

# Ninth Sunday of Pentecost 17 July 2016

To Learn and to Grow Spiritually!

[Amos 8:1-12; Psalm 52 ; Genesis 18:1-10a; Psalm 15; Colossians 1:15-28; Luke 10:38-42](#) from Vanderbilt

[Ninth Sunday of Pentecost 17 July 2016](#) mp3

[Proper 11C / Ordinary 16C / Pentecost +9 Jul 17, 2016](#) from Textweek

We gather to respond to our faith in God by worshiping God, in song, prayer and adoration.

We seek to learn that we may grow spiritually, hearing passages of scripture and listening in the hope to gain insight into God and what is good.

Let's just hope that happens today. I will return to that shortly but first let me get side tracked with Amos!

Amos 8: 1-12

Amos was a man on a mission. Amos is one of the Minor Prophets, part time prophets if you like. He was simply a shepherd who lived during the reign of the wicked king Jeroboam II. He was from the southern Kingdom of Judah just south of Jerusalem but preached in the northern Kingdom of Israel. While times were prosperous yet Israel's leaders and wealthy were oppressing the poor. So God gave Amos the job of announcing God's displeasure.

Amos decried the injustice of the rich in the towns and at the gate of the royal shrine at Bethel where he said God was not pleased with their worship, the politician's were corrupt. And the poor were suffering. Money had become the people's first concern.

So things have not changed that much!

God's patience had worn out. Israel's greed and injustice toward the poor was intolerable.

This could have been the 1<sup>st</sup> reading last week, leading in to 'The parable of the Good Samaritan' and the call to action through loving your neighbour.

**Just remember this is a call into action.** God, through Amos was calling Israel to change their ways and care for the poor and those around them.

If we were to step in to Paul's letter to the Colossians we hear about the Supremacy of God and Paul's willingness to commit to God and become a servant willing to suffer for the sake of the good news for everyone's benefit.

Verse 27

To them [the Lord's people] God has chosen **to make known** among the Gentiles **the glorious riches of this mystery**, which is **Christ in you**, the hope of glory.

28 He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and **teaching everyone with all wisdom**, so that we may present **everyone fully mature in Christ**.

So if you take anything away with you today, Paul proclaims that God wants us to become **'Fully Mature in Christ'**.

Then as we turn our focus to Luke's Gospel, we consider Mary and Martha.

Now I'm like most good Anglicans, even though you doing not see it here, I would much prefer to be behind the scenes, even in the kitchen or stage hand than up on the stage.

I like Martha!

Martha was getting things done,  
a doing person,  
she was helping out,  
being the host, being hospitable. We all know that is good!

Okay Martha got a bit angry with her sister for not helping out,  
Mary after all was just sitting around, doing nothing!  
Martha had every right to complain, Jesus was very caring, he would understand!

But Martha didn't get it. Or at least Martha did not see the big picture!

And it must have hurt to hear, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; <sup>42</sup>there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

Mary has chosen the better part, to listen and be transformed. I would suggest that most of us would prefer to be distracted and do what we would choose to do then to listen and be transformed.

In one of Richard Rohr's daily meditations recently he talked about Transformation: through the 'The Third Way'

For those who do not know Richard Rohr, he is a Franciscan Catholic Priest from the US who I think is quite spiritually insightful. He explored transformation as a process of letting go of the ego's needs and

accomplishments through detachment and also acknowledges that Christianity also fosters attachment.

Using the image of the city for the pain, grief, distraction in life and where we engage and hopefully do our best to care for and bare witness to those in need.

And the image of the desert, for were we gain peace both physically and spiritually.

It is very sad to watch the news with the pain and suffering in the world, the lack of care for the world, and it's humanity it would be understandable to disconnect from it.

Then there are so many who seem to be so connected to the world and build up so much anger without any way to gain peace. The carnage we see is from anger and a unhelpful view of life. It is very sad!

The Third Way is nothing new. It is what many are already doing.

That is to engage in a peaceful way to recharge, to be forgiven, to be guided, to be transformed into a mature human being. As Mary choose!

Then to engage in the world around us being a light in the world, a caring person and one knowing something more about themselves and about God.

The Third Way is to engage in both and to consciously move between the two.

Once we can stand in that third spacious way, neither directly fighting nor denying and fleeing, we are in the place of grace out of which genuine newness can come. This is where creativity and new forms of life and healing emerge.

[Levels of Spiritual Development Richard Rohr](#)

Chaplain Richard Whereat