

For Sunday, July 15, 2018

Moved by the Holy Spirit

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/071518.cfm>

Amos 7:12-15

Ephesians 1:3-14 or 1:3-10

Mark 6:7-13

In May, our family of six packed up and moved to a new state. We've moved plenty as a family, including across the country (twice). But as our family has grown, this was the first time we had to figure out how to successfully travel 1,100 miles with *four* children, *four* car seats, *four* backpacks and knickknacks, coolers, snacks, basic living necessities for a few days' time, and all the little things that pile up while traveling.

Though the list of things to do seemed daunting, we encountered something surprising as we prepared to move — it became a beautiful time of letting go and felt almost like a retreat. We savored the last moments at our cozy little Florida home, soaking up memories of each of our favorite little things there. The gratitude in our hearts was practically palpable as we laughed, prayed, and sat in silence while we said goodbye and waited for what was ahead. Thanks to the movement of the Holy Spirit, a busy time of moving became a spiritual time of renewal.

As I pray with the Gospel and readings this Sunday, I'm reminded of this beautiful time in our lives, realizing the source of such life-giving fruit. In many ways, it came from accepting things were changing and trusting we were called out of our lives for something new God had in store for us ahead. Had we decided not to accept this fact and instead gripped onto the last bits of our old life, I have a feeling the transition would have felt more burdensome and troubling. It really was in letting go that we received.

Even literally — as we gave away items we couldn't pack or handed over keys to the home that held so many sweet memories — the physical letting go of things that were *good* and done in gratitude left space in our hearts for something even *more good*. God has been moving in powerful ways, and through grace, we have been able to ride the waves of this journey, accepting the twists and turns and making this move the most peaceful we've ever experienced as a family.

The Gospel clearly speaks of this same reality. Jesus beckons his disciples to a life that will be richer than anything they are leaving behind. Though suffering will most definitely be their lot, so also will unspeakable joy and the fulfillment of every desire of their hearts. I sometimes wonder if, at the moment Jesus begins sending them out, they had at least a little trepidation. Did they feel nostalgic and want things to stay the way they were? After all, they were the closest friends of Jesus. Were they at least a little sad about leaving the routines so familiar to them? Did they want to soak in the peaceful and joyful times just a little longer? Jesus asks them to go out from their comfort zone without their comfort objects. Travel with no extra clothes, no extra food, no extra money. I think most people would pause for a minute before this bold invitation. But they move forward anyway with trust and love in their hearts.



I find that God shows us His glory and unending care in these moments of trust. The Second Reading is overflowing with this language of love and providential care. “In him we were also chosen.” We were chosen to be his disciples and to receive the call to go out into the world and share the good news. Every grace necessary will be ours, just like it was for them. Like the first disciples, this might look scary sometimes. God’s will might take us away from our worldly comforts, but in exchange, He gives us

A struggle of mine is finding how I can practically go out like the first disciples and preach the Gospel. It is a temptation to think that I’m doing all I can as a stay-at-home parent by attempting to raise virtuous and well-formed Catholics. Although that can be holy work, my challenge is to remember that I can’t excuse myself from the call of discipleship just because I’m a lowly nobody doing my best at home. The First Reading is my reminder of this when Amos seems to shrug off the title he’s given, reminding him of his lowly state. And yet, God used him as a mouthpiece. God wants to use all of us as mouthpieces as well.

As I grapple with this, I look to the current state of immigration in our country. Sadly, the U.S. has become somewhat of a battleground for the poor trying to find a safe haven. Almost daily, we’re hearing stories of immigrants and those traveling with nothing but the clothes on their back being denied the right of being treated with basic human dignity. It would be easy to excuse myself from any connection to it — I’m just a stay-at-home mom ... I’m too far away ... there’s nothing I can do on my own. But I have a feeling that this is a lot like Amos. Regardless of my complaints, God would still like to use me to preach the Gospel through my actions toward the poor. This may require more letting go and accepting of things I’d rather keep the same. But knowing how God provided for us during our move, I will pray like the Psalmist, “Lord, let us see your kindness” and allow Him to send me out and be a part of serving the poor in our country, no matter how they get here.

Angie Windnagle

PRAYER

Lord, make me a instrument of your peace:
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

— *[Prayer for St. Francis](#)*

LPI

2875 S. James Drive • New Berlin, WI 53151
(800) 950-9952 ext. 2469

Send email address changes to: lpiconnections@4LPi.com

To opt out of receiving this reflection, contact: lpiconnections@4LPi.com

Copyright ©2018, LPI. All rights reserved.