



*“I was no prophet,
nor have I belonged to a company of prophets;
I was a shepherd and a dresser of sycamores.
The LORD took me from following the flock, and said to
me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’” (Amos 7:14-15)*

If you’ve ever felt like God is calling you to something you are in no way qualified for, you’re in good company. Throughout history, God has called on countless men and women who were not prepared, lacked training, and often were right next to somebody else who should have been the clear choice for the job.

In the first reading this week we hear from the prophet Amos, a man who was merely a shepherd. He wasn’t an apprentice to another prophet, instead he spent his days taking care of sheep and trees, until God called him to prophesy to the people of Israel.

The Israelites were oppressing the poor and making offerings to God without following His commands, and God needed somebody to hold them accountable. In theory, this was quite the promotion, going from shepherd to prophet! But the Israelites would not listen to him, and so we hear how the priest Amaziah tries to send him away to the southern kingdom of Judah. Yet, in the face of adversity, Amos continued to preach the word of God.

The Gospel gives us a similar picture, with Jesus gathering together the twelve Apostles and sending them out. They had already spent *some* time with Jesus, listening to His teachings and watching His miracles, but they certainly were not completely ready to go out on their own. But Christ knew that the day would come when He would leave them, He would ascend into heaven, and they would have to spend the rest of their lives spreading the gospel on their own. So, Jesus sends them on this journey while they are still able to return to Him and so continue to learn from Him.

But the Apostles are also told to take nothing with them. The reason they are given such a short packing list is because Jesus doesn’t want them to think that they can do this on their own. He wants them to know realize that God will provide for them. Just as God guided Amos, and countless other prophets, God guides the Apostles. In a similar way, God guides us when we follow Him. So, if you feel like there is no way you could what God is calling you to do, whether it’s a vocation, a call to lead a prayer group, serving as a catechist, or anything else, know that God will guide you. You don’t need to do it on your own, because He will guide you and care for you just as He did for Amos, the Apostles, and countless men and women throughout history.