

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year A

[2 Kings 4:8-12a, 14-17; Rom 6:3-4, 8-11; Mt. 10:37-42]

Excerpts from Pope Francis – Angelus 02 July 2023

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Brothers and sisters, in the Gospel, Jesus says, “He who receives a prophet because he is a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward” (*Mt* 10:41). The word “prophet” appears three times. But who is the prophet? There are some who imagine a prophet as some type of magician who foretells the future. But this is a superstitious idea, and a Christian does not believe in superstitions, such as magic, tarot cards, horoscopes and other similar things. Sadly, many Christians go to have their palms read.

Others depict a prophet only as a [biblical] figure from the past, who existed before Christ to foretell his coming. And yet, Jesus himself speaks **today** of the need to welcome prophets. Therefore, they still exist. But who are they? Who is a prophet? Well each one of us is a prophet. In fact, with Baptism, all of us received *the gift and mission of prophecy*.

A prophet is the one who, by virtue of Baptism, helps others read the present under the action of the Holy Spirit. This is very important: to read the present **not like news** but under the action of the Holy Spirit, who helps to understand God’s plans and **conform to them**. In other words, the prophet is the one who shows Jesus to others, who bears witness to him, who helps live today and build the future according to his designs. Therefore, we are all prophets, witnesses of Jesus, “so that the power of the Gospel might shine forth in [our] daily social and family life” (*Lumen Gentium*, 35).

A prophet is a living sign who points God out to others. A prophet is a reflection of Christ’s light [that shines] on the path of brothers and sisters. And so, we can ask ourselves: Do I, who am “a prophet” through Baptism, speak, and above all, **live**, as a witness of Jesus? Do I bring a little bit of his light into the life of another person? Do I evaluate myself on this? Do I ask myself: How am I doing with bearing witness? How am I doing being a prophet ?

In the Gospel, the Lord also asks *to welcome the prophets*. So it is important to welcome each other as such, as bearers of God’s message, each one according to his or her status and vocation, and to do it right where we live — that is, in the family, in the parish, in other spheres of the Church and society.

The Holy Spirit has distributed gifts of prophecy to the holy People of God. This is why it is good to listen to everyone. For example, when an important decision needs to be made, it is good to pray first of all, to call on the Holy Spirit, but then to listen and dialogue, trusting that each person, even a child, has something important to say, a prophetic gift to share.

Therefore, the truth is pursued and a listening environment that is attentive to God and our brothers and sisters is fostered, where people feel welcome not because they say what I like, but where they feel accepted and valued as gifts for who they are.

Let us reflect on how many conflicts could be avoided and resolved in this way, listening to others with the sincere desire to understand each other! So, finally, let us ask ourselves: Do I know how to welcome my brothers and sisters as prophetic gifts? Do I believe that I need them? Do I listen to them respectfully, with the desire to learn? Because each one of us needs to learn from others. Each one of us needs to learn from others.

May this Eucharist help us see and welcome the good that the Spirit has sown **in others**.