

**Homily – Wed. 4th Week in Ord. T., Mem. St. John Bosco
Televised Mass with Senior Staff – February 1, 2024**

As it happens in small towns, we can imagine that in Nazareth everyone knew each other. It seems like everyone knew Jesus and his family. He was also known by his trade. They said: “Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon?” They think they know that he is the son of Joseph, whose trade he carries on. For many years they had shared the space where the community lived, worked, prayed, and suffered. It is much to not know each other well. Based on the comments we heard in the gospel, Mary also did not particularly distinguish herself from the rest of the housewives and mothers of Nazareth.

But recognizing the Messiah in Jesus is something else. It is like taking a leap into the void. It is necessary not only to see and know, but to believe. Jesus “was amazed at their lack of faith.” But the community was also amazed at Jesus. “Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands!” They had learned from the Scriptures that miracles are the work of God. However, not even that made them take the leap.

Since Jesus did not meet their expectations, “they took offense at him.” That was their great misfortune. Everything would have changed if only they had overcome their prejudice and trusted him. But that gesture is the fruit of faith and they lacked faith. Jesus couldn’t do more. They knew so much about Jesus that they thought they knew it all. Their conceit prevented them

from recognizing the Son of God in every aspect they still did not know about him.

Our world today asks with suspicion if God exists and, if he exists, why is he hiding? God not only does not hide. He has come so close to us that we overlook him. Are we witnesses of that truth? Are we able to recognize God's gift in something as simple as a glass of water or the love of our family? The world asks: If God exists, why is there so much evil in the world? God is not only not indifferent to evil and suffering, but he has come to share it with us, to give it meaning. The Lord has exposed himself to our rejection, becoming the object and victim of all evil. In this way he forgives us of all evil and gives meaning to our pain, uniting it with the sacrifice of himself to open the way to his own divine life.

Pope Francis frequently reminds us that God always surprises us. He is always bigger than our expectations and ideas. We must allow ourselves to be surprised. We must always leave room for astonishment, admiration, and bewilderment. God's plans are not our plans, and his ways are not our ways. Our best response is trust and discernment.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, make us sensitive to notice God's mystery in simple things and help us follow your example to ponder everything in our hearts.