was a prisoner of war during World War II. There is no record of what happened to Symanski in the prison camp, but his experiences there obviously changed him. In his later years, Symanski seemed bent on reliving his prison experience. He even turned his small apartment into a prison cell. He put bars over the windows and constructed a small cage in which he slept. He refused to allow electricity or running water in his apartment. He seemed determined to live in the most primitive and confining conditions. Symanski died in 1993 from the effects of his living conditions. [*The Comedian Who Choked to Death on a Pie . . . And the Man Who Quit Smoking at 116*, compiled by the editors of *Fortean Times* (New York: Cader Books, 1996), pp. 48-49.] —

Some of us, too, have been living for years in prison cells of our own making. We are bound by addictions, anxiety, low self-esteem, anger, fear, guilt, misconceptions about God. We get this blank expression when the preacher talks about joy, or stepping out in Faith, or living the abundant life. We're just lucky to make it through the day without collapsing from the weight of our chains. But we weren't made to live that way. (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>) L/22

### **Rejection because of helping a man in need:**

Long ago, there lived an English priest named George Herbert, who was also a poet and amateur musician. On his way to a music session with some friends, he once came across a man whose horse had collapsed under the weight of its load. Both horse and owner were in great distress. Without a moment's hesitation, he stopped and emerged from his vehicle, took off his clerical robes and rolled up his sleeves. First he helped the owner unload the horse, getting it standing on its feet and then reload the animal systematically so that the weight would be evenly and reliably stacked. Then, to the owner's delighted surprise, he gave him some money to refresh himself and his horse. Finally, the priest got back into his vehicle and drove on to meet his friends. Of course, when he arrived late for the music session, his hair was disheveled, his face grimy, his clothes soiled and his hands dirty. This astounded the other musicians, who had known George to be prim, proper and punctual. And when he told them the reason for his unkempt appearance and late arrival, the others frowned upon him for getting involved in such a mess with an ordinary stranger. — Unabashed and unapologetic, George Herbert answered: "The thought of what I have done will be like music to me at midnight. The omission of it would have caused discord in my conscience. For if I am bound to pray for all who are in distress, I am sure that I am bound, so far as it is in my power, to practice what I pray for. So now let's tune our instruments." (*James Valladares in Your Words O Lord, Are Spirit and They Are Life*; quoted by Fr. Botelho). (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>) L/22