“Stay with us, Lord”
2021-2022 Year of the Holy Eucharist, Diocese of Jackson

FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (Year C)
January 30, 2022

I. “And all spoke highly of him, and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth.”
   A. It is pride that keeps the people of Jesus’ hometown from welcoming him as a prophet. Certainly, the people mean well, they are at first delighted by what they hear, but then when Jesus gets down to brass tacks and looks to teach them, warn them, and challenge them, they shut down. They shut down because of their pride.
   B. Sometimes we can be prideful too when listening to the Word of the Lord. We can sit in mass and have the attitude of someone who has heard this all before.
   C. I find that one of the biggest challenges of listening to or reading scripture is patiently receiving it again and again and again. We have heard these passages so many times, and yet each time God wants to teach us something new, each time the Lord wants us to turn more fully to him, to learn and to live in deeper love with Him.
   D. When we hear the grave words of Jesus that he shares with his audience today, we should be challenged, and not enraged. We should have the humility to consider our own weaknesses and shortcomings, and we should not strike out in anger if our pride has been wounded.

II. “When the people of the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury.”
   A. Like the prophets before him Jesus tells the people that they need to repent. He refers to two examples from the Old Testament where the Israelites were not helped by God because of their sinfulness and their unwillingness to turn back to him while pagans were healed and helped by the Lord during the same time frame. This is certainly a shot across the bow to all believers.
   B. One commentator on today’s Gospel writes “This whole episode is a good lesson about understanding Jesus. We can understand Him only if we are humble and are genuinely resolved to make ourselves available to Him.” (Navarre Scripture Commentary) We make ourselves available to Jesus when we take time to pray with the Scriptures without an agenda. We pray to God not just because we need this or that, but because we love him and we know that He has more to teach us than we could ever learn on our own. This posture of humble obedience is vital if we want to avoid the same trap that the people in the Nazareth synagogue fall into. The trap of rejecting the truth because it has wounded our pride.

III. Reject Pride/Embrace Humility
   A. One way we can practice this is by listening with attention to the prayers of the mass, and to try to take on a posture of humble trust as we enter into the mystery of the Eucharist.

Prepared by Fr. Nick Adam