

**Homily — 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 2018  
by Rev. Bob Schramm, OSFS**

**Both the prophet Ezekiel and the apostle Paul  
describe experiences of God that are profound.  
Those experiences are recounted by both of them  
just before the passages we heard today in the first and second readings.**

**There is an ancient Latin phrase for such experiences,  
“mysterium tremendum et fascinans.”  
I'm not a Latin scholar by any means,  
but I think it's worth exploring that phrase a bit.**

**The word mysterium refers to the sense that God is always mystery,  
always somewhat beyond our grasp.  
There's always more to know about God.**

**From tremendum we get words like tremendous, tremble and terrifying.  
There's a sense of what's awesome here,  
a sense of overwhelming power.**

**From fascinans, we get a word like fascinating.  
Something that utterly draws you in, fascinates you, captivates you.  
Something that instinctively draws you near.**

**Both Ezekiel and Paul describe a profound experience of  
of this Mysterium Tremendum et Fascinans  
not as far-off, up there or out there  
but as intimately close, lovingly, graciously present to us all.**

**And Ezekiel and Paul have this profound experience  
even in the face of their own puniness and unworthiness.**

**Ezekiel and Paul are NOT holier-than-thou kind of people.**

**At weekday Masses, we've been listening to readings  
from six different prophets.  
I mentioned this past week that prophets are probably not people  
you'd want to invite to Sunday dinner.**

**It's said that Passionist Rev. Carrol Stuhlmueller  
once described the prophet Amos  
in terms that almost turned his student's stomachs.  
Amos, he said, was a wilderness shepherd,  
who followed the rear-end of sheep and goats for about 10 miles a day.  
He bathed maybe twice a year,  
never once saw a handkerchief or used a piece of toilet paper.  
Amos was as gross as they come.**

**Yet for some reason, "God took (him) from following the flock,  
and said, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'"**

**St. Paul describes today how he wrestled with his own inner demons,  
just like we all do.**

**That wrestling kept his feet firmly planted in the Earth  
with all the rest of us.**

**You see, God dares US ALL to believe that the raw ingredients of our lives  
contain the seeds of the kingdom of God.**

**That, the readings today suggest, is what Jesus may be up to this morning.**

**Surely there are prophets in this convent, in this city, in this nation, in our world.  
I say it often: when we were baptized, we were chrismed  
anointed as priest, king and prophet.**

**Will Jesus leave here today amazed at some "lack of faith?"**

**Keep your eyes open.**

**God longs to draw us into the *Mysterium Tremendum et Fascinans*.**

- **I think there's a glimpse of that every time two people fall deeply in love.  
It's true: "To love another person is to see the face of God."**
- **I think there's a glimpse of it every time I see sisters here waiting in vigil  
as a sister moves from this side of it all to the other.**
- **Heather Boone met a couple in line at Walmart.  
They asked if she was having a party because her cart was full.  
She told them the basket was for poor folks in Monroe.  
They paid for the whole basket.**

**God doesn't outfit the prophets with superpowers that command belief.  
The message of God's nearness comes packaged  
in what looks too familiar for us to take it seriously.**

**Take God's invitation to recognize the prophets around us  
and the one within each of us.**