

Readings Amos 7: 12-15; Ephesians 1: 3-14; Mark 6: 7-13



Fr Michael says:

### Working for Christ

The missionary aspect of our Mass is stressed, it is not something what we have to keep enclosed in the four walls of our Church: the Gospel and its Message has to go with us into the highways and byways of our daily lives, otherwise we are taking the life out of our Celebration! This message may be uncomfortable for people to receive, as Amos experienced, but we must fulfil our task faithfully. As Paul reminds the Church in Ephesus, we need to rejoice in the great spiritual gifts we have received from Jesus, who then sends us out, “two by two” to the places He Himself is to visit. They have to prepare for a short mission and so do not need much; their ultimate calling is much later, after the Resurrection. A scary thought for us all, indeed!

During the Korean War, a village was being bombarded, it had a Catholic Church and outside it a fine statue of Jesus – which was destroyed. A group of American soldiers helped the priest remake the statue; they found everything but the hands. They offered to send to America to have the hands made there. The Priest said no. “I have a better idea, let’s leave it without hands and we will write on the pedestal: ‘Friend, lend me your hands.’ In that way passers-by will come to see that Christ now has no hands but ours with which to raise up the fallen; no feet but ours to seek out the lost; no ears but ours to listen to the lonely; no tongue but ours to speak words of comfort to the lonely.” So Jesus needs us His disciples to help Him fulfil His Mission on earth, **even if they got things wrong**. Amos after all, was simply a shepherd, yet it was he who was sent to preach the message of repentance. The apostles were mainly fishermen asked to do the same thing.

There is often a fear of allowing people to be involved, yet it is good for them to feel wanted and be responsible – this is what Jesus did in John’s discourses of farewell after the washing of the feet. People can use their talents and it helps build up community spirit. Not everyone wants to be involved, they hide behind the “experts” – healing is left to the medical professions; teaching to the teachers; helping the poor to the Government or charitable groups.

Specialists are needed but others also have much to offer and it is often done with a warmer heart! The sick need companionship as much as medicine; the elderly need people to spend time with them; the young need someone to take an interest in them – all we often need is a caring heart!

Genesis starts with the story of how God made us partners in creation, Jesus makes us His partners in His work of salvation – it is an honour and a responsibility. We are responsible for our world and for one another under God: stewards of creation, co-workers with Christ.

To do His work means to be faithful in little things, – it means doing our tasks, no matter how simple, thoroughly and joyfully. We need to be available, to avoid the limelight, to be useful not pushy; to carry our own burdens without them being burdens to others. Basically to be ready, helpful, loyal and constant – in these ways we are instruments of the Kingdom. What can we do? Perhaps simply affirm we are Catholic at work, it can do wonders and can free people to come to you and talk!