

Readings

Am 7:12-15

Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14

Eph 1:3-14 or 1:3-10

Mk 6:7-13

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There is a story about a very religious man named Arthur. He tried his best every day to lead by a Christian example and to make the world a better place.

Arthur went to Mass daily. Each time when he arrived at church, he would put a full bag of trash in the parish dumpster. Little by little, the other parishioners started to notice this and they began to get upset because they thought that he should throw his trash out at his own house.

One day one of the parishioners watched Arthur put the trash bag in the dumpster and he became enraged. He approached Arthur and asked him: “Arthur, why are you throwing your trash in the parish dumpster? Why don’t you use your own trash can at home?” Arthur replied: “We live in a community that has a lot of carelessly thrown papers and empty cans in the streets. This is a disgrace to our neighborhood. I believe that we are called to use our God-given talents to make the world a better place, so I decided to take action and do something about it. Hence, I began to walk to church each day with a trash bag in my hand and pick up all the garbage along the way. When I arrive at church, I put the trash bag in the dumpster. This is my humble way to make the world a better place because that’s what Christians are called to do. Would you consider doing the same thing? I believe that the more we can get people to clean up the streets, the nicer our neighborhood would become.”

Word spread quickly about Arthur's efforts, and it inspired many of the parishioners to do the same. The people started walking to church with trash bags and picking up the garbage along the way. As a result, the neighborhood became very clean, and everyone felt good about their Christian efforts.

Inspiring others to make the world a better place is at the heart of today's readings. In the first reading, Amos was inspired to preach the word of God to his community and to make a positive difference in their religious lives. The same is true in the Gospel. Jesus sent the Twelve out to preach the Word of God to others and to inspire them to become Christ-like in their actions.

We too are called to do the same. Jesus invites each of us to make the world a better place by being Christ-like in the community around us. What are ways that we can do it? Let us start with our local families, friends, and community and ask ourselves how we can make a positive difference in their lives. Maybe we can reach out in a caring way to someone who just lost a loved one and is struggling with meaning in their lives? Maybe we know of someone who is dealing with a serious problem and needs some comforting support? Maybe someone is trying to raise their family with good, Christian values and is struggling financially to provide for their daily needs? Whatever the case, let's look for ways to reach out to others with the loving hands of Christ and to build up the Kingdom of God around us.

Reaching out to help others is what Arthur, Amos, and the Twelve did. Jesus challenges us to do the same in our own lives, so let's be proactive as Christians and make the world around us a better place. We can do this by looking at the needs around and responding in a loving way. We all can achieve this, even if it means a simple thing like carrying a trash bag every day to church.