

Your Lourdes Sunday Liturgy at Home
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR
July 11, 2021

“Truth shall spring out of the earth,
and justice shall look down from heaven.”
– Psalm 85:12

When Jesus called the Twelve, each already had his own means of livelihood. But, at Jesus’ invitation, each was willing to set aside his job and share in Jesus’ vocation. His instructions to them were simple; they were to preach repentance, heal people and continue Jesus’ battle with the powers of evil. What has Jesus called you to do and to be?

Students of the New Testament believe that Mark created the literary genre of the gospel as an instruction in discipleship in order to sustain the developing church and to prepare it for the suffering that comes from following Jesus. Today’s Gospel passage is a fine example of the apprenticeship Jesus offered to his own. And it works for us today.

Meanwhile, Amos (in our first reading) had *two* jobs. He was a shepherd and a dresser of sycamores. While at work, Amos was called by God to speak for God, to be a prophet. Judging from his conversation with the high temple priest Amaziah, being a prophet was never on Amos’ to-do list. On the contrary, he did not even want to be associated with the guilds of prophets who tickled the ears of monarchs with predictions they wanted to hear. Nevertheless, by God’s grace, Amos prophesied solo, and as a result, his word continues to challenge God’s people to uphold God’s justice and be defenders of the poor and downtrodden.

Amos had mastered the art of “dressing” (7:14) the trees by knowing how and at what point in the tree’s development to pinch the sycamore fig fruit so that it would grow large enough to be worth eating. As an outdoorsman and a nomadic sheep herder, Amos was God’s choice to send to the high and mighty to preach repentance to the northern kingdom of Israel.

Jeroboam II was king in Israel (783-743 B.C.E.) when Amos was called. Economically and politically, it was a period of peace and prosperity, but socially and religiously, it was a time of decadence and wanton disregard for the statutes of the covenant. While Israel was still savoring its victory over the Aramean forces (Amos 6:1), the ominous threat of Assyria was looming on the horizon. However, it seemed far enough away for the rich in the Northern Kingdom of Israel to enjoy their wealth and luxuries in confidence. Amos brought the word of God to bear on the injustices that were being perpetrated, especially against the poor.

Enter Amos! Today we get a glimpse of his bumpy encounter with Amaziah, the priest at the temple sanctuary in Bethel. With no loyalties except to God, Amos denounced the sins of all, even the king (7:9), and warned of divine retribution. Infuriated, Amaziah, in no uncertain terms, told the prophet to be on his way, calling him a visionary, a term that had taken on a negative connotation.

Down through the centuries, Amos' words have continued to reverberate with truth and relevance. Walter Brueggeman has said that it is impossible to overestimate the importance of the Book of Amos and the attention given it in recent years. Amos was the first to articulate the idea of "ethical monotheism" – that is, the prophet enunciated the rule of one God over all peoples, one God who had a moral purpose of justice for the whole world. He has also uttered what has become the decisive summons of all prophetic faith, often thundered from the pulpit by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "But let justice roll down like water and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (5:54).

A sense of urgency floods our Gospel passage. Jesus' instruction to take nothing, not food or luggage, not money or a change of clothes, is more than an exhortation to practice simplicity and asceticism. If Jesus and the disciples believed that the messianic era was upon them, provisions for a long campaign were thought unnecessary. In addition, this text also teaches about reliance on God's providence. Just as Jesus found his nourishment in doing the work for which he had been sent, so were his disciples to do likewise.

Besides traveling simply, those sent forth were not to arrange for lodging but were to stay wherever they were welcomed. This would preclude their going from house to house and avoid a possible rivalry among hosts who might try to outdo one another's hospitality. This advice was coupled with a warning that, at times, the disciples would be rejected. When that happened, they were to shake the dust off their feet and move on. Thus, all discouragement, self-doubt and anger could be left behind.

