

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 07/7/2024.

In today's readings, we see examples of people who "**astonished**" others, each in their own way. First, there is the prophet Ezekiel...a man who accepted God's invitation to call the Jewish people to greater holiness and faithfulness. And he did so, enduring the anger of the masses. Ezekiel didn't go about his life like everyone else, blending in and giving in to the way things were. No, **he chose a different path**. And People were **astonished**.

Paul, too, chose a different path. We know the story well...how he had a dramatic conversion experience.... resulting in his willingness to travel all over the known world telling people all about the **wonders God had done through the person of Jesus**. Whether one agreed with Paul or not, his life was simply **astonishing**.

And then of course we have **Jesus**. In today's Gospel story we see him suffering the suspicion of many who had known him his whole life. And yet, the things they heard him **teach**, the **wisdom** he displayed, and the **mighty deeds** he "wrought", astonished them.

May each of us be **astonished** and **open** to all the **wonderful things our loving God has in store for us**.

- Astonishing levels of mercy and forgiveness.
- Astonishing levels of kindness and generosity.
- Astonishing levels of compassion and understanding and love.

These are things that change the world. These are the things that will change human hearts. These are the things that will get others to take notice, to pay attention, to pause and reflect on what they are seeing, and maybe **move them to embrace those very same things**.

And so, being astonishing really has nothing to do with being in the spotlight. No... each of us can be "astonishing" in our own way.... even if our lives seem insignificant.