

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

In his opening account of his call, Jeremiah speaks about how God knew and consecrated him from the time he was in his mother's womb.

"...before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you."

Jeremiah understood that he was hearing from the one who formed humanity out of love in the divine image and continued to call humanity to live in his love and spread his love to all.

In the reading Jeremiah revealed that God was close to him as his own mother and loving and powerful enough to fashion him for what he could become; a prophet to spread God's love to all the nations.

As a prophet, God asked him to prepare himself for rejection and conflict with his people. But God assured him of his strength and guidance.

He said to him, **"They will fight against you but not prevail over you, for I am with you to deliver you."**

Today's Gospel begins with the last words we heard Jesus speak in last week's Gospel: **"Today this passage is fulfilled in your hearing."**

Jesus identified himself as the fulfillment of Isaiah prophecy about bringing God's love, Good news to the afflicted.

The people wondered at his discourse, until some realized that he grew up among them and began to question, "Isn't this the son of Joseph?"

Since they thought they knew him, they challenged his claim to work miracles and they rejected him as the anointed one who had been sent to bring God's love to the afflicted.

Jesus, Jeremiah, all of us are called to give witness to God's love and faithfulness in the circumstances of our life.

God has called us out of love to live in his love and to spread his love to all people in all situations. And like Jeremiah and Jesus in today's readings we will also face rejections, oppositions, challenges as we live in God's love and spread God's love.

When we meet challenges and rejections we should not compromise our faith to save our skin. In such moments, to use the words of St Paul in Second Corinthians 5: 14, we should let the love of God urge us on. Jeremiah and Jesus did that.

St Paul in the second reading tells us that love never fails, for it the foundation of all gifts. As he tells us, not even faith or hope outshines love, because it shares in and expresses God's very life.

Let us note that Paul does not describe love as a charismatic gift but as way, it the highway that all must travel.

The point Paul is making here is that not everyone has every spiritual gift, but everyone is called to live in God's love and spread God's love.

So, no matter the situation we may find ourselves in let us exercise our gift in love for God's sake. That is, let us be patient, kind, humble, forgiving in our dealings with others.