

JULY 11, 2021
Sunday of the 15th Week in Ordinary Time
Mark 6: 7-13

“WITNESSES FOR CHRIST.”

“During the wind-swept city Bridge-War, a small Korean village came under heavy artillery fire. When the smoke of the battle cleared away, the pastor of the parish sought the help of some American soldiers in restoring to its pedestal a fallen statue of Christ. Since the statue’s hands were gone, the soldiers planned to mould two new hands. The pastor, however, came up with a very meaningful suggestion: ‘Let us leave the statue as it is and write on the front of the pedestal the words, ‘Friend, lend me your hands.’ — Sending apostles as ambassadors to preach the Good News, Jesus may work through us to heal, strengthen, comfort and teach on earth in our day.”¹

My sisters and brothers, our readings for today remind us that we have the responsibility to be proclaimers of the Good News to everyone, to every place, anytime. We are called ambassadors of Christ, messengers of love, mercy, compassion and forgiveness. We are children challenged to be loving sons and daughters of God, willing to be witnesses amidst rejection and danger. “The first reading warns us that our witnessing mission will be rejected, as happened to the Old Testament prophets like Amos. Amos defended his prophetic role with courage, clarifying that it was not his, but God’s choice to elevate him from a shepherd and tree-dresser to a prophet. In the second reading, St. Paul explains the blessings that we have received through our Baptism and the responsibility we have to become missionaries. Then Paul reveals the Divine secret that it is God’s eternal plan to extend salvation, through Jesus, to all mankind — first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles. Hence, the Jewish and the Gentile Christians need to love, help, and respect one another, and thus, to proclaim Jesus, giving true witness by their lives. In today’s Gospel, the evangelist tells the story of Jesus’ commissioning of the twelve apostles to preach the Good News of repentance, forgiveness of sins, liberation, and salvation

¹ <http://frtonyshomilies.com>

through Jesus. Just as God sent the prophet Amos to preach repentance to ancient Israel and St. Paul to preach the Good News of salvation to the Gentiles, so Jesus sends forth the Twelve to proclaim the Good News of God's Kingdom and to bring healing to those who need it most. Today's Gospel reports the instruction Jesus gave the apostles for their first mission. They are to be walking illustrations of God's love and providence in action. They are to preach repentance — a change of heart and a change of action taking people from a self-centered life to a God-centered life.”²

My sisters and brothers, the Lord is asking us today to continue do our part to be emissaries and heralds of God for others. Do not be afraid, He is with us amidst difficulties and challenges. So, let us be the hands to lift the fallen, the feet to find and seek out the lost, ears to listen to the depressed, afraid and sad, and a tongue to speak words of love, compassion, sympathy and encouragement to those overwhelmed by grief, disappointment, loss, and distress. Like Amos and Paul, we are picked by God through the Sacrament of Baptism, we became sons and daughters of God, to become disciples and preachers of the Good News of salvation to all by our Christian witnessing and living the gospel. Are you willing to do your part? Are you eager to be missionaries? Are you ready to be send out as witnesses of Christ? My brothers and sisters, let us preach, live and share the good news to all by our witnessing, kind words and act on behalf of Jesus, our Lord and Master.

Let this be our prayer: “Lord Jesus, make me a channel of your peace, love, mercy, healing, and forgiveness so that others may find in You abundant and eternal life. Help me to be freed from all attachments of this world that I may gladly follow and carry out the mission You entrusted to me. May I be the hands to lift the fallen, the feet to find the lost, the ears to listen to those depressed and afraid, and the tongue to speak words of love and encouragement to those who are grieving and distressed, and be witnesses of the joy of the Gospel both in word and deed for my brothers and sisters today and always. Amen.”

² ibid