

Developing the Strength of a Prophet

The consoling words from the prophet Jeremiah give comfort to all of us. God told him that he, like each of us, was known even in his mother's womb. It was this knowledge of being known and loved that gave Jeremiah the strength to stand before his people and prophesy some very strong and harsh words. He was set as a strong pillar, a wall of brass, a fortified city. He was rooted in love, because he needed to be so as not to be crushed by the anger and resentment stirred up by his prophetic words.

Jesus faces the same ire when visiting his hometown. At first the Nazarenes praise him, but soon, as if they had some entitlement, they presumptuously demand that he perform miracles to satisfy their vanity—not to change their hearts. When Jesus challenges them, their response is to want to throw him off a cliff!

As Christians, we all have a prophetic mission. We're called to preach the truths of the gospel, and at times this isn't popular. In the public square, the Church and Christians are often praised for their charitable work but asked to silence their religious voice when morality is discussed. We need the strength and conviction of prophets as well as the love that drives them.

—Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

Piece: *Jeremiah*, 1510-1512
Artist: Michelangelo
Location: Sistine Chapel ceiling



For Reflection

Do I have the serenity and moral courage to share the gospel truth in love?

Do I always show my faith in charitable thoughts and actions, and then in words when appropriate?

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.

Jeremiah 1:5