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## Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, Junior High

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Thu, 12/13/2012 - 19:00

### **Junior High Session**

Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19

Luke 4:21-30

## **Opening Prayer**

Let us pray.

God of Justice, you call us to speak the truth even when it is difficult.

Give us the courage to live as prophets in the world.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

## **Opening Life Reflection**

Living as a prophet in the world is the focus of today's session. Invite the young people to reflect on a time when they or someone they knew spoke up for what was right even though it was difficult.

A role-play exercise can be very effective with this topic. Ask for some volunteers to act out a situation where a young person is being mistreated by a group of peers, and someone from the group speaks out against what is happening. Discuss:

- Have you ever stood up for someone who was being mistreated by your peers?
- Can you think of a time when you did not speak out against something that you knew was wrong because you feared the consequences?
- Why is it difficult at times to stand up for what you think is right and good?
- Name some of the injustices that you see each day.

Allow time for discussion. A prophet is someone who sees the world through the eyes of God.

Prophets see with a vision of peace, justice and love and speak out against whatever violates that vision. By our baptism we are called to be prophets in the world today.

## **Listening to the Word of God**

In the Old Testament reading listen to the call of God.

Read Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19.

Allow for silence.



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## Scripture Discussion Starters

- How does God call the prophet Jeremiah?
- What does God command him to do?
- What does God tell him not to do?
- How will the prophet find courage in the face of difficulty?

In the Gospel reading Jesus speaks as a prophet. Listen to the response of the people.  
Read Luke 4:21-30.

Allow for silence.

- What does Jesus say about the Scriptures?
- How do the people respond to Jesus?
- Why do the people ask if Jesus is the son of Joseph?
- What does Jesus say to the people?
- Why does Jesus go on his way?

## Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings.

In the Old Testament reading today we hear God's call of an individual to be a prophet. The call begins with God who knows the prophet even before he is born. Being born a prophet does not come without cost. The reading warns that people may fight against what is good. God encourages the prophet to speak the truth. To be strong and trust in God. God promises to give the prophet strength to stand up against all adversaries. This reading points out the call of God and not on the response of the prophet. This focuses our attention on God's role in the encounter.

In today's Gospel we are struck by the angry response of the people to Jesus' claim that he has come to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah. The life-giving truth that Jesus has to tell is not accepted in his hometown. At first the listeners are amazed by Jesus' words. But they soon begin to question Jesus' claim asking, "Is not this Joseph's son?" Jesus makes the point that no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown.

In this passage Luke presents a basic truth about the prophetic ministry of Jesus. In reaching out to the Gentiles who are most in need of salvation, Jesus would encounter resistance from his fellow Jews. But Jesus would endure and continue steadfastly on his way. The point is made that all followers of Christ are called to make what is often the unpopular choice of standing up for the outcast in the face of opposition. This is the baptismal call of the prophet. To persevere and rely on the power of God.



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## Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Name some people who you consider to be modern day prophets.
- What is the call of a prophet?
- How does a prophet find the strength and courage to make difficult choices?
- Where do you find the strength and courage to make difficult choices?

If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.

## Doctrinal Discussion Starters

### Our Identity as Prophets

Prophets speak the word of God. In Israel's history, prophets played a much-needed role in restoring the faith of the people. The prophets spoke on behalf of God. Some examples of Old Testament prophets are Moses, Elijah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. God anointed Jesus for his mission as priest, prophet, and king. Jesus is the Word of God, fulfilling God's message of love and concern for the world.

Catholics believe that through our baptism in Christ, we are called to be prophets -- to spread the good news, speak the truth and be a force for justice and peace in the world. It is difficult to stand up for what is right and true if we do not believe in ourselves or trust in God. Our identity as prophets helps us to embrace the task of building a better world. We can work for peace, and stand up for those who are rejected with confidence that God is with us. In God we find the strength, courage, and conviction to live as prophets in the world.

- How can you live as a prophet in the world today?
- How does your baptism call you to be a force for what is good and true in the world?

## The Gospel in Life

How can you live out your baptismal call to be a prophet at home, in school, and with friends?

### Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 24

Junior High, Morality, chapter 4

Junior High, Church History, chapters 2, 5, 10 and 12

### Blest Are We

Grade 7, chapter 2

Grade 8, chapter 2



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