

God gets political • Breaking open the word

Today's readings discuss worldly things—because God knows that we have to navigate our way through this world and wants to help us to find balance as physical and spiritual beings. To be truly balanced, we need to live justice and to be trustworthy. This plays out in our daily dealings, in our culture and in our politics.

The book of the Prophet Amos is awesome. He delivers God's judgement on the nations of the world using a formula that equals perfect injustice. Throughout the book, God, through Amos, chides the nations for their treatment of the poor and vulnerable. People cheat one another to get more; they sell poor products to make more money. They give less for a larger fee. They “buy the lowly for silver, and the poor for a pair of sandals.” Sound familiar? This is all happening in our culture and our world today; think of sweatshops where our sandals and pretty much everything else we buy is made, the waste we create, the food, water and renewable resources we waste every day, taking it from the poor. We need to review our individual way of living to see where we contribute to this injustice.

In the letter to Timothy, Paul thanks God for those in authority and asks us to pray for them. Paul lived in a time when political leaders were not elected and he states on many occasions that he believes (as most people did) that God put them in leadership. We live in a democracy—the responsibility for who is put in charge rests squarely on us. We need to consider (especially as voting time approaches) the best choice for leadership on local, state and federal levels based on our beliefs of what society should be. As Paul says, our leadership should promote, “quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity.” When you take that with Amos'

commentary on social justice, there is much to consider.

Jesus brings our point home in the story of the bad steward in today's Gospel. At that time, people in his position would usually "mark-up" what was owed to take a commission for themselves. When he re-writes the notes for a smaller fee, he is taking off his commission and telling them they owe the proper amount. He made the best of that bad situation he created, and was able to recoup some of his dignity. We need to be willing to sacrifice some of our profit in order to do what's right. Jesus reminds us that it's important to be trustworthy and do the jobs that we are given with honor. This is particularly true for people in leadership positions.

You can read this Sunday's readings here:

[Scriptures for the Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C](#)

Break open the word with your family

Kids

Why are the people with authority important (those people can be: parents, teachers, church leaders, politicians)? Do you pray for them? Try to remember to pray for the leaders in your life every day.

Teens

How do you see our country's way of life in contrast to what Amos showed in the first reading? Do you see similarities? Do you think we are different? What social justice issues that Amos discussed remind you of issues we are currently dealing with?

Adults

How do you decide who you will vote for in elections? Take a look at the US Bishop's information on [Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship](#).

A little lectio

The ancient practice of prayerfully reflecting on bits of Scripture is known as *lectio divina*. Want to try it out with your family? Head over to [Lectio Divina for Kids](#) to find out how to adapt this prayer practice for your kids.

A little Bible study

Want to do a little Bible study with your kids? Here are some tips:

- During Ordinary Time, the Church pairs the Old Testament and New Testament readings in a way that each sheds light on the other. Ask your kids to look for the common theme connecting the two readings. (Sometimes it's obvious, sometimes it is subtle.) How does the "dialogue" between the readings help you understand them better?
- Get a New American Bible, Revised Edition, and take a look at the footnotes for these readings. How do they change your understanding of what is going on?
- Take a look at the context for the readings—what happens before, or after?
- Read the NABRE's introduction to the book of the Bible that the readings are taken from. How does that help you understand the readings?
- If you don't have a copy of the NABRE at home, you can view it online at the USCCB website at the [Daily Readings](#) web page.

For even more resources for breaking open this Sunday's

readings, head over to [The Sunday Website](#).