



# ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

**THIS SUNDAY February 3 & BEYOND”**

**“Is Jesus Someone I Can Believe In?”**



If you are someone who has yet to find the God they can believe in, then let's talk about looking at Jesus Christ. Just for this moment of reading.

You know, there's just an enormous amount of things we could talk about in regards to who Jesus is. But this, to be a

conversation, also has to be, from your side, answering the question about what may be behind my first sentence. If your question is the same, that is, “Is Jesus someone I can really believe in?”, then we'll need to talk about what your qualifiers are for “can really believe in.” Correct me if I'm wrong in regard to you – I have found this question is in reference to whether or not God has any idea of what I'm going through in my own life, and, even if He knows somehow the details of my life, is there any sense at all that He's experienced any of what I've experienced? Can God relate to me?

We are talking about the nature of a relationship that spells out T-R-U-S-T. And the fear of developing a relationship when trust is broken. And when Trust is broken, and the relationship is thus broken or impaired in some way, then one of the feelings that comes from such is Rejection.

There are quite a few other facets of “can really believe in”, such as I want a God who shows no weakness; or, I want a God who proves compassion; or, I want a God who is vulnerable.

The bottom line is that Jesus was absolutely REJECTED by his own family and home town people, after He shared some of the realities of His Father in heaven who showed faithful compassion and empathy in the form of HEALING to people who were not considered the People of God at that time. And the People of God did not

receive the same ministry from God because, well, they chose not to believe and trust in their own God!

So here you are, not having made up your mind and heart about WHO to believe in. But perhaps you've heard enough now about Jesus perhaps sharing some of your own life events to keep on reading?

As I said, Jesus said to a crowd of people in a Jewish assembly house (a synagogue) that at one time in their history God had bestowed miracles on outsiders who believed. It was a not-so-veiled commentary on the faith Jesus perceived in his home town, Nazareth. Outside this village Jesus had performed amazing miracles, but the unbelief in Nazareth was too thick. Even though they wanted to see a miracle show, they eventually showed themselves to be neither worthy nor ready. "A prophet wasn't honored in his own hometown," quoted Jesus..

The resentment and skepticism that seethed beneath the surface, now erupted in anger and murder. The congregation rose up from their Sabbath synagogue worship intent to kill their homegrown Teacher. They literally threw Jesus out of the building and out of the village. Then, once outside, the crowd led him away to the edge of the mountain that Nazareth is at. Without hearing or trial, and in violation of both Jewish and Roman law, his townspeople intended to kill him by throwing him over a precipice.

Is it possible this Jesus knows what you know about personal rejection? But by His divine power and presence overcame the intended results? Is that enough for you to see that this Jesus is someone YOU CAN believe in?

Now let me be clear. Life is no fairy tale, and believing in Jesus does not provide a get out of world unfairness card here. But Jesus walking through the crowd -- !! -- should be enough to let you know just Who has the Power in this life, and so Who's side to be on!!

Did any good come from Jesus' visit to Nazareth? Yes, and it directly reflects Jesus' mission to gather us into his arms and to be that God we can believe in. One of Jesus' followers, John said in his Gospel,

"He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:10-12)

I'd like to offer this prayer for you and for your use, while you are considering just who – God – you can believe in:

Lord, you know how I hate rejection. How I go way out of my way to avoid being or feeling rejected. Help me to grow out of it. I am impressed by your courage without retribution. Give me the same courage to face those who distrust, dislike, or resent me, who look down on me, who think they have me figured out. Help me to love them while refusing to compromise my integrity. And if you are in fact the God I can believe in, show me who you are; and then Forgive me where I've been afraid. I pray this in whom I hope you are. Amen.

Fr. Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Fourth Sunday of the Epiphany

Jeremiah 1:4-10 Psalm 71:1-6, 15-17 1 Corinthians 14:12b-20 Luke 4:21-32

## CALENDAR

**SUNDAY: The Fourth Sunday of the Epiphany**

8:30a Low Mass (Church)

10:30a Solemn High Mass (Church)

*—The entrance to the church is on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue—*

*Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.*

**MONDAY:** 7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

**TUESDAY:** Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

**FRIDAY:** AA Meetings

8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)

8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)