

15th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Amos 7:12-15, Psalm 85:9-14, Ephesians 1:3-14, Mark 6:7-13

Are we prepared to carry out Christ's mission?

Are we willing to bring hope and healing to others?

It would seem today more than ever, we need hope and healing. Jesus had been preparing the twelve for some time now and determines this is the day to kick them out of the nest. Jesus had taught them and they heard him teaching the crowds for some time and now it was time for them to spread the Good News themselves. Jesus sent them out with just the basics – a tunic, sandals and staff. They didn't need a suitcase. They were not caught up in which pair of sandals they would wear with which tunic. Some times we can be so caught up in the things we have and forget that God is the source of all that we have.

Jesus sent them two by two. This was based on the understanding of their time that any testimony given required two witnesses. This would also be beneficial today, to have more than one person present especially if it was a significant discussion.

Jesus is the healer and gave his disciples the authority to cast out demons and to heal the sick as they were preaching. This is one of the first times in the New Testament which references what we know as the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

From our reading from Ephesians, we are prepared for mission. The mission of the Church is to announce, bear witness and spread the mystery of the communion of the Holy Trinity. God loves us so much, that he willed from the beginning that we would be his sons and daughters. Through our baptism, we joined in Christ's death and resurrection and received the Holy Spirit, an indelible mark placed on our soul that we are now a child of God. Then sealed with the Holy Spirit at Confirmation, we are to continue growing deeper in our relationship with God each day that we may inherit the promise of heaven.

The seal of the Holy Spirit marks our total belonging to Christ, our enrollment in his service for ever, as well as the promise of divine protection in the great eschatological trial. (CCC 1296)

We were anointed with the Oil of Chrism which signifies outpouring of God's grace and the spiritual strength to enable us to resist the influence of sin and manifest cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance and the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity.

Amos, a shepherd, was called by God to be a prophet, to speak the truth to the people.

At our baptism we were anointed with Chrism to be priest, prophet and king. As prophet, we are to speak the truth in love.

How are we growing our relationship with Jesus each day?

Do we take time to pray especially with the scriptures to hear God speaking to us?

Do we take time to help our family members do the same?

How can we speak truth if we don't have a firm understanding of the teachings of the Church?

We are so blessed with many wonderful Catholic resources today. Here are a few.
Catholic radio – KWKY 1150AM (www.iowacatholicradio.com)
Relevant Radio (internet – www.relevantradio.net)
United States Council of Catholic Bishops – www.usccb.org
Word on Fire – Fr. Robert Barron – www.wordonfire.org

Today, more than ever, we need to grow in our relationship with Jesus.
Today, more than ever, we need a deeper understanding of the teachings of the Church so we can provide an accurate response to questions we may be asked.
Today, more than ever, we need to pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be active and guide us each day.

This is the same Holy Spirit that overshadowed Mary, bringing our Savior into the world.
This is the same Holy Spirit that opened Elizabeth's womb to conceive John the Baptist, who prepared the way for our Lord.
The same Holy Spirit that transforms the bread and wine to the Body and Blood of Jesus during the Eucharist prayer.

As we approach the Eucharist today, let us ask Jesus to heal us and tell him that we are willing to bring hope and healing.

Then at the Sending, we are now better prepared to carry out Christ's mission and we are excited for the many ways we will be a witness for Christ and His Church realizing there will be successes and some failures. We return next Sunday to be refilled and recharged for the next week.

References from the Catechism of the Catholic Church

CCC 1506-1509 – Disciples share in Christ's healing mission

CCC 737-741 – Church called to proclaim and bear witness

CCC 849-856 – origin and scope of the Church's mission

CCC 1122, 1533 – Mission-mindedness

CCC 693, 698, 706, 1107, 1296 – the Holy Spirit as God's guarantee and seal

CCC 492 – Mary as a unique example of being chosen before the foundation of the world