

Our Share in Christ's Prophetic Mission

Moses' response to Joshua's complaint about Eldad and Medad

"But Moses said to him, 'Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!'" —Num 11:29

Jesus to the Liberated Demoniac

"Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." —Mk 5:19

Jesus sends His disciples out throughout Galilee

"These Twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, '...Go to the lost sheep of Israel. And preach as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons.'" —Mt 10:5-8

Jesus sends His disciples out to the ends of the earth

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. . ." —Mt 28:19-20; Mk 16:15-18; Lk 24:44-48

"As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." —Jn 20:21

(St. Paul and St. John also speak about "prophets" within the Christian Church: 1 Cor 12:28-29; 13:2; 14:29, 32, 37; Eph 2:20; 3:5; 1 Tim 1:18; Rev 11:10; 22:6, 9)

Discussion Questions

1. How is Christ a prophet? How is He like the prophets of old? Can you think of some specific parallels? Can you also think of certain prophecies from the Old Testament which Christ fulfills?
2. How does Christ involve His disciples in His prophetic mission?
3. How is Christ a prophet to us? How can we be more attentive and faithful to what He teaches us?
4. How are we called to share in the prophetic mission of Christ, priests in one way, religious in another, and laity in another? How can we better live out that mission?

CHRIST THE PROPHET



Old Testament Background

Except for when God spoke directly to His people on Mount Sinai (Ex 20:1-17), God spoke to His people through individuals we call prophets. God called them to be His messengers. Through them God instructed, formed, guided, exhorted, warned, and gave hope to His people. Certain early figures are referred to as prophets, such as Abraham (Gen 20:7), Moses (Dt 34:10-12), Aaron (Ex 7:1), Miriam (Ex 15:20), and Deborah (Jdg 4:4). The *period* of the prophets would be later, however, and would be closely associated with the period of the kings. This prophetic period would stretch from the call of Samuel in the time of the Judges to the prophet Malachi in the time after the return from the Babylonian Exile. During this time, God called many prophets like Elijah (1 Kgs 17) and Elisha (2 Kgs 2), who never wrote anything. He also called prophets by or for whom books would be written, such as Isaiah (Is 6), Jeremiah (Jer 1:4-19), Ezekiel (Ezk 1-3), and the Twelve Minor Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi). In the Old Testament, Moses predicts that one day there would be a new *prophet like unto Moses* whom God would raise up to speak the words of God (Dt 18:15-19). In the Old Testament, there are many other prophecies that point us toward a future figure who would be greater than all the prophets of old, and even greater than Moses. This figure would be a divine-human figure who would speak the words of God, heal and forgive His people, suffer, die, rise, and lead His people to resurrection and eternal life with God. Jesus Christ is this figure, the Messiah.

New Testament

Where do we see Christ exercising a prophetic mission?

- When He calls people to repentance and conversion (Mk 1:14-15)
- When He calls persons to follow Him (Mk 1:16-20; 2:14)
- When He preaches and teaches (Mt 5-7; 10; 13; 18; 24-25)
- When He reveals God to us in His actions and Passion (1 Jn 3:16)
- When He sends His apostles out to teach in His name (Mt 10:5-15; 28:19)
- When He establishes a Church, giving to Peter and his successors the role to bind and loose in His name (Mt 16:18-19) and later promising to send the Holy Spirit upon the Church in order to guide her into all truth (Jn 16:13)

The Views of People

“And when he entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, ‘Who is this?’ And the crowds said, ‘This is the prophet, Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.’”
—Mt 21:11

“Fear seized them all; and they glorified God, saying, ‘A great prophet has arisen among us!’ and ‘God has visited his people!’” —Lk 7:16

“When the people saw the sign which he had done, they said, ‘This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!’” —Jn 6:14

“When they heard these words, some of the people said, ‘This is really the prophet.’ Others said, “This is the Christ.” —Jn 7:40-41

“So they again said to the blind man, ‘What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?’ He said, ‘He is a prophet.’” —Jn 9:17

The Woman at the Well

“The woman said to him, ‘Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.’” —Jn 4:19

The Disciples on the Road to Emmaus

“And he (Jesus) said to them, ‘What things?’ And they said to him, ‘Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a mighty prophet in deed and word before God and all the people. . .’” —Lk 24:19

Jesus Speaks about Himself in Relation to the Prophets

“And He said, ‘Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his own country.’”
—Lk 4:24

(See also the Parable of the Wicket Tenants: Mk 12:1-12; Mt 21:33-46; Lk 20:9-19)

In the Preaching in the Acts of the Apostles

“Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet from your brethren as he raised me up. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you.’”
—Acts 3:22 (see also Acts 7:37)

In Hebrews

“In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the ages.” —Heb 1:1-4