

A reading from the book of the prophet Amos.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

Hear this, you that trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
saying, “When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain;
and the Sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale?
We will measure out less and charge more,
and tamper with the scales,
buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals,
and selling the sweepings of the wheat.”
The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
“Surely I will never forget any of their deeds”.



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

The WORD of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

A reading from the first letter of Saint Paul to Timothy.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

Beloved:

I urge that supplications, prayers,
intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone,
for kings and all who are in high positions,
so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life
in all godliness and dignity.

This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour,
who desires everyone to be saved
and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

For there is one God;
there is also one mediator between God and the human race,
the man Christ Jesus,
who gave himself a ransom for all;
this was attested at the right time.

For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle,
a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

I am telling the truth, I am not lying.



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

The WORD of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING – C 25

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples,
“There was a rich man who had a manager,
and charges were brought to him
that this man was squandering his property.
So the rich man summoned him and said to him,
‘What is this that I hear about you?
Give me an accounting of your management,
because you cannot be my manager any longer.’
Then the manager said to himself,
‘What will I do,
now that my master is taking the position away from me?
I am not strong enough to dig,
and I am ashamed to beg.
I have decided what to do so that,
when I am dismissed as manager,
people may welcome me into their homes.’
So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one,
he asked the first,
‘How much do you owe my master?’
He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’
He said to him,
‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’
Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’
He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’
He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’
“And his master commended the dishonest manager
because he had acted shrewdly;
for the children of this age are more shrewd
in dealing with their own generation
than are the children of light.
And I tell you,
make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth
so that when it is gone,
they may welcome you into the eternal homes.



Whoever is faithful in a very little
is faithful also in much;
and whoever is dishonest in a very little
is dishonest also in much.

If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth,
who will entrust to you the true riches?

And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another,
who will give you what is your own?

No slave can serve two masters;
for a slave will either hate the one and love the other,
or be devoted to the one and despise the other.
You cannot serve God and wealth.”



The **Gospel** of the **Lord**.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SCRIPTURES IN DEPTH

Reading I: Amos 8:4-7

Amos, the prophet of social justice par excellence, denounces the rich who just cannot wait for the new moon festival or the sabbath day to be over so that they may engage in business and make profits, cheating and exploiting the poor in the process. He threatens them with divine judgment.

Responsorial Psalm: 113:1-2, 4-6, 7-8

This is one of the first Hallel psalms (113-118), so called because they begin with “Alleluia” and celebrate the mighty acts of YHWH. Verses 7-8 provide a striking contrast to verses 4-6, between the majesty of YHWH and his condescension to the “poor.” It is doubtless because of these final verses, with their reference to God’s vindication of the poor, that this psalm was chosen as a response to the reading from Amos.

Reading II: 1 Timothy 2:1-8

Much of 1 Timothy consists of a Church order, setting out the duties of the Church’s ministry and (so here) describing the liturgical activities of the Christian assembly. It represents an attempt on the part of the Pauline churches to consolidate their life after the pioneering missionary work of the Apostle.

Since the time of Cyrus, the Jewish community had prayed even for its pagan rulers, and the Church continues this practice. Such prayer recognizes the function of the state in relation to the gospel.

If the state functions properly, it creates those outward conditions of tranquility under which the gospel may be preached and the life of the community may flourish.

This positive view of the function of the state is found in most places in the New Testament (see especially Rom 13). But there is another side to the state—its potentially demonic side (Rev 13).

Yet even the demonic state continues to fulfill some of its God-given functions of maintaining domestic peace and justice (there were police even in Nazi Germany, and they were not all brutal).

To that extent it still merits the prayers and obedience of the Christian community, even if at other points some kind of resistance is the order of the day.

Gospel: Luke 16:1-13 or 16:10-13

The Gospel consists of the parable of the unjust steward, followed by a string of sayings on the right use of wealth. These sayings probably did not originally belong to the para-

ble, for the parable itself hardly intends to hold up the unjust steward as an example of the right use of wealth!

Taken by itself, the parable is a challenge of Jesus to his contemporaries to make a drastic decision for the coming kingdom of God before it is too late (cf. the parable of the wise and the foolish virgins).

The string of sayings gives a new application to the parable: the disciples are to show as much intelligence in the use of wealth as the unjust steward did in his own interests.

Reginald H. Fuller