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Based on the gospel for 4 July, Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time: Mark 6:1-6

"A prophet is despised only in his own country, among his own relations and in his own house."

Who do they think they are? We have likely all heard this familiar put down and witnessed its power to hold people back and suppress ideas. It is Jesus' experience as he returns to his hometown and finds himself dismissed as just "the carpenter, the son of Mary."

Though aware of his miracles and astonished by his wisdom, the people of Nazareth cannot believe that God could act through someone so familiar. Their closed hearts and minds make them unable to receive the transformation and healing which Jesus could have brought.

This is a trap that we can fall into all too easily, missing much wisdom because we do not expect it from ordinary people.

The culture of encounter, which Pope Francis challenges us to engage in, provides a helpful corrective. We are invited to leave our comfort zones and, enriched by our differences, engage deeply with others. As we do so we come to see the wonder in the familiar and recognise the presence of God in each person.

With our hearts open to the other, to dialogue and relationship, we may find ourselves experiencing the presence of God more often than we thought possible.

Loving God,
send us your spirit of encounter.
Enable us to recognise your presence in each person,
to see the world as you do
and love it with your love.
Amen.



No one beyond reach

No one should be beyond the reach of the love and support they need to thrive. Do you agree?

[Sign your name](#)



Summer FUNraiser

Are you a wannabe Olympian, tennis pro or football star? Take on an active challenge for CAFOD this summer.

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Reflection on leadership

For the feast of St Peter and St Paul earlier this week, Linda from our Theology team reflected on what makes a good leader.

[Read more](#)

This reflection and prayer were written by Caroline Stanton of our Theology team.



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7/2/2021

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