READINGS: Ezekiel 2:3-5/ 2 Cor. 12:7-10/ Mark 6:1-6
**Theme:** Rejection of the Lord
14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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At the time of the Prophet Ezekiel, his people had rebelled against God by living contrary to the terms of the Covenant. They disobeyed the commandments and by so doing rejected God, the author of the commandments. He then sent the prophet to bring Israel back to Himself. But then He forewarned the prophet to the effect that if they had rejected Him, his messenger should not expect a different treatment (Ezekiel 2:3-5). Centuries later, our Saviour Jesus Christ would also experience rejections by His own people. Today’s gospel reading gives us an instance of the Lord’s rejection (Mark 6:1-6).

Beloved, the rejection of God still happens today. It is very easy to identify those who do not believe in God as rejecting Him. However, today, the world (including some Christians) rejects God in many other ways. The rejection can be in the form of making laws or advancing courses that go against an implicit or explicit Biblical teaching. Secondly, it could be a way of life or an action that goes against the teaching or will of God.

Let us consider a few examples of the first form of rejecting God. The Bible teaches, for instance, that human life is sacred. It is sacred from the moment of conception to natural death. Yet today in some societies or countries laws have been enacted to legalize abortion and euthanasia. Another example: whereas the Bible teaches that marriage is a divine institution established between a man and a woman, today some are rejecting God by re-defining what marriage is. In other words, what God has joined together in His institution which predates the establishment of any nation and the making of human laws (constitutions), others have been daring enough to put asunder. May the Lord be merciful unto us and patiently convert the world.

In the days of Jesus, those who rejected Him thought they knew Him so well. They said: “Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, are not his sisters here with us?” (Mark 6:3). Similarly today, those who champion the above kinds of rejection of God claim to have a better understanding of human nature and psychology than the inspired writers of the books of the Bible. And in this respect, these modern persons claim that some of the teachings of the Bible would have been different if the Biblical writers were exposed to the so-called “advanced knowledge” of our era. Really!

As indicated earlier on, another form of rejecting God is when our actions go contrary to His Word or will. In other words, to sin is to reject God. This is an area where a lot of us repeatedly reject God. As the Lord granted St. Paul sufficient grace to enable him not to fall into sin despite his temptations and weaknesses (2 Cor. 12:9), so may He grant us sufficient graces for each day.

Finally, when the people of Nazareth rejected Jesus, they unfortunately denied themselves of His blessings. Even today this is true. So let us pray that we will never reject the Lord, but seek to be ever closer to Him, who is Source of every blessings in the heavens and on earth. Amen!