

**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**