

Spiritually Speaking

He was amazed at their lack of faith

By Fr. Thankachan Joseph

Though Jesus had made a big impact in other towns and villages, He is rejected by His own town members. Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and his own house." (Mk. 6:5). Why? They felt they knew all about Him, and He had nothing to offer them. We have a chance to listen to the same Jesus and to receive Him into our hearts and into our lives. The readings of the day call us to open our hearts, our minds, and our whole being to the presence of God in others, to reflect: Can we see the presence of God in others? Can we recognize that God speaks through others? Do we see and acknowledge the prophets of our own time?



Fr. Thankachan Joseph

The prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 2:2-5) describes what a real prophet does and his duties and responsibilities. God sends prophets to His people. We don't always like to hear the words that a prophet speaks. On the other hand, not everyone who speaks is a prophet. The Old and the New Testaments both understand clearly that a true prophet must speak according to the Word of God, not according to the words of men. Today, many claim to be prophetic, but most lack any claims to speaking the Word of God. The Prophet Ezekiel's message is always the same: faithfulness to God's word revealed in Holy Scripture, love for God, love for others, care for the needy and the oppressed. The message always demands that we give up our own concerns and be concerned only for God and God's message for us. The moment we begin to seek our own good, our own enrichment, our own way of thinking, we become unfaithful to the word of God.

In St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians (12:7-10), he describes the difficulties that he has undergone to spread the Word of God: "I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong." (v.10). Paul warmly invites all of us to embrace the word of Jesus Christ with all our strength and all our being. When we do, we shall surely suffer and become aware of our own weaknesses. This also is a form of prophecy because the more we embrace Christ and follow His way, the more our lives speak about God and His incredible love for us.

St. Mark (6: 1-6) narrates the challenges of rejection faced by the prophet in his own native town. We should remember that Ezekiel told us that it does not matter if a prophet is recognized or not. What matters is that the prophet speaks the word of God. The Gospel of Mark points out that we can reject a true prophet simply because we don't believe that God acts in the ordinary events of our lives and in seemingly ordinary people. Jesus's hometown people do not simply puzzle over His extraordinary powers. They are actually "scandalized" by Him. In telling them how He feels, Jesus identifies Himself with the rejected prophets of old. The townspeople's lack of faith renders Jesus, the prophet in their midst, powerless - He acknowledges, however, that some few do have faith: "he cured a few sick people." He cures these people "by laying his hands on them." We have seen, in the request of the man with leprosy (1:41) and the action of the crowds (3:10), the people's well-founded faith in the healing power of touch, of bodily encounter.

At times, we may be like Jesus, bringing the wisdom and power of God to our families or local communities, only to meet with rejection. Sometimes, we may be like the few who come in faith and experience a healing touch. At other times, we may replicate the behavior of the opponents of Jesus and discount the achievements of those who excel or whose message challenges us. To refuse to listen to a prophetic message because the messenger fails to meet our preconceived ideas about prophets may have something to do with a lack of faith. It may actually stymie the power of God. Finally, the emphasis on healing invites us to pause and consider the intrinsic value of all, human and other-than-human, so often denigrated and devalued by attitudes that dichotomize the material and the spiritual with dire consequences for the Earth community.

Join us as we celebrate
George Nairns
 Gilliam & Bisbee Building
 July 8th, 2021 at 1:00 pm.
 We will celebrate her hard work and dedication that she has put into Willow Creek Terrace over the years and wish her good luck on her new journey!

~ Letters to the Editor ~

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. The GT is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$10. Email to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

Leadership Letter accountability

To the editor,
 In the article, Board Oversight of Culture for High Performing Hospitals, healthcare consultants Mitchell Rabkin, MD and Susan have Friedman write of the importance of measuring and caring for the organizational culture in healthcare. The article starts by asking the question, 'Is the board doing its job with only a limited view into how the organization actually operates?'

"Good board members monitor, guide and enable good management...forming strategic policies and goals...authorizing major transactions; overseeing viability of the organization's business model...and accuracy of its financial statements." Boards "monitor, guide and enable good management" by doing the following:

It requires a chair who sets appropriate agendas and leads.

It brings skilled and committed members unafraid to ask difficult questions of each other and the CEO and his/her team in an open environment.

It reviews an external auditor's detailed report and its "Management Letter."

While this role of activities is critical, another vital perspective does not get board's attention. Culture is the result of leadership decisions shaping policies, processes and procedures, and how seriously these are internalized throughout the organization. While culture is not treated as important,

it is the result of leadership decisions.

According to the writers, the more prevalent indicators of deeper issues that reflect organizational culture include:

- excessive turnover because of poor management.
- unenforced or inadequate personnel policies.
- unclear description of roles or relationships.
- lack of openness.
- poor reception or handling of complaints by employees or patients.

These situations lead to low morale, inefficiency, costly re-work, loss of talented staff, customer loss, sagging reputation as a place to work and patients' diminished expectations of technical quality of care and human concern.

Just as the external audit with its Management Letter provides insight into financial operations and ways to improve them, boards and hospital leadership would benefit from a comparable audit of the organization's workplace operations and culture, producing a Leadership Letter with observations and recommendations for improvement, followed by board discussion with the hospital's CEO, including implementation timelines and follow-through.

I will write in the next letter to the editor on how to conduct a Leadership Letter. The need for change is up to this community to get back the trust of the present leadership.
 Dr. Carmelo A. Di Salvo

County government in lottery gambling business

To the editor:
 "County chips in \$70,000 additional prize money for vaccination lottery." Are you joking, Morrow County? Morrow County government is now in the lottery gambling business? How do we reel in this Ponzi scheme? I know our county commissioners and trust them, so this Covid 19 sweepstakes does not add up. So here are my concerns and questions.

