

**DEACON TONY'S JULY 14TH HOMILY
FOR THE
15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

As I look over our readings for today, I see a handbook for Apostles of yesteryear as well as today.

Let us start with the prophet Amos. He was told to flee Bethel and never preach there again because he was upsetting the king's sanctuary. So, our prophet must deal with rejection, which is probably true of every prophet sent by God.

In his defense, Amos tells the priest that he was not a prophet but a shepherd called by God to speak out against false alters dedicated to false gods. Bethel was located on the border of the divided kingdom and only 10 miles North of Jerusalem. The Jews were required to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem once a year and the Northern Kingdom was losing people because many were relocating to Judah. Bethel was considered a very holy place and the Northern population was encouraged to worship there instead of going further into Judah.

The part of Amos' story that we can relate is that Amos was an ordinary man who was called by God to tell the people about right worship. We too relate to being called at our Baptism, to speak about our right relationship with God.

In our second reading Paul, who was also called from his previous life, to speak to God's children. He writes how our personal life should be centered on the Love that Jesus offers to us, every day, and how His death for our sins brought eternal freedom to His brothers and sisters.

Our Gospel contains basic instructions for His Apostles and all of us who follow: go two by two – Invite a friend to attend a bible study, adoration, Mass, reconciliation etc. Don't carry anything extra so we can learn to be totally dependent on the Grace of God.

Now we are fully equipped to share what Jesus means to us.