

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 21, 2025

Lord, forgive our greed.

Money is God in action.

Pray for each other.

-rvb.

Reading 1

[Amos 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!**

A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.

The first verse from Amos rattles our psychic security as Christians. Does Amos' stinging condemnation pierce our harden hearts? "**Hear this, you who trample upon the needy and destroy the poor of the land!**" So it is, the rich are getting richer, and the poor are getting poorer, and in today's world, the middle class is disappearing.

The Labor Force writes: “Jeff Bezos spent \$500 million on the world’s largest yacht—a yacht so big that he can’t park it even in Florida’s Port Everglades, which is specifically designed for mega yachts. Instead, Bezos had to park his yacht between two oil tankers. Jeff Bezos spends half a billion on the world’s biggest luxury yacht while he cuts corners on worker safety at Amazon. Bezos has previously said that he founded a space-travel company because it was “the only way [he] could see to deploy” his riches.

But the people who work for Amazon work in unsafe warehouses where every movement is tracked and are paid below a living wage. Instead of ‘deploying’ his millions for yachts, spaceships and union-busting lawyers, Bezos should recognize that the workers who pack, ship, and deliver orders for Amazon are the ones who created his wealth—and he should recognize their union.”

Amos chapter 8: The Basket of Fruit Vision

Introduction: In [Amos 8](#), the prophet delivers a serious warning to the people of Israel about the consequences of their actions. This chapter reminds us of the importance of living with integrity and treating others with fairness and compassion, which is one of the two great

commandments as Jesus tells us in [Mark 12;31](#). As we look deeper into this outline of [Amos 8](#), we will try to find the wisdom and relevance of this ancient text for our lives today.

I. [Amos 8:1-2](#) – The Vision of the Basket of Fruit.

In these verses, Amos shares a vision of a basket of summer fruit, which symbolizes the end of Israel's prosperity and the coming judgment. The Lord declares that time is ripe for judgment, and the people will no longer be able to escape their fate. This imagery is echoed in [Jeremiah 24:3](#), where the Lord shows Jeremiah a vision of good and bad figs, representing the fate of those who will be saved and those who will face judgment. Similarly, in [Matthew 7:16-20](#), Jesus teaches that we will be known by our fruit, indicating the importance of living a life that reflects the character of God.

II. [Amos 8:3-6](#) – The Oppression of the Poor.

Amos condemns the wealthy and powerful for their mistreatment of the poor and vulnerable. They trample on the needy and take advantage of their position to exploit others for their own gain. This behavior is reminiscent of the warnings in [Proverbs 22:22-23](#), where it is said that the Lord will defend the cause of the poor and will bring justice to those who oppress them.

In [James 5:1-6](#), we see a similar rebuke to the rich who have lived in luxury while neglecting the needs of others. Even though you are aware, you do not care and do not share. You hear the cries of the poor. You are like Mr. Business who went to Mass, never missed a Sunday, but went to hell for what he did on Monday. -Internet.

Responsorial Psalm

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

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

or:

R. Alleluia.

Praise, you servants of the LORD,
praise the name of the LORD.

Blessed be the name of the LORD
both now and forever.

R. Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.

or:

R. Alleluia.

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. Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.

or:

R. Alleluia.

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. Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.

or:

R. Alleluia.

Reading 2

1 Timothy 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.

A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures

In this reading from Timothy, the Christian community is exhorted to pray for one another. Prayer places us in the presence of God as it is a conversation with God. It injects us with the power of the Holy Spirit. It strengthens us to reach out to others in the name of Jesus. Prayer has consequences. Some had said, “Be careful when you ask

God for something. He may grant your request.” Because of Jesus’ humanity he redeems death, Christ is the mediator between God and us.

Speaking of **Autumn**

The autumn trees are praying.
Each one is at a different stage.
Some let go of their leaves early
as they stand naked, arms uplifted
in God’s crisp presence.
Other trees, still green and vulnerable,
clutch their leafy egos, afraid to reveal
their fragile, slender, inner selves.
Fleeting reds, golds, oranges, yellows,
and browns weave a pattern of change,
deepening and transforming.
Leaves, like prayer, become arid and dry
when they merely swirl about the heady
branches.
The leaves must fall to the ground and
become one with the heart of God’s
wet energies. -rvb.