1) Why does the county need to spend \$70,000 to entice Morrow County citizens to take an experimental vaccine? The Moderna, Pfizer, Johnson and Johnson vaccines have been approved under "Emergency Use Authorization" only. Why do we need to be bribed to take a vaccine for a flu virus that is 99.5 percent survivable? Why should Morrow County

citizens be enticed to take an experimental vaccine that nobody (Virologists, Immunologists, Epidemiologists, Doctors) know what the long-term health effect will be. The CDC, on June 26, added a warning about the risk of adverse events including myocarditis and pericarditis for both Moderna and Pfizer. A recent Harvard Pilgrim study found the Covid 19 vaccine adverse (VAERS) events (death, heart attacks, strokes, blood clot, immune disability, anaphylactic reaction, etc.) were underreported by 100 percent. (Feb. 19, 21, Richard Jaffe). There is not one peer reviewed scientific study that demonstrates Covid 19 vaccinations are better than natural immunity. In addition, US Surgeon General Dr. Vivek in May 2021

Chamber Chatter

Willow Creek Farmer's Market runs each Thursday through September 2 from 4-7 p.m. at the Heppner City Park. Cost for the entire season for vendors is \$50 or by the week at \$10 per week. Check out the Facebook page, email willowcreekfm@gmail.com or call 541-720-4399 or 757-285-5792 for additional information.

Music in the Park will begin Sunday, July 11 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. featuring Neymark and Sons. Joel Neymark and his sons Elijah and Gabe, who share the gift of singing and playing a variety of stringed instruments in a style they refer to as eclectic folk flavored with campfire jam sessions will perform. Hopeful Saints Ministry will be offering food for purchase/donation at each event for their Mission and Outreach fund.

Friday, August 6 from 5-10 p.m., Murray's Annual Wine Tasting Event at the Willow Creek Fit Park. Live entertainment will be provided by Joe Lindsay from 5-7 p.m. and Brady Goss from 7-10 p.m.

Sunday, August 8 from 5:30-7:30 p.m., Music in the Park at the Heppner City Park will feature a return of La Grande's Wasteland Kings.

Sunday, September 12 from 5:30-7:30 p.m., Music in the Park at Heppner City Park featuring Chasing Ebenezer, a Portland musical group.

Applications for the 2021 culturally based activities in Morrow County are now being accepted. Projects supported in the past have included quilting, art displays, historical library books, cultural entertainment and events, kids' activities in the parks and schools, drama and musical workshops. Grants can be awarded up to 50 percent of the total project cost. For complete guidelines and application forms, please contact Jaylene Papineau at 541-676-5630, email jpapineau@co.morrow.or.us or visit the Morrow County website under the Clerk/Elections Office, Morrow County Cultural Coalition Information.

Hold the Date - August 17-22 for the Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo. The theme this year is "Morrow County Strong." The parade will take place on Saturday, August 21 at 10 a.m. Those who are interested in being in the parade should contact the Heppner Chamber at heppnerchamber@gmail.com or 541-676-5536.

Space available for service club sign

A space has become available for another service club sign at the entryway into Heppner due to the Heppner American Legion consolidating with the Lone Legion post and their sign being removed.

Anyone interested in placing a sign should call John Edmundson at 541-676-5177.

DA's Report

Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson has released the following report:

- Ajamu Dia Nathan was convicted of telephonic harassment and sentenced to 30 days jail with credit for time served, 24 months bench probation, no contact with victim and trespassed from Green Acres RV Park.

warned "people should be prepared for the fact that we may need a booster every year."

2) The Morrow County prize of \$70,000 is in addition to Oregon lottery of over \$1,000,000 for the lucky (?) Oregon winners. To entice children ages 12 to 17 to have at least one shot, five will earn \$100,000 for an additional government outlay of \$500,000. The 1.86-million-dollar Oregon prize money will come from the Federal Coronavirus Relief Act. The funds are fiat money, printed by the Federal Reserve with no collateral backing, and add to the national debt that must be repaid with interest every year going to outside lenders including foreign (hostile) governments. During the fiscal year 2020 the federal debt

increased \$4,210,000,000 the largest annual dollar increase in history.

3) Morrow County government has no business being a participant in the vaccination lottery industry. Nor does Morrow County have any business in enticing, bribing or encouraging citizens to take any experimental, emergency use, virus vaccination that may well prove devastating to the future health, immune system and wellbeing of those that take it. And once you start taking it are you hooked for life? I support those that decide to take the vaccine, however those that choose to trust God and their immune system should not be bribed, enticed, coerced or one day mandated (when the bribes won't work) to comply.

Stuart Dick, Irrigon

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FUND (STF)

Looking for Committee Members

We Have Five Vacancies in the STF Committee

STF PURPOSE

This Advisory Committee is established in the interest of transit system users (seniors, disabled, veterans, Hispanic and any other pertinent person groups) in Morrow County. Its purpose is to advise the Morrow County Commissioners/ The Loop on matters that pertain to the Special Transportation Fund and all matters regarding the transportation needs of those utilizing the transit system. The Advisory Committee will make recommendations that encourage and promote the accomplishments of those needs that directly affect the welfare of those who desire and/or require such services.

If you are interested in serving in this committee, please contact Katie Imes at The Loop: 541.676.5667 or kimes@co.morrow.or.us



STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT FUND (STIF)

Looking for Committee Members

We Have Two Vacancies in the STIF Committee

STIF PURPOSE

The Committee shall assist the Commissioners in tasks and duties supporting local and regional transportation services funded through the State Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) and allocated to Morrow County, for distribution to Public Transportation Service Providers within and adjacent to Morrow County.

If you are interested in serving in this committee, please contact Katie Imes at The Loop: 541.676.5667 or kimes@co.morrow.or.us

