

**FR.TK.REFLECTIONS 14<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY YEAR-B-2024:**

**CLOSED HEARTS, REJECTION AT THE HOME GROUND:**

January this year, I had a break for my vacation and went to Africa, specifically in Kenya where I come from. The pastor of my home parish asked me to say mass. I didn't meet the expectations of the parishioners especially with my short homily of 15 minutes! They were so discouraged, you could see the **'why'** written on their faces. They expected me to preach for one hour or so! Courageous women came after me after mass and expressed their disappointment since they didn't know where to go with all the extra time. You should have told us stories of life in US, climate, churches and political setup. Their anxieties were evident.

Consider this episode in the gospel (Mk 6:1-6) involving Jesus and the people of his native place, Nazareth. While Jesus is accepted by the outsiders, he is rejected by his own. He found **closed hearts among those who know him the best and who should have been proud of this home boy** who has made their town known everywhere since he was called the Nazarene, Jesus of Nazareth. He ran into a brick wall among his own people. They questioned his wisdom and knowledge. They ended up in being the losers because he couldn't do miracles there except **curing few sick people**.

The same case is seen in our first reading (Eze. 2:2-5). The prophet is being warned by God that he is being sent to stubborn Israelites who have **rebelled against God**. They will be **negative to him hence to be prepared for opposition and rejection**.

Jesus in the gospel is facing the same, this time from his own people. They couldn't bring themselves into terms with his

**wisdom, gifts, and greatness.** they knew his humble background, **where did he get all this wisdom from? don't we know his father, mother and brothers.** He was rejected by his own people and the world. **what about you and me,** are we going to **welcome him or further reject him? Do we recognize his wisdom and knowledge or have we closed our heart and mind!** What about other servant of the gospel, how do we treat them? How much do we **judge, criticise form opinion of them according to our standard? Do we recognize and appreciate their service and sacrifice, Do we limit their their effectiveness by gossiping unnecessarily, do we see good in them or only the negatives.**

It is is so humiliating and hurtful to be rejected **by the people you serve.** Jesus was so amazed by their **unbelief and that is why he didn't work a lot of miracles in their territory because they had closed their hearts.** **We must open our heart and welcome Jesus.**

Rejection, can easily result to **anger, and lack of initiative to any person, leading to frustration and helplessness.**

We are called to be like Jesus despite, rejection, he had the courage of doing good, curing some of the sick. We shouldn't be discouraged.

**GODS GRACE IS ENOUGH TO SEE US THROUGH REJECTION.**