

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 07/11/021

*Not so long ago at a daily Mass for a good-sized group of Catholic Grade School Students, I began my homily by asking how many of them would like to go on an exciting **Journey**. Almost every hand went up. So, I told them that right now we are going to take a journey in a Time Capsule. Get in and close the door, I told them. Now, put on your seat belts and crash helmets. On the panel in front of you turn the dial to the Year 30 A.D. Turn the other dial to North Shore of the Sea of Galilee, Israel. Finally, sit up straight and push the green button that says, "Go!" You have arrived. Get out and there on the beach you see Jesus walking toward you smiling and calling you by name. Greet him and now close your eyes and listen carefully. He has a secret to tell you. Then I asked them to share what happened. Would you believe, almost every second grader heard Jesus' whisper, "**I love you!**" Only one little boy heard the words, "**Be nice to your little sister!**"*

I tell that story for one reason: Like the journey of Amos throughout Judah, and like the journey of the Twelve Apostles in today's Gospel, we too are on an earthly journey in a land that is not our real home. Our citizenship is in heaven. That is our origin and our destiny.

***All three Readings today** speak of our having been **chosen** -even before the "foundation of the world." We are chosen by God to use our time, talent, and treasure to be flesh and Blood signs that God's Kingdom is present. Jesus came and inaugurated the Reign of God - a reign of Justice, Peace, Forgiveness, Compassion, Mercy and all that is Good. He chose you and me to carry on his work - not alone but with, in and through Him.*

As we journey Jesus instructs us to "Travel Light! "That is, to spread the "Joy of the Gospel," we do not need to accumulate unnecessary wealth, we do not need status, or power. We need to clear out in our lives all that distracts us from focusing on what it means to be a genuine follower of Christ.

The Apostles expelled demons by the power of the Holy Spirit. We have the same Spirit, and power to expel the demons of Lies, Hatred, Racism, Intolerance, Selfishness, and whatever destroys individuals and communities.