

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time- C 2007

[Am 8:4-7](#)

Hear this, you who trample upon the needy
and destroy the poor of the land!
“When will the new moon be over,” you ask,
“that we may sell our grain,
and the sabbath, that we may display the wheat?
We will diminish the ephah,
add to the shekel,
and fix our scales for cheating!
We will buy the lowly for silver,
and the poor for a pair of sandals;
even the refuse of the wheat we will sell!”
The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Never will I forget a thing they have done!

[Ps 113:1-2, 4-6, 7-8](#)

R. (cf. 1a, 7b) Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.

Praise, you servants of the LORD,
praise the name of the LORD.
Blessed be the name of the LORD
both now and forever.**R.**
High above all nations is the LORD;
above the heavens is his glory.
Who is like the LORD, our God, who is enthroned on high
and looks upon the heavens and the earth below?**R.**
He raises up the lowly from the dust;
from the dunghill he lifts up the poor
to seat them with princes,
with the princes of his own people.**R.**

[1 Tm 2:1-8](#)

Beloved:
First of all, I ask that supplications, prayers,
petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone,
for kings and for all in authority,
that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life
in all devotion and dignity.
This is good and pleasing to God our savior,
who wills everyone to be saved
and to come to knowledge of the truth.
For there is one God.
There is also one mediator between God and men,
the man Christ Jesus,
who gave himself as ransom for all.
This was the testimony at the proper time.
For this I was appointed preacher and apostle
— I am speaking the truth, I am not lying —,
teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

It is my wish, then, that in every place the men should pray,
lifting up holy hands, without anger or argument.

[Lk 16:1-13](#)

Jesus said to his disciples,
“A rich man had a steward
who was reported to him for squandering his
property.
He summoned him and said,
‘What is this I hear about you?
Prepare a full account of your stewardship,
because you can no longer be my steward.’
The steward said to himself, ‘What shall I do,
now that my master is taking the position of
steward away from me?
I am not strong enough to dig and I am ashamed to
beg.
I know what I shall do so that,
when I am removed from the stewardship,
they may welcome me into their homes.’
He called in his master’s debtors one by one.
To the first he said,
‘How much do you owe my master?’
He replied, ‘One hundred measures of olive oil.’
He said to him, ‘Here is your promissory note.
Sit down and quickly write one for fifty.’
Then to another the steward said, ‘And you, how
much do you owe?’
He replied, ‘One hundred kors of wheat.’
The steward said to him, ‘Here is your promissory
note;
write one for eighty.’
And the master commended that dishonest steward
for acting prudently.
“For the children of this world
are more prudent in dealing with their own
generation
than are the children of light.
I tell you, make friends for yourselves with
dishonest wealth,
so that when it fails, you will be welcomed into
eternal dwellings.
The person who is trustworthy in very small
matters
is also trustworthy in great ones;
and the person who is dishonest in very small
matters
is also dishonest in great ones.
If, therefore, you are not trustworthy with
dishonest wealth,
who will trust you with true wealth?
If you are not trustworthy with what belongs to
another,
who will give you what is yours?
No servant can serve two masters.
He will either hate one and love the other,
or be devoted to one and despise the other.
You cannot serve both God and mammon.”

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (September 23, 2007)

Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113:1-8; 1 Timothy 2:1-8; Luke 16:1-13

The readings can be found on: <http://www.usccb.org/nab/092307.shtml>

(By Deacon Pat)

Where can I find the face of God?

Years ago, in Royal Oak, at a protestant church on the corner of 13 Mile and Crooks Roads, there were reports of people seeing the silhouette of our Blessed Mother in the shadows on the church's front wall.

People gathered for weeks on the front lawn.

They prayed and they were inspired.

The Detroit News reported that people claimed to have their lives changed.

What if someone told you that you could go somewhere in Kalamazoo and see God?

You know, something like take Oakland Avenue or South Westnedge to South Street and go East.

If you get to City Hall you've gone too far!

In Scripture today God reveals who he is and where to find him.

The prophet Amos scolds the prosperous and self-righteous of his time.

Even though they observe the holy days of the new moon and the Sabbath,

they can't wait until they can go about their daily business of becoming rich through cheating the vulnerable.

They treated the poor as valueless except as ones from whom to extract their own comfort.

The Lord swore never to forget a thing these rich swindlers have done.

Because you see, God wills everyone to be saved.

There are no throwaways.

Jesus gave himself as ransom for all.

We now try to wrap our minds around Jesus' parable of the dishonest steward.

This is the story of a business manager who had been squandering the owner's assets.

Upon discovery, the owner fires the steward.

In our society, getting canned would be clear justice.

Maybe we could even sue him in court to recover some of the losses.

In Biblical times, justice would have entailed throwing the steward into prison until his family could pay off his debt

or maybe sell the steward into slavery or some of his family.

To merely get fired then would be just, but would also be pretty merciful.

What's the steward's reaction to this merciful act?

Well, there are others who owe the owner oil from the olive groves and wheat from the pasture.

These are folks who survive off the surplus after giving the landowner his due, much like American sharecroppers of our not too distant past.

For these folks to be cut a deal on their debt could mean the difference between their families making it through another season or not.

These are God's poor.

These are who Jesus meant when he said,

"Whatever you do for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." (Mt 25:40)

Jesus identifies himself with the hungry, the thirsty, the alien, the naked, the sick and the imprisoned.

The steward does not own the assets he manages,
but he was able to manage them for welfare of these poor...

just as we don't own anything here on earth.

Just as the holdings were owned by the rich man,

God is the one who possesses all of creation.

We are his stewards.

Sometimes, often times, we squander God's gifts.

But when God showers us with mercy,

we are often inspired to share his mercy with others.

So now the sharecroppers are happy.

And the steward has secured his future because of the gratitude of the debtors.

So how did the rich man make out in this parable?

Well, in Mid-Eastern culture, honor is the currency most valued.

Through the steward's prudence, the rich man has acquired the reputation of great generosity and honor in the land...

just as we honor God from whom all blessings flow.

So how does God reveal himself? Where can I find the face of God?

God shows us his face of mercy as he brings us into his divinity
at home... at school...at work...and especially at his altar.

Then we are able to recognize his face in the needs of others...

to whom we share the face of God.

Again, God shows us his face of mercy as he brings us into his divinity.

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