Finally, this text is significant for the different light it sheds on the disciples of Jesus, who were frequently described by Mark as confused, without understanding, and full of doubt. Here, their active cooperation with Jesus in his battle against evil in all its forms is encouraging and worthy of emulation. Moreover, Mark also makes the point that commitment, service and worthy apostolic witness are possible even where perfect faith and complete understanding are not present. Even though they had not graduated from disciple school and were still imperfect servants, Jesus sent forth the Twelve. In the same way, he sends each of us, confident that God's grace will be sufficient for us.

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Prelude: Center yourselves first by singing along with "This Is the Day," by Leon C. Roberts and the St. Augustine Choir:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fK3XmctnEmE>

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And with your spirit.

Penitential Act

Lord Jesus, you call us to be your disciples:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you send us to tell others of your reign:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you promise to provide what we need for the journey:

Lord, have mercy.

Opening Prayer

God of justice, God of salvation,
from every land you call a people to yourself. Yours is the work we do,
yours the message we carry.

Keep your Church single-minded and faithful to you. Let failure not
discourage us
nor success beguile our hearts,
as you send us to proclaim the gospel.

We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who
lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever
and ever. **LET THE CHURCH SAY – AMEN.**

First, listen to “Order My Steps” sung by the GMWA Women of
Worship: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCSuw1zs8Kw>

Then move on to this Sunday’s readings:

Readings for Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time July 11, 2021

1st Reading – Book of the Prophet Amos 7:12-15

¹² Amaziah, priest of Bethel, said to Amos, “Off with you, visionary,
flee to the land of Judah! There earn your bread by prophesying,

¹³ but never again prophesy in Bethel; for it is the king’s sanctuary and
a royal temple.”

¹⁴ Amos answered Amaziah, “I was no prophet, nor have I belonged to
a company of prophets; I was a shepherd and a dresser of sycamores.

¹⁵ The LORD took me from following the flock, and said to me, Go,
prophesy to my people Israel.”

The Word of the Lord.....Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm – 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

⁹ I will hear what God proclaims;
the LORD for he proclaims peace.

¹⁰ Near indeed is his salvation to those who fear him,
glory dwelling in our land.

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

¹¹ Kindness and truth shall meet;
justice and peace shall kiss.

¹² Truth shall spring out of the earth,
and justice shall look down from heaven.

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

¹³ The LORD himself will give his benefits;
our land shall yield its increase.

¹⁴ Justice shall walk before him,
and prepare the way of his steps.

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

2nd Reading – Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians 1:3-14

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has
blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens,

⁴ as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy
and without blemish before him. In love

⁵ he destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in
accord with the favor of his will,

⁶ for the praise of the glory of his grace that he granted us in the
beloved.

⁷ In him we have redemption by his blood, the forgiveness of transgressions, in accord with the riches of his grace

⁸ that he lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight,

⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will in accord with his favor that he set forth in him

¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of times, to sum up all things in Christ, in heaven and on earth.

¹¹ In him we were also chosen, destined in accord with the purpose of the One who accomplishes all things according to the intention of his will,

¹² so that we might exist for the praise of his glory, we who first hoped in Christ.

¹³ In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised holy Spirit,

¹⁴ which is the first installment of our inheritance toward redemption as God's possession, to the praise of his glory.

The Word of the Lord.....Thanks be to God.

Gospel – Mark 6:7-13

⁷ Jesus summoned the Twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over unclean spirits.

⁸ He instructed them to take nothing for the journey but a walking stick
no food, no sack, no money in their belts.

⁹ They were, however, to wear sandals but not a second tunic.

¹⁰ He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave.

¹¹ Whatever place does not welcome you or listen to you, leave there and shake the dust off your feet in testimony against them.”

¹² So they went off and preached repentance.

¹³ The Twelve drove out many demons, and they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

The Gospel of the Lord.....Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection Prompts:

- If Amos-like prophets appeared today, what would they say? What would they denounce? What would they encourage?
- As you share the Gospel with others, what do you let go of and what do you receive?
- Jesus called his disciples to be wounded healers? How have you embraced that mission?

