



Reflection by Greg Sunter

This account of the sending out of the twelve disciples appears in all three of the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) and so originates from the Gospel of Mark. It is a commissioning of the disciples to spread the ministry of Jesus – teaching, healing and casting out demons. It seems rather harsh conditions under which Jesus sends out his disciples. They are to carry nothing but a staff – a walking stick – and to trust completely to the hospitality that they will encounter. For the disciples going out on their mission, it is a challenge to their faith and their trust that God will provide for them. The act of sending out the disciples can also be seen as a challenge to the towns and people that the disciples visited. A challenge for them to fulfil their duty of hospitality – of welcoming the stranger and caring for those in need. By travelling without a ‘fallback position’ the disciples are utterly at the mercy of those they encounter but there is an implicit demand on the other to extend hospitality to the one who seeks it.

How would the disciples be greeted in our world today if they arrived in a country or town with no food, no possessions and calling on the hospitality of the place in which they had arrived? Does this sound familiar? There are refugees and asylum seekers who arrive on our borders and seek the hospitality of our country. They are fleeing inhospitality – often starvation, war, persecution, poverty – and they ask for welcome and hospitality. Unfortunately, in the culture of fear and intolerance that has developed, they are not met with welcome and hospitality; they are met with obstacles, rejection and ill treatment.

Gospel Acclamation See Eph 1:17-18

Alleluia, alleluia!

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our hearts that we might see how great is the hope to which we are called.

Alleluia!

Gospel Mk 6:7-13

He called the Twelve, and began to send them out.

Jesus summoned the Twelve and began to send them out in pairs giving them authority over the unclean spirits. And he instructed them to take nothing for the journey except a staff – no bread, no haversack, no coppers for their purses. They were to wear sandals, but, he added, ‘Do not take a spare tunic.’ And he said to them, ‘If you enter a house anywhere, stay there until you leave the district. And if any place does not welcome you and people refuse to listen to you, as you walk away shake off the dust from under your feet as a sign to them.’ So they set off to preach repentance; and they cast out many devils, and anointed many sick people with oil and cured them.

The psalm responses are from the English Translation of the Lectionary for the Mass ©1981 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Inc.(ICEL). All rights reserved. The psalm texts, from *The Psalms, A New Translation*, ©1963 by The Grail, England and used by permission of the publishers. The scriptural quotations are taken from the *Jerusalem Bible*, published and copyright 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers.
© 2017 Creative Ministry Resources Pty Ltd
All use must be in accordance with your user licensing agreement.

The Living Word

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

11 July 2021

First Reading Am 7:12-15

Go, prophesy to my people.

Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, said to Amos, ‘Go away, seer; get back to the land of Judah; earn your bread there, do your prophesying there. We want no more prophesying in Bethel; this is the royal sanctuary, the national temple.’ ‘I was no prophet, neither did I belong to any of the brotherhoods of prophets.’ Amos replied to Amaziah, ‘I was a shepherd, and looked after sycamores: but it was the Lord who took me from herding the flock, and the Lord who said, “Go, prophesy to my people Israel.”’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 84:9-14. R. v.8

(R.) Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation.

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say, a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people. His help is near for those who fear him and his glory will dwell in our land. *(R.)*
2. Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced. Faithfulness shall spring from the earth and justice look down from heaven. *(R.)*
3. The Lord will make us prosper and our earth shall yield its fruit. Justice shall march before him and peace shall follow his steps. *(R.)*

Second Reading Eph 1:3-14 or shorter form Eph 1:3-10

Before the world was made, he chose us in Christ.

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all the spiritual

blessings of heaven in Christ. Before the world was made, he chose us, chose us in Christ, to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in his presence, determined that we should become his adopted sons, through Jesus Christ for his own kind purposes, to make us praise the glory of his grace, his free gift to us in the Beloved in whom, through his blood, we gain our freedom, the forgiveness of our sins. Such is the richness of the grace which he has showered on us in all wisdom and insight. He has let us know the mystery of his purpose, the hidden plan he so kindly made in Christ from the beginning to act upon when the times had run their course to the end: that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth. And it is in him that we were claimed as God’s own, chosen from the beginning, under the predetermined plan of the one who guides all things as he decides by his own will; chosen to be, for his greater glory, the people who would put their hopes in Christ before he came. Now you too, in him, have heard the message of the truth and the good news of your salvation, and have believed it: and you have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit of the Promise, the pledge of our inheritance which brings freedom for those whom God has taken for his own, to make his glory praised.