

Theme: *"It is always difficult to preach*

July 12, 2015

Amos 7: 12-15

*truth to power and authority."* **Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Eph. 1: 3-14

Mk. 6: 7-13

**Brothers and Sisters,**

***Peace to you All!***

I hope that everyone is enjoying their summer breaks despite the dry heat we have been having, which is normal for Texas. Thank God we just replaced and installed one new air-condition unit above the St. Faustina Hall to make sure we do not experience another unit breakdown like we had a weeks ago. Up until then our whole AC system has been on a life-support mode since one big unit broke a few weeks ago. There are five separate units in our church AC system, three above St. Faustina Hall and two above the chapel area and they are around 9 years old now from the time we built the church. And two of these broke down and quit on us two weeks ago forcing the other three to work close to within their power limit. The new unit cost us \$22,000.00 including installation and we could only afford to replace one at this time. We just cleaned and replaced the filters of the other one just to keep it running, I do not know for how long. I just hope that this could sustain us for this summer and for many years to come.

Please continue to support our church with your **Sunday Tithing** even for the summer months for this regular collection is what keeps us going every day throughout the year. While we appreciate the Capital Campaign Pledges of **\$1, 754,000** towards our New Building, we also need to maintain our present one. Every family of the parish has to contribute at least \$12/Sunday and Holy Day to ensure our ability to continue our services for our people. Our Carnival Profit is showing very encouraging but the final tally is still not yet available. Perhaps we will be able to give you the final report at the beginning of August. Thank you very much for your continued support.

Our readings for this weekend remind us how difficult it really is for man to listen to God. Ever since the beginning of creation, man has found it constantly self-reaffirming to disobey God, to ignore Him and to even spite Him. The original sin is very much embedded within us. This is even doubly defined in the moral, theological and spiritual areas of our lives. The whole history of salvation is riddled with this constant conflict between God's plan and man's assertive refusal to yield to divine invitation. We saw this in the conflict between Moses and the Pharaoh in Exodus, the jealousy of Saul towards David in the book of Samuel, the difficulty that the prophet Elijah and King Ahab in the book of Kings, the problem of King Ahaz with Isaiah, the struggle of King Zedekiah to understand and to give in to the words of Jeremiah, in the book of Jeremiah.

The same phenomenon can be found in the New Testament. King Herod did not believe the wise men about the birth of the Savior in Bethlehem. Jesus had a hard time convincing the Pharisees about the New Interpretation of the Law, the refusal of the Sadducees to believe in the resurrection, and his final condemnation by the Sanhedrin during the Passion Narrative. This struggle between man's will and God's divine plan became even more defined and prominent during the trial and condemnation to death of Jesus by Pilate. And throughout the history of the church and the world this human resistance to God's divine plan has been repeating itself over and over again.

And so in our First Reading today, Amos who was a man of God from Judah during the reign of King Jeroboam of the northern Kingdom, was silenced and expelled by Amaziah, the priest in charge of the sanctuary. And Paul, who experienced persecution and *probable* arrest in Ephesus during his three year of- and-on mission there, now writes to the Ephesians about the true, original and eternal plan of God for man emphasizing the message of salvation through Our Lord Jesus Christ who sent out the Holy Spirit as the evidence and the first installment to buy our release from sin and the freedom in grace. And finally, in the gospel, Our Lord sends out the Apostles on a mission to proclaim the message of salvation to all those who dare to listen and embrace it for our redemption from sin. It is a message of invitation to all to hear the gospel and to live it to be saved.

It is indeed with great difficulty that man is able to open up to the gospel of salvation. The strong resistance we feel to yield to God's invitation comes from original sin which has sown in us the state of **concupiscence=strong inclination to sin**. This state if the will is made even more prominent when God sends simple prophets to speak to authority about His plans. This explains why we constantly say that it is difficult to speak the **TRUTH to POWER** and authority. This truth can be found in all areas of life namely, the spiritual, social, political and economic levels.

But the greatest challenge of all is in our everyday decisions. Do you easily yield to God's will? Or do you constantly find yourself always questioning, vacillating, ignoring and even rejecting Him.

**With all my prayers,**

**Fr. Ernie**