



## Deacon Deliberations by Deacon Gary Kupsak

### “Could He Ever Go Home?”

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus went home. But he wasn't at home. In spite of his most powerful teachings, his family and old friends met him with quite a bit of skepticism. In First Century Palestine, in a rather static culture that measured a person's worth by their place in society, Jesus had clearly overstepped his bounds. Carpenters (and Jesus could make a very good table) had the lowly reputation that is sometimes attributed to traveling salesmen. These travelling craftsmen (day laborers) left their families without physical and economic security to go out into the countryside, to other cities near and far to seek work making tables, chairs, fences, walls and buildings out of wood and stone.

These carpenters often garnered very little respect in their communities. People gossiped and speculated about carpenters' activities away from their families, and our Jesus the Christ came from such an environment, as did Joseph, his earthly father. That very conservative Hebrew culture that Jesus lived in also cast a critical eye towards those who stepped above their station in life. Such people did not fit into the world of family and old friends, no matter what these people did, no matter what kind of a reputation they had built up while they were away from home.

Jesus was performing his salvation ministry completely different from that of a carpenter. He went from marginally honorable to the highly respected (I hope you notice that Jesus referred to himself in the third person as a “prophet,” while those in his hometown of Nazareth insisted on calling him a “carpenter”). Jesus was no longer what the people of Nazareth expected him to be. Because his family, relatives, friends had such little faith in him, Jesus could not lead them to faith in God through his miracles. They simply did not trust Jesus. No “mighty deeds” would change them, his words, his acts, his message would be futile. So, Jesus went back on the road, amazed at their lack of faith.

#### **Jesus came home, but he wasn't at home.**

Have we ever been disrespected by those close to us? How does the way we're treated by people who are close to us affect us? Have we ever disrespected, treated old friends and family in the same way? Jesus went home, but he did not find home to be what he imagined it to be. To those who were at one time close to him, he could be nothing more than a carpenter.

Do we extend the warmth of “home” to our Lord and Savior? Do our words and actions show our faith, show those around us that, yes, we are believers in Jesus Christ? Is the Son of the Father amazed by our faith or the lack of it? As we move through our journeys of life, by word and by deed, let's make our hearts the homes that always welcome Jesus.