

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

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(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

A Prophet and His Native Place

“A prophet is not without honor except in his native place.” It could be the slogan of high school reunions everywhere.

I speak from experience — I didn’t go to my high school reunion, but I do live in the same area in which I grew up. Ghosts from the past lurk in every grocery aisle and gas station. Former classmates fill my prescriptions at the pharmacy. I am always sure to see an old teacher or two at the Fourth of July parade.

If my teenage self knew that this was her future, she would be horrified. She wanted to grow up and move away, not because she didn’t like living in this town, but because she wanted to reinvent herself. And you can’t reinvent yourself in your native place. In your hometown, you’ll always be exactly what you are — no more, no less.

The same was true for Jesus, who was probably the only person actually worthy of admiration at his high school reunion. When he returned to his native place, he was what he had always been — God and man, Messiah, miracle-worker. This is not something he *became*, it was always within him.

But the people of Nazareth cannot accept it. Why?

Well, probably for the same reason that I wanted to reinvent myself when I was 16. We don’t often see anything worth venerating in the “right now” of our lives. We think happiness is a promotion or a pay bump away. We think we’ll finally be holy when we find the time to take that silent retreat. We think we will be beautiful when we lose ten pounds.

The Nazarenes lived with God right under their noses, and they didn’t realize it. So, when he came in all his greatness, the dissonance was too much to bear, and they rejected him. They didn’t want that God — the one they had dismissed or overlooked or ignored. They wanted a different one. A shinier one. One that didn’t look like the “right now” of their lives.

But that’s where God is, folks. He’s in the right now, and nowhere else. He’s waiting there for you, with all the happiness, holiness, and beauty your life needs.

Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.” — Mark 6:4