

have heard the message of the truth and the good news of your salvation, and have believed it: and you too 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.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** cf. Eph 1: 17-18

**Alleluia, alleluia! May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our heart that we might see how great is the hope to which we are called. Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL** Mk 6: 7-13

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.**

*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 Gospel of the Lord.**

# Breaking Open the Word



# THE SAVING WORD

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / B

11 JULY 2021

## OPPORTUNITY AND DANGER

When God intervenes in our lives it can mean radical change that brings with it both opportunity and danger. Amos’ work had involved the care of trees – nothing had prepared him for his new ministry as prophet. Preaching far from his home, he was politely threatened, and told in no uncertain terms, that his message of judgement was not welcome at the king’s shrine. His response was that while his message was discomfoting to hear, it had been given by God. It was not his own and his experience of God was so powerful that he could not deny it. He had a duty to preach the message he had been given.

The mission of the twelve is another example of the kind of radical change that can accompany a close encounter with Jesus. Called to share in Jesus’ mission they are prepared and commissioned for this new task, a task which will lead them to face acceptance, as well as the risk of rejection. They are instructed that they must travel light, there is nothing they can carry that will defend them from a closed mind or a hardened heart.

The opening hymn in the letter to the Ephesians is a beautiful and loving reflection on what we have received in Jesus. It is filled with wonder for the fact that we have all been adopted through Jesus, who is the source of forgiveness and our freedom. There is an implicit invitation: having received so much how could we not share this with others – whatever the risk.

## FIRST READING

Am 7: 12-15

**A reading from the prophet Amos.**

*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.”’

■ **The word of the Lord.**

**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

**A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians.**

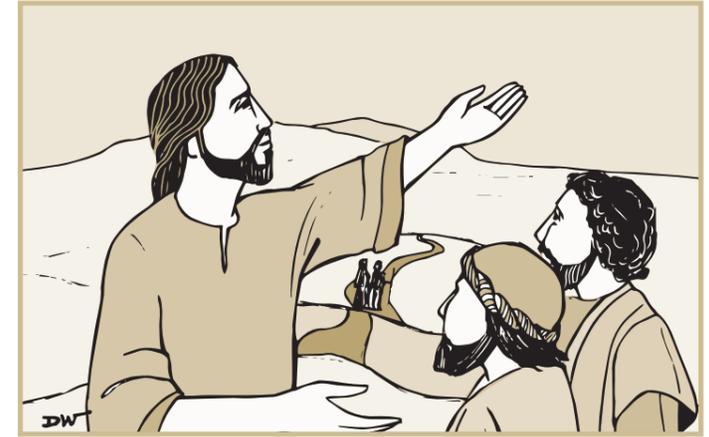
*Before the world was made, he chose us in Christ.*

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,



determining 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,

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