“Balm in Gilead” arranged and conducted by M. Roger Holland II:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KeH52w26u6k>

Meditation Prompts:

- Have you discovered God’s purpose for you? If so, visualize in your silent meditation how you would actualize it, do it?
- If you have not discerned God’s purpose for you in this season of your life, sit quietly with the question and see if your path becomes clear.

Then move into this week’s prayers of the faithful.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS – July 11, 2021 FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Presider: Let us confidently offer our prayers to God who has bestowed on us every spiritual blessing.

Worship Leader

1. For all Christians, that they may see the grace of God, active in their lives. We pray: **Let justice roll down.** (RESPOND: **Let justice roll down.**)

2. For all people who hunger and thirst for justice, that they may be rewarded. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
3. For continued healing for Pope Francis and his return to active ministry. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
4. For family farmers, communal gardeners, migrant workers and all who work on the land. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
5. For the success of our Moving Forward in Faith campaign to build a new spiritual home. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
6. For David & Carol Elam as they celebrate 38 years of marriage and for Michael & Monica Taylor as they celebrate 46 years of marriage. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
7. For comfort for all whose lives have been forever changed by the condominium collapse in Surfside, Florida. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
8. For the prophets in our midst; who remind us of what matters most, and challenge our priorities. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
9. For our Stephen Ministry, its leaders, and all Care Team members and receivers here at Lourdes. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
10. For commitments and actions to renew the face of the Earth with clean soil, water and air for the benefit of future generations. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
11. For all those who are unemployed or underpaid, that they find the work they seek with a living wage and humane benefits. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**

12. For all those who are separated from us by infirmity, especially those afflicted by COVID-19, and for all those living with HIV and AIDS, that they know our community's care for them. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
13. For all the dead, that they see God face to face. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**
14. Please share any intention you have [PAUSE.....] as well as all our own needs. We pray: **Let justice roll down.**

Presider: Loving God, make us mindful of your presence in all times and places. Open our eyes, heal our hearts, and transform our priorities with your grace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son. LET THE CHURCH SAY.....AMEN!

Sing or recite "The Lord's Prayer."

Then, luxuriate in this classic: "Use Me" Ron Kenoly's Hosanna!

Music:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-2mkzSu6SU>

Closing Prayer

O God,
you show the light of your truth to those who stray, that they may return to the right path.
Grant that all who profess the Christian faith may reject whatever is contrary to the gospel and follow the way that leads to you.

We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. LET THE CHURCH SAY – AMEN.

Closing Song

"Only What You Do for Christ Will Last" sung by Mahalia Jackson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHXjfeLsiw8>

“Only What You Do for Christ Will Last” from the 2005 Metropolitan Baptist Church Prayer Breakfast at the Washington Hilton and Towers. A commissioned arrangement by Moses Hogan:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWoJixFJUlk>

“Only What You Do For Christ Will Last”
by Raymond Rasberry

Verse 1:

You may build great cathedrals large or small,
you can build skyscrapers grand and tall,
you may conquer all the failures of the past,
but only what you do for Christ will last.

Chorus:

Remember only what You do for Christ will last.
Remember only what you do for Christ will last,
only what you do for Him will be counted at the end;
only what you do for Christ will last.

Verse 2:

You may seek earthly power and fame,
the world might be impressed by your great name,
soon the glories of this life will all be past,
but only what you do for Christ will last.

Chorus

Verse 3:

Though your armies may control each hemisphere,
and your orbits out in space cause men to cheer,
your scientific knowledge may be vast,
but only what you do for Christ will last.

Chorus

Verse 4:

Though your song and prayers are heard and praised by man,
they've no meaning unless you've been born again,
sinner, heed these words, don't let this harvest pass,
for only what you do for Christ will last.

Chorus