As mentioned, prayer places us in the presence of God so we can

Offer intercessory prayers – “First of all, I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone...”

Brother Lawrence shares with us as to how to place ourselves in God’s presence for a starter:

Lay brother Nicolas Herman, known as Brother Lawrence (1611–1691), lived in a Carmelite monastery outside of Paris in the seventeenth century. He is known to the world for his practical recommendations to pray in little moments throughout the day, which he called “Practice of the Presence.” As Carmen Acevedo Butcher tells in her new translation, Brother Lawrence developed an ongoing awareness of God’s love during decades of work—and prayer—in the monastery kitchen. He disliked the work, but “got used to doing everything” there “for the love of God.”

Here is how he describes this practice:

- 1. The first way to develop presence is in living each day with great simplicity.**
- 2. The second is in great faithfulness to the practice of this presence and to this inner awareness of God in faith, always gently, humbly, and lovingly doing this without giving in to hurry or anxiety.**

3. Taking special care that this inner awareness, no matter how brief, precedes our activities, that it accompanies these activities from time to time, and that we finish all tasks in the same way, we gradually grow the habit.

4. For those beginning this practice, forming a few words interiorly is helpful, like: “My God, I am all yours,” . . . or “Love, create in me a new heart,” or any other phrases love produces on the spot. . . .

5. The practice of the presence of God, although a little difficult at first, secretly achieves marvelous effects in the soul, attracting an abundance of God’s graces, and when done faithfully, it imperceptibly leads the soul to this simple awareness, to this loving view of God present everywhere. This is the most sacred, the most robust, the easiest, and the most effective form of prayer. -Richard Rohr.

Alleluia

[Cf. 2 Corinthians 8:9](#)

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Though our Lord Jesus Christ was rich, he became poor,
so that by his poverty you might become rich.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

[Luke 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."**

In this Gospel of Luke, two major themes are highlighted: one of ingenuity and sharing wealth wisely and justly. While the steward was dishonest nor a man of honor, he does demonstrate creative thinking as a wily individual. It is said that when Pope John Paul visited Mother Teresa of Calcutta, he gifted her his limousine. Cleverly and creatively, she sells it and builds a home for the homeless. Enterprising she is.

The second part of the Gospel considers the proper and just use of money. We are to be stewards of the wealth we have, but rather we defund USAID as now thousands of children starve to death. As an anonymous person observed: “The massive sin of war, millions of lives displaced, children starving to death, human life destroyed, buildings in rubbles, grief stalking families, billions of dollars wasted on weapons, and attempts at cease fire falling on deaf ears. Weep over us, O Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.”

The encyclical, Mater et Magistra speaks to the heart of this Gospel, that is, social justice, and being stewards of our wealth: “The economic prosperity of any people is to be assessed not so much from the sum total of goods and the wealth possessed as from the distribution of goods according to the norms of justice, so that everyone in the community can develop and perfect himself and herself.” Money is to

be a means to an end, not an end. In a sense, money can be God in action as evidenced by this quote from *The Magical Work of the Soul*: “Money which has been the slave of our selfishness, must become the instrument of our goodwill. Money is magnetically bound to selfish purposes by the power of selfish desire. It can be equally attracted and bound to unselfish purposes by unselfish desire. There are some very saintly people who are wise and shrewd business persons. It is not a question of whether one makes money, but how one makes it, and uses it. Money can do great good. Using it as a steward is to perform a useful, even spiritual service. A spiritually orientated accountant might say getting and managing money properly is half of it, giving it away responsibly is the other half. “Superfluous wealth can buy superfluities only. Money is not required to buy one necessity of the soul.” – Henry David Thoreau.

Final prayer: Help me to be a conscious philanthropist – everything is interconnected and interrelated for all life is sacred. By sharing of what I have in my life completes this spiritual loop. Thank you, God.

Roger J. Vanden Busch