



Bringing Home the Word

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

July 14, 2024

You Can Do It

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

Today's readings are about unpretentious people who accomplished remarkable deeds. Amos, a shepherd from the southern kingdom of Judah who also cultivated sycamore figs, challenged the people at a northern shrine in Israel. He did not come from an illustrious family, nor was he particularly important. Yet he is the one called by God to summon the northern Israelites to repentance.

The disciples of Jesus pursued family businesses like fishing or were employed by the Romans like Matthew. They didn't come from socially prominent families,

nor were they known as community leaders. But look at what they did: they cast out demons and cured the sick. Where did these people get their training? More importantly, where did they obtain their power? We find the answer to such questions in the second reading: "In him we were also chosen" (Ephesians 1:11).

We are assured that God "has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens" (Ephesians 1:3). We don't have to worry about performing miracles; all we have to do is open ourselves to the graciousness of God. God will do the rest. Through us, God will cast out the demons of prejudice and bias that plague our world, of selfishness and spitefulness so prominent in our political rivalries, of greed and dishonesty in many of our social interactions. Through us, God will heal our country, our world, and our Church of hatred, violence, and oppression. With Amos and the Twelve we too hear: "You can do it." †

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A Word from Pope Francis

The Twelve have the order to "take nothing for their journey except a staff".... The staff and the sandals are the gear of pilgrims because that is what the messengers of the Kingdom of God are, not omnipotent managers, not irreplaceable officials, not celebrities *on tour*.... [They are] humble workers of the Kingdom.

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Sunday Readings

Amos 7:12-15

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

Ephesians 1:3-14 or 1:3-10

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

Mark 6:7-13

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

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Do you realize that through God, ordinary people have the power to transform the world?
- In what ways do you make the world better?

Claiming Hope for the Wounded

Kathleen M. Basi

The Japanese technique known as *kintsugi* involves piecing together shattered pottery and binding it with gold lacquer. Rather than trying to hide the flaws in a piece, this art form recognizes that flaws themselves are part of an object's beauty. Our wounds—and especially the ways we react to them—are precious scars that make us unique and beautiful children of God.

Well-meaning platitudes can undercut this central truth of human existence. When people say, “God’s ways are not our ways” or “God has a plan” or “God never gives us more than we can handle,” it’s easy to start thinking God gave us this pain on purpose to torment us. But the wounds we suffer are not the will of God. They are the reality of living in a fallen



world in which the effects of sin ripple outward.

One thing is true, though: God can use our pain—our broken places—to do something beautiful within us. As he stitches us back together with the gold of his love and healing, we become more

sensitive to the richness life has to offer. We learn a profound gratitude for all that is good, beautiful, and holy, and empathy and compassion for others.

God does not abandon us to despair. If we give him the space to work within us, he can transform our pain. We may not recognize it until years later—if ever. But trusting that his hand is at work, even in suffering he did not wish upon us, can free us to hope for the future.

Lord, you have promised that, in the end, all things work for good. Help me entrust you with my suffering. Use my pain to bring a little piece of your kingdom to earth. Give me the grace to seek joy despite my woundedness. Anima Christi! O good Jesus, hear me; within your wounds hide me. Amen. †

Wisdom from Catholic UPDATE

From “An Invitation to Prayer” by Fr. Edward Hays

Our search for God in our prayer lives is not restricted to special times and places. The Holy Spirit invites us, in the words of St. Paul, to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). How does one respond to the invitation to pray always? We need to discover ways to remind ourselves of God’s loving presence in our everyday world. God is present to us twenty-four hours a day. It is our awareness of God that needs heightening. Rituals can help us in this regard: not only familiar rituals like morning, evening, and meal prayers, but other simple rituals that we create for ourselves. †

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Loving God, as Jesus called the disciples and sent them to do your work and your will, help us to listen for your call to the life you intend for us. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

July 15–20

Monday, St. Bonaventure:
Is 1:10–17 / Mt 10:34–11:1

Tuesday, Weekday:
Is 7:1–9 / Mt 11:20–24

Wednesday, Weekday:
Is 10:5–7, 13b–16 / Mt 11:25–27

Thursday, Weekday:
Is 26:7–9, 12, 16–19 / Mt 11:28–30

Friday, Weekday:
Is 38:1–6, 21–22, 7–8 / Mt 12:1–8

Saturday, Weekday:
Mi 2:1–5 / Mt 12:14–21

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