The Gospel of Luke gives us wonderful examples of Jesus’ emotional world. There are demonstrations of tremendous compassion, of a soul searching for recognition, of the heartbreak that comes with being misunderstood.

Notice the deep grief, disappointment and love Jesus expressed in Luke 13:31-35. You can hear his sorrow as he laments over Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets: “How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!” (Luke 13:34)

Yes, he is the Son of God, but he is also the Son of Man, experiencing the same range of emotions that we feel. Yet, do we really understand him?

“Who do you say that I am?” Jesus puts this question to every disciple. His earthly life is framed by the varied answers given by the crowds, the disciples, the authorities. Is he a prophet? Is he the Messiah? Is he just an itinerant, uncredentialed preacher from Nazareth?

Inherent here also is the contrast between reality and our expectations. Jesus is keenly aware of this when, in Luke 9:22, he says: “The Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and scribes …”

The key word here is the one translated as “rejected.” This rejection does not come quickly. It only comes after the authorities have scrutinized Jesus, examined the scriptures, taken stock of his words and deeds. They had a certain expectation regarding the Messiah. Jesus simply did not meet the accepted criteria. Thus, he must be rejected.

How often have we allowed our own prejudices and preconceptions to determine our decisions? How often have we rejected God’s gift because it did not come in the way or person we expected? Conversely, have you ever been rejected because, despite all you may have done or achieved, you did not fit into the expected mold?

May these questions inform your prayers and your lives as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Grace and peace, and we’ll be looking for you on Zoom this Thursday at 6 p.m.

Fr. Dion and Patricia