

**Fr. Nick Dant's Homily, Saint Matthew Catholic Church, Indianapolis**  
**Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, June 27-28, 2020, Cycle A**

Last Sunday we reflected on our Baptismal call to share in Jesus' ministry of being a prophet to the world. We heard Jesus challenge us to fear no one, and not to be afraid to boldly proclaim and live His Gospel in world, trusting that God is always with us through whatever difficulties we face.

This weekend we hear Jesus challenge us again not to be afraid, to embrace our prophetic role as his followers, making the Gospel truly the reason why we live.

Jesus says: "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me."

Jesus sounds pretty harsh in his demands, but He is trying to make a point – if we are going to call ourselves His followers, be true prophets in the world, then Jesus and His Gospel have to be the filter through which we live our lives. Everything else will fall into place – in proper order – if the Gospel is truly the center of our lives. We love everyone through the eyes of Jesus. In short, Jesus sends us out as missionaries in His place!

And those who are open to us as His disciples and receive us into their lives will be blessed, Jesus says! "Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward..."

The Shunammite woman welcomed and received Elisha the prophet into her life and her home, because she recognized him as a holy man of God. She was blessed and rewarded for her insight and hospitality. She was given the promise of having a son!

Jesus is saying it is the same for those who welcome and receive His disciples into their lives. As prophets for Jesus, those who receive us and welcome us will be blessed, will be rewarded. But the gift we bear, the blessing we bear as Jesus' disciples goes far beyond any gift this world has to offer, even having a child, when one is childless. As followers of Jesus the blessing we bear is a wonderful surprise: eternal life.

Yes, as Jesus says: "...whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because the little one is a disciple – amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward – and that reward is eternal life!"