

Have you ever asked yourself?

Why am I here?

Why did God place me here?

In this place, at this time?

None of these are coincidences

They are a part of a grand plan

A storybook, if you like

And as the author writes, he places new characters into his book as it progresses

They are an integral part of the story

This is kind of what our world is like

God is the author

And he inserts characters as he desires

But this book of salvation history has twists and turns

Because the author doesn't control his actors like a puppet

He has given them free will

And we are free to take our own paths

Even a path the author might not want us to take

But for us to discover our specific role

We have certain fundamental questions to resolve

Why am I here?

As the Baltimore Catechism states:

We are here to know God

To love and serve him in this world

And to be with him for all eternity

This doesn't make us slaves

Ultimately it makes us free

Not a misguided freedom from things

Free to do as I please

No matter the cost

But truly free

Free to choose

**And when we choose correctly, we find ourselves on the way of
salvation**

God has a plan for each of his children

And he has commissioned us in our baptism

Our commission is to spread the Kingdom in the world

To bring the Gospel to all corners

Not just here at Mass on a given weekend

But to take what we receive here

And bring it into the world

Places no priest or religious can go

You are called to take it into your families

Into your places of work

Into your schools

Into the grocery store

Into the gas station

Into any place God sends us

And we have to do this intentionally

It is not enough to be just a good person

To take care of the needs of our family

To work hard

These are a part of it

But there is more

Amos had that opportunity

To go above and beyond

He was married, and had a family

He was a farmer and a shepherd

At this time, David's kingdom was split into 2 houses

The house of Judah, where Amos lived

And the house of Israel

Judah was a poor nation

But they were faithful

Israel was rich and powerful

But they turned from God

God had a plan for Amos

To go to the house of Israel

To warn them

To call them back into their covenant with God

When he heard this invitation

Amos had a choice to make

Obey, despite the dangers that would accompany him

Or he could remain where he was

Not rich, but comfortable

In the end, he accepts his mission

And he is abused and rejected by the leaders of Israel

But he is honored in the eyes of God

The apostles heard a similar invitation

Come and see

They had accepted

Some with all their hearts

Some with reservations

One just going through the motions

In today's Gospel, the 12 are sent by Jesus to the cities of Israel

Take no food, no sack, and no money

Trusting in God's providence

They were sent to preach the good news

They had a choice

They were free to refuse or accept his invitation

As the people they were sent to were free to accept or reject them

We see again and again in Sacred Scripture where Christ was rejected

He tells his disciples

If you enter a town or house and they reject you

Shake the dust from your feet in testimony against them

This was a sharp rebuke at this time

As Israelites would journey through pagan lands

When they crossed back into their own land

They would shake the dust of the pagans from their shoes

To those rejecting God's message

Jesus is telling his disciples

Treat them as you would a pagan

The 12 accepted his invitation and went

We don't read of any bargaining or making deals

They went off and preached repentance

This is a message our world still needs

Perhaps more than ever

How good are we at preaching this message?

As baptized children of God

We are chosen and we have our mission

It is more than being a 'good person'

**We are called to live as prophetic witnesses to Christ in the world
For some, I believe there are vocations to the priesthood and religious
life among us**

**As families, are we willing to encourage this in our own families?
As a parish family, are we ready to encourage this in our community?**

But for most, it will be as men and women immersed in the world

But not of the world

Husbands, wives, children

In our places of work and study

We are called to be a light pointing to the Holy Trinity

To show how God is working and blessing our lives

To be a people of peace, goodness, patience

Love, joy, modesty and self-control

To accept God's plan

His invitation

To know him, love him and serve him in this life

So we will be with him in the next

This is our baptismal commission

This is our time and our place in salvation history

Are we willing to go?

To accept God's plan freely

To use the gifts of time, talent and treasure

Not as we might desire, but as He calls us to

To build his kingdom in this world

While awaiting it's fulfillment in heaven?

The invitation is here for all good people

To go above and beyond

To live the way of discipleship we are called to

Regular, ordinary people like Amos, Paul and all the disciples

Invited into an extra-ordinary mission

Bringing people to God

And God into the world