

A reading from the book of the Prophet Amos.

Pause - and look up at the assembly

Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, said to Amos,  
 “O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah,  
 earn your bread there, and prophesy there;  
 but never again prophesy at Bethel,  
 for it is the king’s sanctuary,  
 and it is a temple of the kingdom.”

Then Amos answered Amaziah,  
 “I am no prophet, nor a prophet’s son;  
 but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees,  
 and the Lord took me from following the flock,  
 and the Lord said to me,  
 ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’”

as in ‘profit’

= Pro-fa-SIGH

Amaziah = Am-uh-ZIGH-uh  
 Bethel = BETH-uhl  
 Amos = AY-muhs

PAUSE for **THREE** seconds  
 then look up at the people  
 and say SLOWLY:



The WORD of the LORD.

*Thanks be to God.*

## SECOND READING – 15 B

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who has blessed us in Christ  
with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,  
just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world  
to be holy and blameless before him in love.  
He destined us for adoption to sonship as his own  
through Jesus Christ,  
according to the good pleasure of his will,  
to the praise of his glorious grace  
that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.  
In Christ we have redemption through his blood,  
the forgiveness of our trespasses,  
according to the riches of his grace  
that he lavished on us.  
With all wisdom and insight  
he has made known to us the mystery of his will,  
according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ,  
as a plan for the fullness of time,  
to gather up all things in him,  
things in heaven and things on earth. ✨

Pause for **THREE** seconds  
then look up at the people  
and say SLOWLY:



The WORD of the LORD.

*Thanks be to God.*

## GOSPEL READING – 15 B

The Lord be with you.

*And with your spirit.*

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark.

*Glory to you, O Lord.*

Jesus called the twelve and began to send them out two by two,  
and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.  
He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff;  
no bread, no bag, no money in their belts;  
but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics.  
Jesus said to them,  
“Wherever you enter a house,  
stay there until you leave the place.  
If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you,  
as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet  
as a testimony against them.”  
So the twelve went out and proclaimed that all should repent.  
They cast out many demons,  
and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.



The GOSPEL of the LORD.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

## SCRIPTURES IN DEPTH

### **Reading I: Amos 7:12-15**

This reading appears to have been chosen to go with the mission of the Twelve in the gospel. Amos is sent to God's people in Israel (the northern kingdom) as the Twelve were sent to God's people in Galilee.

The passage places before us two contrasting conceptions of religion—one represented by Amaziah, priest of Bethel, and the other represented by the prophet Amos.

Amaziah thought of religion in "civil" terms. It existed to promote loyalty to the status quo—the royal house and patriotism. Bethel was the king's sanctuary and the temple of the kingdom, a sort of national cathedral.

Amaziah thought of his own role as that of a court chaplain, whose job was to prophesy "smooth things."

Amos, however, was not a card-carrying member of the prophetic guild (whose members viewed their duties much as Amaziah did his); he was an outsider whom God had called to denounce the government for its injustices and inhuman policies.

We do not get the substance of Amos' message here, only his basic attitude.

It is to deliver the word of the Lord, not to take the professional line of the court chaplains and spokespersons for an uncritical patriotism.

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### **Responsorial Psalm: 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14**

In commenting on this identical selection on the nineteenth Sunday of the year in series A, we pointed out that the original context of this psalm is uncertain, but that its theology reminds one of Second Isaiah and that its plausible context is the impending return from exile. While suitable for any occasion, it does not appear to have any particular connection with today's readings.

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### **Reading II: Ephesians 1:3-14 or Ephesians 1:3-10**

The opening thanksgiving of Ephesians (which we regard as Deutero-Pauline) is suggested by Paul's thanksgiving in 2 Corinthians 1:3ff, and is today widely thought to be made up from a liturgical hymn.

This liturgical material runs through verse 14. The shorter version is obtained simply by lopping off the latter portion, which is printed as a separate paragraph in the RSV (and NAB). In the Greek both parts consist of a simple sentence.

The contents suggest that these verses were taken from a baptismal hymn. They speak of (1) the election and predestination of the believer before the creation; (2) the Christ-event; (3) the gnosis conveyed in Christian experience; (4) the definition of gnosis as the cosmic scope of salvation history; (5) the distinction between "we" (Jewish Christians) and "you" (Gentile Christians), and the sealing of the latter with the Holy Spirit in their initiation.

It may reasonably be conjectured that the distinction between Jewish and Gentile Christians has been introduced into the hymn by the author of Ephesians, thus adumbrating his major theme throughout the letter. That theme is the unity of both parties in the one Church.

Thus, the hymn would have concluded with a celebration of the sealing of all the newly baptized. It will be seen that the short form omits an essential part of the hymn.

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### **Gospel: Mark 6:7-13**

It was claimed by some of the early form critics that the synoptic missions were creations of the post-Easter community. If this were so, one would have expected Jesus' charge to reflect the Church's post-Easter Christological kerygma, whereas in point of fact the terms of their mission in both Mark and Q are exactly those of the earthly Jesus.

Mark does not specify, as Q does, that they were charged to proclaim, as Jesus did, the inbreaking of the kingdom of God, but he implies it in (a) the eschatological haste (no bread, etc.); (b) the warning of possible rejection as Jesus' message was rejected; (c) the statement that they preached repentance (see [Mark 1:14](#)); (d) their performance of exorcisms and healings.

“We must regard as authentic the commission to act like Jesus himself in proclaiming that God's kingdom has drawn near and in doing mighty works” (F. Hahn).

It is equally clear that the four forms of the charge (Mark, Q, Matthew, Luke) tended to expand or reduce the original nucleus in accordance with contemporary needs and practices. Thus, in Mark, as we have seen, we find that the reference to proclaiming the kingdom of God has been dropped (Mark knew only a Christological kerygma in his Church), and the reference to exorcism and healing is extended to include a specific mention of oil (see [Jas 5:14](#) for this Church practice).

What function does this charge play in Mark? Mark clearly is very interested in the Twelve. They are sometimes presented in a highly negative way, as blind and unperceptive to the mystery of Jesus and his mission.

Here, however, they are presented in a positive light. They are entrusted with the same message and mission as the Master himself. Clearly, Mark wishes to hold before his Church this twofold possibility. In Mark's Church the successors of the apostles are simultaneously warned and encouraged.

They may misunderstand Jesus and, in the supreme hour of persecution, fail their Lord, as the disciples forsook him and fled; or they may become true witnesses to the gospel message, as the disciples did briefly in Jesus' earthly lifetime and as they did for good after the risen One had commissioned them in Galilee ([Mark 16:7](#)).

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