

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today's readings tell us we are called by God, blessed with every spiritual blessing and sent out to spread Christ's love.

"Let us see, O Lord, your mercy,"

Amos 7:12-15

Amos, a shepherd and a tender of sycamore trees, totally unqualified to be a prophet, is called by the Lord.

Ephesians 1:3-14

We are chosen in Christ "before the world was made".

Mark 6:7-13

Jesus sends out his twelve disciples.



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

Jesus had been rejected by his neighbours, yet he still went on teaching in the area around Nazareth. He summoned his apostles, and sent them out "two by two". The Greek word *apostollo* means "someone who is sent with a message". The

apostles did not go on their own volition, but under the power and authority of Jesus.

Strengthened by one another, they had to imitate Jesus by trusting in God's providence. If they were shown hospitality when they brought the good news, they should remain in that place. But if doors and ears were closed to their message, they must shake the very dust off their feet when they left that place. (The Rabbinic law said that the dust of a Gentile country was defiled, and when people returned to the Holy Land from another country they would shake off every particle of dust of the unclean land.)

Empowered by the Lord, the new missionaries went forth to announce God's reign, expel demons and heal the sick by anointing them with oil (early evidence of the Sacrament of the Sick. (See James 5:14).



"He began to send them out."

Again, like last week, the theme is prophecy. Today the concentration is on the sending out of prophets, entrusting them with a mission, and most importantly on the necessary qualifications to be a prophet. The only qualification necessary is an open ear, to hear the mandate from God.

We see this in Amos, the simple shepherd, and in the Twelve, called by Jesus from their humble occupations, which no one would have thought qualified them to speak on 'religious' themes. As last week, the possibility of rejection and failure is quite explicitly treated - Jesus instructs the Apostles in what to do if they are ignored.

When the Gospel simply states, "So they set off to preach repentance..." we can imagine all that was in their minds and hearts as they did so. They had heard the call of Jesus, and allowed it into their hearts: this was all they needed to go out and speak his words.



Saint Bonaventure

Bonaventure joined the Franciscans, or Order of Friars Minor at the age of 22. He studied theology and philosophy in Paris. When he was aged thirty-six, Bonaventure was made Minister General of the Franciscan Order. He emphasized total dependence upon God, and he wrote guides to mystical contemplation. He also wrote the official life of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Following St Francis, Bonaventure expressed charity, goodwill and affection towards other people.

Bonaventure spoke at the Council of Lyons, at which he was a papal legate, but died before its close. On hearing of his death, Pope Gregory X, who had appointed him cardinal bishop of Albano in 1273, declared that Bonaventure was "a man of eminent learning and eloquence, and of outstanding holiness." Bonaventure was known as "The Seraphic Doctor" of the Church because he revealed a warmth toward other people as a divine fire.

Thorns and cross and nails and lance,
 Wounds, our rich inheritance . . .
 May these all our spirits fill,
 And with love's devotion thrill . . .

Christ, by coward hands betrayed,
 Christ, for us a captive made,
 Christ upon the bitter tree,
 Slain for man - all praise to Thee.

Saint Bonaventure.

GOSPEL WORDSEARCH

E	S	C	E	M	O	C	L	E	W	BREAD	HAVERSACK	PURSES
S	R	I	N	N	M	O	K	C	E	TUNIC	HOUSE	WELCOME
D	E	R	U	C	G	A	C	I	L	DUST	FEET	SIGN
V	P	L	T	W	H	I	A	N	C	DEVILS	OIL	CURED
E	P	U	E	S	R	T	S	U	D			
E	O	E	R	E	L	O	R	T	B			
T	C	S	F	S	T	I	E	S	R			
I	N	U	T	W	E	L	V	E	E			
L	S	O	N	E	E	S	A	E	A			
E	S	H	E	T	F	S	H	U	D			