

More rejection

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The Gospel is always proclaimed by flawed mortals—otherwise it would never be proclaimed at all. The Gospel is also always *heard* by flawed mortals—otherwise it would never be heard. Hence there is a beautiful and incarnational link between the two pericopes that make up this week's Gospel lesson.

In the first Jesus enters his hometown, Nazareth, having just [outdone](#) himself in the miracle department: he raised a young girl from the dead. But he's hardly been elevated to superhero or superhealer status—recall that in last week's reading, the people laughed at him. The rejection our Lord meets in his hometown is different from what he faces elsewhere only in degree.

We might be tempted to look down our noses at the people of Nazareth for responding to Jesus the way they do. But we would miss an important point: we too disbelieve. We too are apt to restrict what we think God is capable of in our lives and our communities.

Such a reaction also overlooks the connection between this episode and what follows. The rejection Jesus experiences allows his disciples to know that in Christ God has entered the human condition in an entirely real way, complete with suffering. The disciples are no longer ever alone in their weaknesses and so-called failures—and neither are we. As they go out two by two, they do so knowing that even Jesus, God the Word, came to his own and his own received him not. In this way God glorified the stranger.

Rejection has been the traveling companion of the Gospel from the beginning. Don't take it personally.