

The Church of Saint Pascal Baylon

Fr. John Mitchell, Pastor: Sunday Homily

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Homily Notes – 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time – July 8, 2018

In this weekend's Gospel reading from Mark 6:1-6, Jesus comes to his hometown of Nazareth and does not receive a warm reception there. The hometown people have heard of the mighty deeds he has done elsewhere and of miracles Jesus has performed, but they take offense at Jesus. Why? Maybe they didn't think Jesus was all that remarkable because they knew him since he was a boy, and they knew Mary and Joseph, and they think Jesus is just a carpenter. They are not open to his teaching and preaching, and Jesus is not able to do any mighty deed there except for curing a few sick people. These Nazareth people had an obstacle to believing in Jesus as the Son of God. Maybe at times we have obstacles in our lives that cause us to question our faith. Maybe we have a cross right now that we are bearing, and we ask, "Why did God give me this cross?". Maybe we are dealing with change in our life such as a new job, new school or new home, and we struggle to believe that God will be there for us in this time of change. Whatever the obstacle to faith in our life, I have found in my life that when I pray and bring that obstacle to God and ask, "Lord, where are you in this experience? Please show me what you want me to learn. Please show me what good you'd like me to experience or show me how I need to grow in my faith", then I will receive an answer.... eventually. If we are open to God in our faith questions, I believe that God will reach us. For every step we take towards God, I think God takes 10 steps towards us. I believe that our obstacles can be then means by which our faith is strengthened. If we deal openly and honestly in prayer and conversation with God about our doubts and obstacles to faith, I believe that God will strengthen our faith and help us grow stronger in our commitment to following Jesus as a disciple.

—Father John Mitchell