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| 4th Sunday Ordinary Time |
| Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19 |
| 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13 |
| Luke 4:16-30 |

**A. Text/Context**

* It is an ordinary ritual for the Jews to go to the temple or a synagogue on a Sabbath and listen to the words in the scripture and it was the turn of Jesus to read
* And the people who heard were astonished with the beautiful words coming out from the mouth of Jesus
* Because the passage that he reads talks about himself so the speaker himself is the subject of the story and that makes it very personal and beautiful to listen
* He said to the congregation that today this passage is fulfilled. Who can say this but a prophet only who knows the events unfolding before his own eyes
* But the people at the same time nagtanong din sila: Di ba anak man ito ni Jose at Maria and so while they were impressed of Jesus they also doubted a lot because what can a son of a carpenter do?
* Remember that the scene we have today is the synagogue in Nazareth where the elders have a schedule who will read the scriptures
* And today it was the turn of Jesus to read and the people were so amazed because he reads and proclaims the scriptures with so much wisdom and eloquence
* And everybody in the crowd is struck dumbfounded and are all in praise of him
* But they as the question. How come that this is the man in their neighborhood and suddenly he has become so good commanding all respect and wisdom and eloquence?
* Isn’t he the son of a carpenter? The son of Mary? And all those questions
* So the people are confused who is this Jesus why did he become so brilliant?
* So there is a development here. They are so impressed of Jesus. Then, there is the doubt that he cannot be that good and the impending violence occurred so that they want to push him on the edge of a hill in order to kill him
* But of course Jesus has escaped from their midst as exemplified by the prophet Jeremiah in the 1st reading in Jeremiah: They will fight against you but they will not prevail over you because I am with you to deliver you says the Lord
* But it is not the character of Jesus that ensued the violence it is because of the argument Jesus gave in an example that really made them furious. The pride of the people was crushed when he gave examples
* Jesus already knows that they have no faith in him because the people believed that Jesus is no better than them
* But Jesus anticipated a request from them that he should also do the miracles as Jesus did in the town of Capernaum
* The pride of the people was hurt when he gave 2 examples that happened in the OT: the 1st example is that a woman of Zarephath who is not even a Jew was saved from famine by Elijah. God sent the prophet Elijah to save the woman from hunger but the rest of Israel is suffering from hunger and God did not feed them
* The 2nd example is that there were many lepers in the OT and a leper Naaman was cleansed by Elisha was also a non-Jew. God also sent the prophet Elisha just to give instructions to Naaman how to heal his leprosy and he was healed
* Here the people got mad because it appears that God does not like them anymore and they think they are a special people so how can God reject them?
* They are the chosen people and so it was an insult to them that God would favor a pagan instead of them and so they were so jealous
* Remember that the Jews have been very disobedient throughout history and God sent prophets to remind them to go back to God
* And so today the same situation happened. They know Jesus but they do not believe in him how can he perform a miracle?
* Miracles can only happen if you have faith in it. Therefore Jesus needs their faith also so he can do miracles in Nazareth but Jesus knew that they do not believe in him
* Without faith no miracles can happen. He is rejected. No prophet is accepted in his own native place. And they all wanted to kill Jesus by throwing him on a cliff

**B. Human Situation**

* The situation that we have in the gospel today is typical of a prejudice or a bias by putting people in a box
* We have our own biases on people whom we already knew very well. So that if the person does something new and good’ we will not believe
* The people are so biased against Jesus. This is now the exhortation of St. Paul in 1st Corinthians in the 2nd reading 13:4-8: Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails
* The fact that Jesus is not accepted is because they do noy have love for Jesus even if Jesus is their neighbor
* These people from Nazareth are the so-called chosen people but they cannot even recognize Jesus; then how much more to love Jesus
* So even if you are the chosen one of God if you do not love others it is really nothing
* What is the example of St. Paul in the 2nd reading? Even if I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal
* What does it mean? Even if you have wisdom, you are so intelligent and brilliant but you are not capable of loving and caring for others you are nothing. Without love we are empty

**C. Challenge**

* So all the readings today throw us into a challenge to love
* Whatever talent we have if we have no love we are really nothing
* Our capacity to love is a measure of our being human because we are all created by God because love
* A human on his moments of reflection and silence he will long for the presence of God if he is a real human being
* Because non-humans have no capacity for compassion and charity. They cannot connect to God because they have no connections in their physical body
* Do you know the reason why the whole world was destroyed in the days of Noah?
* Because so many people have become so wicked and why is it that they are so bad and wicked?
* Because actually they are not really humans, they are the descendants of Nephilim the angels of Satan who assumed human form and mingled with humans and so they are no longer real humans actually
* The same things are happening today. Millions and millions of humanoids are produced from underground laboratories and they really look perfectly human
* And they worked in the top governments with all intent to control all of us and they are the ones who bring havoc and destruction in the world, wars and all forms of violence and corruption done over and over again
* Because they are not humans they have no capacity to love because they have no souls because they were not created after the image and likeness of God
* And there are also human beings who have become the minions of Satan because they have sold their souls because of the lure of power, wealth and fame
* And so again the measure of our humanity is our capacity to love, to be compassionate, to be charitable