

January 30, 2022

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jer 1:4-5, 17-19 | 1 Cor 12:31—13:13 or 1 Cor 13:4-13 |
Lk 4:21-30

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Wait, what? One moment the people of Nazareth embrace Jesus, but as soon as he challenges them the crowd turns on a dime, and moves toward throwing him off a cliff. The Son of God, also the son of a carpenter, goes from hometown hero to *persona non grata* just like that, prefiguring his death on the cross and giving credence to his admonition that “no prophet is accepted in his own native place.” From the earliest moments of his public ministry as recorded in Luke, Jesus’ love for us is prominent. He never faltered. He never wavered. He moved forward to continue his mission of fulfilling God’s will for him, and be a sacrifice once and for all for our sins. Perhaps we have had a similar experience of being the “hero” for someone, only to somehow end up the goat. It is not easy to remain steadfast in our daily mission to love as Jesus loved. Today’s readings assure us that God will give us the grace to do so.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

It can be challenging to square Paul’s eulogy of love with the reality of day-to-day living with a spouse, family members, and friends. Love is patient ... *except when I’m late getting out to the car for church again*. Love is kind ... *except between crabby siblings who want to watch different shows on Netflix*. It is not quick-tempered ... *unless you thoughtlessly back into my car in the driveway*. It occurs to me that perhaps Paul’s words aren’t entirely about us, but about the perfect love of God. It’s pretty amazing to think that God loves us in all the ways Paul describes. As we open our hearts to God’s love and deepen our relationship with Jesus through prayer, we may find that love spilling over into our daily interactions. For when we are kind, we love; when we are patient, we love; when we are not quick-tempered, we love.

PRAY Although our love for one another is imperfect, we must strive to love as Jesus loved each day, and there is no better place to start than prayer. Ask a friend or family member this week if they have any concerns you can include in your prayers. Or request a Mass for someone who is going through a tough time or who has recently died.

