***LSW***

children

Does anyone act as prophet among our families and friends? *Sometimes, we have people who will remind us that we have to be good when we prefer to be naughty. Our parents and teachers often act as prophets to us.*

Is it easy to listen to them? *Take your time to get the answers. Use practical examples, especially those that the children bring up themselves. Get into the why of it all. Is it that they didn’t like to be told that they were doing something wrong? It is that they didn’t want to be reminded of the consequences? Is it because there is someone hindering them from doing something they wanted to do? Is it the way they nag us?*

Are there any ways we can listen to them better? *Often it is impossible to listen when we are angry: so, maybe, we should think about what was said when we have calmed down. Or we ask them to write it down so that we can read it later. We remind ourselves that they are saying things to help us: maybe, we can pick up words from the Bible in what they say. Some people are nags or pretty rude at times: we have to ignore the way these people say things and concentrate on the message itself.*

*The last line of the reading always intrigues me. Can you imagine: you have a lynch mob going after your blood and yet, you can still slip through them and disappear. Somehow, their anger not only closes their ears but their eyes as well!*

Year C

### Fourth Ordinary Sunday

**Concepts**

Listening to your own family

**Points to note**

This reading is the second of a two-part reading. That is why the acclamation is the same. This Sunday continues Jesus’ proclamation last Sunday with his rejection as prophet in his own country. The first line here is the last line from last Sunday.

You know what they say: you cannot teach your own family. Somehow your children never listen to you; they listen to their friends, they listen to their friends’ parents, they listen to the guys on TV. And your spouse? Well, your spouse seems to have tons of patience teaching or advising other people but none with you. Why is this so? Is it that it is harder to listen to our own families? Is it that a prophet is not accepted in his own family?

I am not suggesting, though, we discuss this with the children: I am not sure if their maturity level suffices here. The point is that reading the Bible, whether for ourselves or for the children, involves translating it into the practicalities of our daily living. It may be simpler to leave this reading to those who do preaching but it is more rewarding to place this reading within the context of our family relationships.

**Liturgy**

Acclamation before the Gospel

Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Lord has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,

to proclaim liberty to captives.

Alleluia!

Gospel

It is important to reprise last Sunday’s reading. Explain that Jesus was invited to preach at his local synagogue after his community heard stories about him performing healing miracles around the region. He has just read the reading in the synagogue and is starting his sermon.

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And also with you.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St John

(Lk 4:21-30)

Jesus began to speak in the synagogue, “This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen.” And he won the approval of all, and they were astonished by the gracious words that came from his lips.

They said, “This is Joseph’s son, surely?” But he replied, “No doubt you will quote me the saying, ‘Physician, heal yourself’ and tell me, ‘We have heard all that happened in Capernaum, do the same here in your own countryside.’” And he went on, “I tell you solemnly, no prophet is ever accepted in his own country.

“There were many widows in Israel, I can assure you, in Elijah’s day, when heaven remained shut for three years and six months and a great famine raged throughout the land, but Elijah was not sent to any one of these: he was sent to a widow at Zarephath, a Sidonian town. And in the prophet Elisha’s time there were many lepers in Israel, but none of these were cured, except the Syrian Namaan.”

When they heard this everyone in the synagogue was enraged. They sprang to their feet and hustled him out of the town; and they took him up to the brow of the hill their town was build on, intending to throw him down the cliff, but he slipped through the crowd, and walked away.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**Discussion**

What is a prophet? *Give them examples of prophets. You have the sixteen prophets who wrote books in the Old Testament and you can find their names in the list of books beginning with Isaiah. There are also those who were referred to in the historical books but did not write their own like Elijah (1 Kg 17:9) and Elisha (2 Kg 5:14) whom Jesus mentioned in his sermon. There are others in the New Testament who did the same job as prophets and we call them our saints.*

What does a prophet do? *He tells people about God and he also tells them what they should do and not do to please God.* Is it an easy job? *Well, they all have problems. John the Baptist was beheaded. Jeremiah was thrown into a well. Paul had to endure imprisonment, shipwreck and finally, martyrdom.*

Why was the job so difficult?  *Because they told people things that people did not want to hear. Take John the Baptist as an example. The king had imprisoned him because he told the king that God does not want the king to marry his brother’s wife. Discuss why people do not like to listen to what prophets have to say. Beware that the children do not get the idea that being shunned for saying rude things makes us a prophet.*

Can we think of any one around today who speaks like a prophet? *Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for what he said. Aung San Suu Kyi had lots of problems. Nearer home, Ambiga and Irene Fernandez springs to mind.*