

## **Homily**

**12th Sunday in OT A 6.25.17**

**Father Todd Molinari**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today's readings and Mass resumes the season of Ordinary Time. They focus our reflection on the role of the prophet, the challenge of proclaiming the Word of God to an often hostile world and the price of obedience. The prophet Jeremiah was the paradigmatic unwilling and rather sullen prophet, but God in His Mercy nevertheless called him: The prophet obeyed, not because it pleased himself to, but rather because he intuited that God is the only proper recipient of human obedience. The ministry of Jeremy has a perennial challenge to all of us: How to proclaim the truth of God to a world that will not only be hostile to it but hostile to you as well? This is the core of the proclamation of the Gospel by Jesus as well. The prophet is one who solely proclaims God to humanity and is concerned only with God's concern for the People of God, not the elite and the powerful. But the question remains: Are we willing to lay down our lives under the threat of persecution if that is asked of us as it was of Jeremiah?

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says, "Do not let men intimidate you. Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be known..." Jesus builds on the prophetic tradition of Jeremiah in forming us in discipleship: The "concealed/revealed" and "nothing hidden/not known" pairings refers first to the intentions of potential and actual persecutors. In other words, don't worry about what others will say or do; don't base your decisions as a baptized disciple on calculation and hedging. Just be faithful to proclaiming the kingdom and let the chips fall where they may. But it also refers to Jesus' own instruction and formation to us to be disciples: Base your life, your decisions, your every thought, word and deed solely on the Word of God and anything that comes from God or can lead back to God. We are to use our minds and our hearts in being fully engaged in reality as-it-is, not as we or others wish it to be, and it's only in the embracing of reality that we can point to the future with hope based on what God wants for his People. This calls for the hard work of being consistently engaged in the mission of the Church, of thinking through problems, challenges and difficulties with openness to repentance, change and growth. Otherwise we can lose our prophetic gift by either avoiding the hard facts of life, or the pain of being rejected, or allowing ourselves to be numbed by our own complacency or routine and superficial religion or by the many dead ends offered by our broken world.

At this Eucharist when we receive Jesus in Holy Communion we are receiving and accepting our calling to be prophetic disciples, as well as the cost to our lives.